

Executive

Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 and Use of Natural Resources Project

2 July 2012

Report of Head of Environmental Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report considers the newly drafted Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 as well as the progress of the Use of Natural Resources Group in delivering the Council's Low Carbon Management Plan.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 and its action plan
- (2) To note the achievements of the Use of Natural Resources Group in delivering the Carbon Management Plan in 2011/12
- (3) To note future initiatives of the Use of Natural Resources Group in delivering the Carbon Management Plan in 2012/13

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The former Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate expired in May 2012. A "cleaner, greener Cherwell" is a strategic priority in the Council's Corporate Plan, linking back to the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 1.2 The Sustainable Community Strategy has committed to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change by reducing the overall carbon emissions for the district, aspiring to eventually becoming carbon neutral.
- 1.3 Cherwell's Low Carbon Environmental Strategy is the successor to the Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate and it ties into the national target to reduce CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2050.
- 1.4 To reflect the importance of local authorities leading change locally on the

climate change agenda, central government continues to require local government to report on an annual basis CO₂ emissions from across our estates and operations.

- 1.5 The draft of the new strategy was developed on the strengths of the former strategy (“Cherwell Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate”) incorporating the work of the Use of Natural Resources Group as well as Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan.
- 1.6 The Use of Natural Resources Group has involved key staff from across the Council such as Estates, Procurement, Housing, Leisure Services, IT, Fleet Maintenance, Transformation and Environmental Services. It uses multiple work streams to deliver projects to improve energy efficiency and save energy costs, outlined in the Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan.
- 1.7 The Use of Natural Resources Group is internally focused and it delivers part of the Cherwell Low Carbon Environmental Strategy and the Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan.
- 1.8 This report highlights the achievements of the Use of Natural Resources Group which has led to a Carbon reduction of 2.3% 2010/11 and of 6.2% in 2011/12. Its adjusted target for 2012/13 is 4.5%.

Proposals

- 1.9 To agree the Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 and its action plan.
- 1.10 To continue building on the successes of the Use of Natural Resources Group by improving the Council’s energy efficiency performance into 2012/13 in line with the Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan.

Conclusion

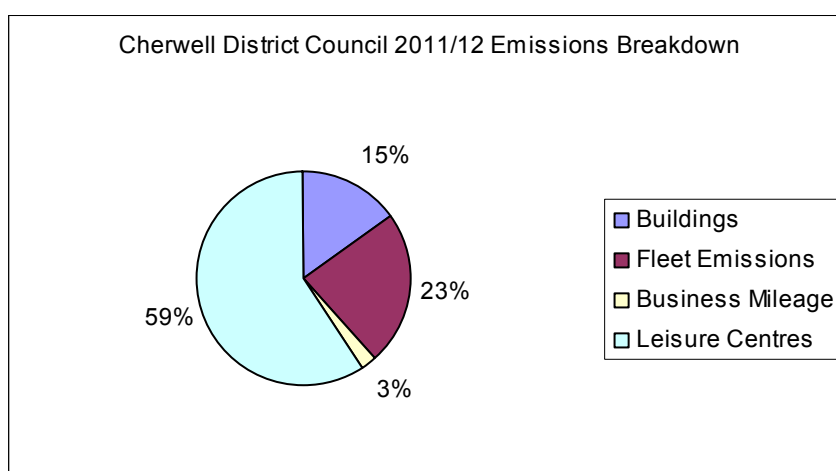
- 1.11 The Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 will help further the success of carbon reduction and energy saving work internally as well as across the district.
- 1.12 A co-ordinated cross-service approach is employed to take action and to drive forward and support the Use of Natural Resources project and Cherwell’s Carbon Management Plan reducing 22% of its carbon emissions by 2014/15.
- 1.13 Annual targets of the Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan are outlined below:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Annual Target %	4	6	4	4	4

- 1.14 Due to the underperformance in carbon reduction in 2010/11 (2.3% instead of 4%) and the over performance in 2011/12 (6.2% instead of 6%) Cherwell’s internal targets have been adjusted to 4.5% in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 in order to achieve the overall 22% reduction target.

Background Information

- 2.1 The former Cherwell Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate is divided into three sections: “Leading by example”, “Working in Partnership” and “Planning for Sustainable Development”.
- 2.2 As part of the implementation of the strategy the Use of Natural Resources Group was set up to reduce internal emissions as outlined under the section “Leading by example”.
- 2.3 Since 2009 the Use of Natural Resources Group has focused on reducing the Council’s emissions through improving energy efficiency and therefore saving energy costs.
- 2.4 Measurement of the Council’s carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions has previously been assessed by National Indicator (NI) 185. In the first NI 185 baseline year (08/09), emissions from Cherwell District Council operations were 5,002 tonnes. Leisure Services is with 59% of the Council’s overall emissions the biggest contributor. The main sources of these emissions today are:



Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012

- 2.5 The new Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012 is divided into three main sections “Leading by Example”, “Sustainable Communities – Our district – Our future” and “Working in Partnership and encouraging low carbon initiatives” and an action plan.
- 2.6 “Leading by Example” outlines the Council’s ambitions target to be working towards a low carbon future as outlined in its Corporate Plan 2012/13 as well as its four strategic priorities (“District of Opportunity”, “A Cleaner and Greener Cherwell”, “A Safe, Healthy and Thriving Community” as well as “An Accessible, Value for Money Council”).
- 2.7 The main focus of the “Leading by Example” section is on the Council’s Low Carbon Management Plan and its target to reduce emissions by 22% by 2014/15 from a 2009/10 baseline.
- 2.8 The second main section of the strategy “Sustainable Community – Our District – Our Future” sets out how we aim to support the transition to a low carbon economy. Examples given are Cherwell’s role in a local Community Interest Company delivering the Green Deal, EcoBicester as an example of a whole town approach to

the eco development, as well as an outline of low carbon initiatives in the district.

- 2.9 The third part of the strategy Working in Partnership and encouraging low carbon initiatives outlines how the Council is keen to support 'low carbon' initiatives across Cherwell District, involving the community and working with local partners to raise awareness and encourage CO₂ savings.
- 2.10 The Action plan contains key actions delivered during the lifetime of the strategy regarding the district's carbon footprint as well as the Council's.

Low Carbon Management Plan

- 2.11 Cherwell District Council participated in the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management Programme to establish a Low Carbon Management Plan which was adopted in May 2011. This plan sets out our path for reducing CO₂ emissions over the next five years until 2014/15.
- 2.12 Our carbon reduction target is to reduce CO₂ emissions from our own operations by 22% from a 2009/10 baseline year by the end of financial year 2014/15 (1,195 tonnes of CO₂).
- 2.13 With energy costs rising, it is essential that efficiencies are adopted to reduce these costs. With a 22% reduction target in emissions Cherwell District Council energy costs will be significantly reduced to just over a £1,000,000 worth of savings over 5 years.
- 2.14 The Carbon Management Plan projects are identified within specific work streams- and are in line with the work streams for the Use of Natural Resources Delivery Group.
- 2.15 The table below outlines the carbon reduction targets achieved:

Tonnes of CO₂	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2011/12 % from 2009/10	2011/12 % from 2010/11
Buildings & ICT	757	879	1042	-27.4%	-14.0%
Fleet Emissions	1149	1164	1207	-4.8%	-1.3%
Business Mileage	128	137	132	-3.0%	-6.6%
Leisure Centres	2949	3131	3053	-3.4%	-5.8%
Total	4982.8	5311.6	5434.1	-8.3%	-6.2%

Use of Natural Resources Group

- 2.16 In 2009 a project team, the Use of Natural Resources Group, was formed from an existing Energy Efficiency Taskforce. Seven ongoing work streams were identified, and each work stream lead was required to devise a work package specifying the tangible outcomes and delivery dates for their area.

2.17 The seven work streams and their overall objectives were as follows;

- Leisure centre energy use – ongoing partnership work with Parkwood Leisure to make changes to plant and equipment and in house management systems to reduce CO₂ emissions
- Property improvements – addressing any sub-standard energy performance in the Council's buildings and identifying a programme of improvements
- Technology enhancements – addressing the high energy consumption of computers and servers
- Fleet use optimisation – achieving fuel reduction targets
- Sustainable procurement strategy – implementing the strategy and ensuring that sustainability forms a key part of procurement activities
- Workplace travel plan – assessing staff travel patterns and devising a plan aimed at reducing non-sustainable methods of travel
- Culture change and best practice – engaging staff across the Council to embed good practice and share successes
- Communications – engage and inform staff as well as external audiences on main successes of the Use of Natural Resources Delivery Group.

2011/12 Main Achievements of the Use of Natural Resources Group

- 2.18 In 2011/12 the Use of Natural Resources Group delivered 6.2 % of energy savings in line with the Council's Carbon Management Plan target for 2011/12.
- 2.19 Delivery of the Carbon Trust recommendations; installation of variable speed pump drives, changing and updating lighting schemes, systems for collecting quality utility usage data and installation of motion sensor light regulations (PIRs) in all leisure centres.
- 2.20 Property maintenance completed the refurbishment of the Thorpe Lane Depot which has won a Green Apple Award for the reduction of 30% of emissions. The works completed included the installation of PV solar panels on the roof of the refurbished workshop and the storage warehouse. Size and benefit of Feed in tariff (generating income) and saving energy leads to £6000 savings per year.
- 2.21 Bodicote Old House has also been refurbished to increase energy efficiency. This features increased insulation, low energy lighting and a biomass boiler to replace existing gas boilers.
- 2.22 Bodicote House HQ lighting system has been revamped in meeting rooms and hallways to PIRs (motion sensed). A bid for photovoltaic (PV) panels at Bodicote House has been approved as part of the capital programme 2011/12 and will be completed in May 2012.
- 2.23 Fleet use optimisation continued to reduce its fuel usage having reduced fuel by 4.8% since 2009/10. This has been achieved through the procurement of fuel efficient vehicles, an "Intelligent Driver" training and the rounds review seeking optimum efficiency from the use of vehicles and staff time.

- 2.24 Furthermore, a workplace travel plan has been implemented and an internal Green Champions network has been set up to raise awareness.

2012/13 Main work programme of the Use of Natural Resources Group

- 2.25 In 2012/13 the Use of Natural Resources Group aims to deliver 4.5% of energy savings in line with Council Carbon Management Plan target for 2012/13.
- 2.26 Leisure services main measures will be the delivery of the biomass boiler (Capital programme 2011/12) for the Bicester Leisure Centre, the completion of the solar capital scheme 2011/12 (Kidlington and Gosford, Bicester,,Woodgreen and possibly Spiceball Leisure Centres), installation of LED lighting at the Bicester centre as well as detailed energy audits for Kidlington and Spiceball Leisure Centres that will deliver further energy saving actions.
- 2.27 Property maintenance aims to assess the feasibility of increasing the number of heating zones in Bodicote House to provide more precise control as well as continue with the final phases of installing energy efficient lighting. Furthermore, it aims to investigate the feasibility of refurbishing of inefficient windows at Bodicote House.
- 2.28 With the introduction of a government grant of 25% of the purchase price of electric vehicles fleet use will explore the purchase of electric vehicles / vans and electric charging points.
- 2.29 IT will further deploy energy saving Wyse terminals to replace old PCs and plans to improve conference call capabilities.
- 2.30 A joined procurement policy has been developed that incorporates sustainable procurement as a golden thread. The use of full – life costing has been and will be used to inform decisions on procurement issues such as boiler replacement and electrical maintenance.
- 2.31 A comprehensive communications plan has been developed covering each of the areas. To further promote energy efficiency through behaviour change internally as well as externally articles are planned for In Brief, Cherwell LINK and in some cases press releases will be drafted.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 Key to the internal and external environmental performance of the Council is the Low Carbon Environmental Strategy
- 3.2 The excellent work already achieved by the Use of Natural Resources Group needs to continue to deliver the Carbon Management Plan
- 3.3 Key to reducing energy costs and emissions is the Low Carbon Environmental Strategy as well as the Carbon Management Plan

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

- Option One** To approve the Low Carbon Strategy 2012 and its action plan as well as the forward plan for the Use of Natural Resources Group

Option Two	To reject
Option Three	To ask officers to modify the proposals by setting lower emissions targets, recognising that this would conflict with public and national government expectations

Consultations

Use of Natural Resources Group	Continued investment in energy saving projects and promote energy awareness will help to reduce emissions and energy costs
Key Officers Group	Continued investment in Low Carbon Environmental Strategy
Public Consultation	To be carried out over the summer 2012

Implications

Financial:	<p>There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.</p> <p>Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 221559</p>
Legal:	<p>There are no direct legal implications with this report. The actions taken and proposed to be taken all contribute to the Government's targets to reduce carbon emissions pursuant to the Climate Change Act 2008.</p> <p>Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance 0300 0030107</p>
Risk Management:	<p>A Cleaner Greener Cherwell is one of the four strategic priorities of the Council and increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO2 emissions is a key component.</p> <p>The main risks associated with the strategy relate to performance against our pledge to reduce the council's carbon footprint by 4% during 12/13. Failure to adopt and deliver the strategy and action plan is likely to have an impact on performance. This will be mitigated through performance management (quarterly reporting).</p> <p>Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager 01295 221563</p>

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

Lead Member

Councillor Nigel Morris
Lead Member for Clean & Green

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Low Carbon Environmental Strategy 2012
Background Papers	
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