

Copeland Borough Council's Commitment to Climate Change

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Allan Holiday, Deputy Leader
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy
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Summary and Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

- Members consider and agree to sign a local version of the Nottingham Declaration as a means of showing the Council's commitment to climate change, detailed in Appendix 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 There is now consensus among the international community that the world is warming and that this is a result of human activities. As a result climate change issues have risen in the concerns of international bodies, national governments and the global industrial and scientific sectors. This has resulted in a number of top down initiatives, however it is important to recognise that local community at large has a vital role to play.
- 1.2 As a community leader Copeland Borough Council has a central role in leading the society's response the challenge of climate change by supporting the local community to become more resilient to extreme weather events and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's operations and estates.
- 1.3 In March 2007 the Local Government Association (LGA) established the Climate Change Commission to critically review and evaluate UK local government's track record on the climate change agenda. The final report concluded that there was an urgent authority-wide consistent response needed throughout the UK.
- 1.4 In January 2008, following extensive consultation, the Government issued its White Paper 'Meeting the Energy Challenge: A White Paper on Nuclear Power'. The White Paper outlines the Government's belief that new nuclear power stations should have a role to play in the national future energy mix alongside other **low carbon** sources.
- 1.5 By signing up to the LGA Nottingham Declaration the Council will send a public commitment to take action and create a catalyst for a more systematic approach to climate change issues. By the end of October 2008 almost 90% of all English councils had signed the declaration and it is the LGA's aim to achieve 100% by the end of the year.

2 ARGUMENT & OPTIONS

There are a number of compelling reasons why the Council should sign up to the Nottingham Declaration, these include:

2.1 Reassure local residents

Reassure Copeland residents that you are taking climate change seriously. A recent survey by the Local Government Association found that 76% of adults think councils have a key role to play in tackling climate change and 70% said that climate change should be a top priority for their council. Almost three quarters of all signatories have publicised their decision to sign in their local press.

2.2 Strengthen the Council's response

A survey of local authorities commissioned by the LGA Climate Change Commission found that 84% of local authorities that have or are developing a climate change strategy believed that signing the Nottingham Declaration was a key driver. Similarly, a recent survey by the Energy Saving Trust found that 80% of respondents believed that signing the Declaration helped to build member and senior officer momentum within the council.

2.3 Performance

From 2009 the new local performance framework will encompass climate change. National performance indicators (NI185, NI186, NI188 and NI 194) and the new Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) will assess how well local authorities are preparing for climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Council is currently engaged in developing its effectiveness in these areas and has relevant Corporate Plan objectives in place.

2.4 Save money & attract new resources

Adapting Council and local buildings and other infrastructure for severe weather can help to avoid and reduce the high costs of emergency measures and repairing damage. Furthermore, there are many examples of local authorities that have made significant savings by introducing sustainable energy measures and there are a range of support networks available to the Council that are planning climate change and energy initiatives.

2.5 Improve the quality of life for our local community

Preparing for the impacts of climate change (adaptation) will help to protect our local community from the worst effects of severe weather events, such as flooding, storms, high winds and heat waves. Action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) can bring other benefits to the local community, such as: lower fuel bills; improved housing stock; reduced business costs; more competitive businesses; improved public transport; better cycling and walking facilities; and improved air quality.

2.6 Strengthen existing policy

As part of the aspirations detailed in the Energy Coast Master Plan the Council has a key role in UK sustainable energy. In signing the

Nottingham Declaration the Council would send a positive message to low carbon and renewable energy providers such as the UK new nuclear power programme and local biomass micro-generation schemes that the Council is in principle committed to supporting their investment.

3. SIGNING-UP PROCESS

- 3.1 The process for signing up to the Nottingham Declaration is straight forward:

Once the decision has been made to sign-up and the date of when it comes into force (e.g. April 2009), the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive sign a copy of the declaration. This is then framed and displayed in a prominent place for example the Copeland Centre foyer.

It is recommended that the commencement date for our commitments is as soon as possible and before the end of the 2008/09 financial year to be in line with Corporate Objectives. **Therefore it is recommended that the commencement date is Monday 2nd of March 2009.**

- 3.2 Once signed the Council informs the Energy Saving Trust of its 'signing the declaration' and they add the Council to the list of signatories, which can be viewed on the Energy Saving Trust's website. The preferred method of informing them is by email at practicalhelp@est.org.uk. If a 'local version' of the declaration is developed, a personalised copy can be arranged and sent by the Energy Saving Trust.
- 3.3 The signing of the declaration could then form part of a press release to the local newspaper informing residents of our commitment to climate change issues.

4. CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The Council has identified in its Corporate Plan (objective 3.4.3) the importance it is giving to the issue of climate change. The Council's current aim is to show its commitment to combating the causes of climate change by signing up to the Nottingham Declaration.
- 4.2 The Council is currently developing a climate change strategy and action plan which will address the following national indicators:
- NI 185 -CO2 reduction from LA operations
 - NI 186 - Per capita reduction of CO2 from LA area
 - NI 187 - Fuel poverty
 - NI 188 - Planning to adapt to climate change
 - NI 194 - Air quality, NOX & PM10 emissions
- 4.3 The provision of a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan would fulfil the commitment given in the Nottingham Declaration. The strategy is expected by the end of 2008/09 financial year.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 The existing budget enables some officer time to be allocated to the climate change agenda. There is also a small capital amount within the Nuclear & Sustainable 2008/09 budget currently being used for external support in writing the Council's Climate Strategy and Action Plan.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Nottingham Declaration is a 'voluntary pledge' to address the issues of climate change. In essence it is a high-level statement of commitment to its own community. In signing the declaration, in general, we make a commitment to:

"Within the next two years develop plans with partners and local communities to progressively address the causes and the impacts of climate change, according to our local priorities, securing maximum benefit for our communities".

- 6.2 **The Council can fulfil this commitment by developing a climate change strategy and associated action plan.** As the declaration states, this is to be done 'progressively' and is already in line with our Corporate Plan (objective 3.4.1) objectives which are designed to support the meeting of targets for national indicators NI 185 (CO2 reduction from LA operations), NI 186 (per capita reduction of CO2 from LA area), NI 187 (fuel poverty) and NI 188 (planning to adapt to climate change). A climate change strategy/action plan will form the Improvement Plan for achieving the targets.

- 6.3 From 2009 the new local performance framework will encompass 'climate change'. Three national performance indicators and the new Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CAA) will assess how well local authorities are preparing for climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A climate change strategy/action plan will provide evidence that the Council is systematically addressing these issues.

- 6.4 The Council is currently developing a Climate Strategy and Action Plan in-line with the Cumbria Vision 'countywide strategy'. Completion is expected by the end of this financial year 08/09. Delivery of the Action Plan and its implications is yet to be done but may lead to a review of the Corporate Plan 09/10.

- 6.1 It is proposed that the project lead remains to be done by the Sustainability & Nuclear Policy Advisor.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The signing of the declaration and showing the Council's commitment to climate change is covered by Corporate Plan objective 3.4.1

- 7.2 The Corporate Plan currently has objectives in place for the 'sustainability' national indicators NI 185, NI186, NI 187, NI 188 and NI 194. The Nottingham Declaration essentially shows the Council's commitment to tackling the issues which performance is monitored by the national indicators.

- 7.3 The provision of a climate change strategy/action plan would fulfil the commitments set out under the Nottingham Declaration and the NI agenda at the same time. The strategy is currently being developed and is expected in early 2009.
- 7.4 The current corporate plan objectives and the Council's responsibilities under the new National Indicator programme are encompassed within the wording of the 'common' high-level statement of commitment. The provision of a Climate Change Strategy/Action plan would fulfil the commitments given; **we are currently developing this in-line with the Cumbria Vision countywide strategy, completion is expected by the end of this financial year 08/09.** Delivery of the Action Plan and its implications may lead to a review of the Corporate Plan 09/10.

List of Appendices:

1. Copeland Borough Council's Commitment to Climate Change -Nottingham Declaration (Local Version).
2. Supporting information; UK Climate Change Programme

List of Background Documents:

- The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change – Carbon Trust
- Be Aware, Be Prepared, Take Action – Local Government Assoc
- Cutting Through Green Tape - Local Government Assoc
- Cumbria Vision - Climate Change Strategy
- Guidance to Local Authorities and Government Offices on National Indicators - BERR

List of Consultees: Julie Betteridge, **Cllr Allan Holiday**, Andrew Percival (HQN consultant), Performance Team, Contracts & Projects Manager, Planning Policy, Housing Team, Corporate Team.

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	None
Impact on Sustainability	The 'Declaration' would impact on local and ultimately national sustainability issues
Impact on Rural Proofing	Strategies and action plans need to consider the rural community
Health and Safety Implications	None

Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	The work needs to take account of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.
Children and Young Persons Implications	The issues are intergenerational and will therefore effect future local communities
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Monitoring Officer Comments	
Section 151 Officer Comments	

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision **No**

APPENDIX 1

Copeland Borough Council's Commitment to Climate Change

LOCAL VERSION OF THE NOTTINGHAM DECLARATION

The Declaration

Please note the process for signing the declaration is highlighted in the main report in Section 3.

A local version of the Nottingham Declaration is permitted to be developed as long as the fundamental commitments contained within the Nottingham Declaration are retained. Therefore due to the Council's key role in the nuclear industry and Energy Coast aspirations a local version has been written (below) encompassing these elements (in bold text). However the fundamental commitments to climate change are unchanged. The list of commitments and acknowledgements are as follows:

The Council acknowledges that:

- There is evidence that climate change is occurring.
- It will have far reaching effects on the UK's people and places, economy, society and environment.

The Council welcomes the:

- Socio-economic benefits which come from combating climate change
- Welcomes the emissions targets agreed by central government and the programme for delivering change, as set out in the UK Climate Change Programme.
- Opportunity for local government to lead the response at a local level, encouraging and helping local residents, local businesses and other organisations to reduce their energy costs, to reduce congestion, to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to improve the local environment and to deal with fuel poverty in our communities.
- Endorsement of this declaration by central government.
- **In principle development of carbon neutral energy sources as part of the Council's Energy Coast Master Plan. These energy sources include Nuclear Power, tidal, off-shore wind power and micro-generation schemes such as Biomass and Hydropower.**
- **The research and development of 'next generation' energy sources such as hydrogen fuel.**

The Council is committed: (from the agreed date)

- To work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010.
- To participate in local and regional networks for support.
- Within the next two years develop plans with partners and local communities to progressively address the causes and the impacts of climate change, according to local priorities, securing the maximum benefit for the local community.

- To publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own local authority's operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal, and the purchasing of goods and services.
- Assess the risk associated with climate change and the implications for the Council's services and local community of climate change impacts and adapt accordingly.
- Encourage all sectors of the local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- To monitor the progress of the Council's plans against the actions needed and publish the result.

APPENDIX 2

Copeland Borough Council's Commitment to Climate Change

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. UK CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME - Domestic Climate Change Goals

- 1.1 The 2000 UK Climate Change Programme confirmed a domestic policy goal of moving towards a reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the most important greenhouse gas, by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.
- 1.2 The government's Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy further developed the UK's climate change policy by adopting a longer-term goal of putting the UK on a path to reduce CO₂ emissions by some 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020.
- 1.3 In spring 2006, following a review, the government published an updated UK Climate Change Programme. This introduced additional measures to take us close to our domestic goal and ensure that the UK can make real progress by 2020 towards the long-term goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by about 2050.

2. KYOTO PROTOCOL

2.1 Objectives of the Protocol

Climate change is the greatest challenge facing the world today. It's a global issue that demands a global response.

The Kyoto Protocol has been established to limit the growth in the emissions of greenhouse gases. Under the Kyoto Protocol, industrialised countries and those in transition to a market economy (the so-called "Annex I countries") have agreed to limit or reduce their emissions of six greenhouse gases.

2.3 Greenhouse gases

The six greenhouse gases addressed by the Kyoto Protocol are:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- Methane (CH₄)
- Nitrous oxide (N₂O)
- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)
- Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)
- Sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆)

The Protocol sets quantified emission limitations and reduction obligations with respect to a basket of six gases. Of these, carbon dioxide (CO₂), which derives from the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, is the most important. Methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions are also substantial contributors to the problem.

2.4 Emission targets

"Annex I Countries" (of which the UK is one) are those that have taken on emission reduction or limitation targets under the Kyoto Protocol. These targets are set relative to a country's GHG emissions in 1990, the base year. They define the amount of greenhouse gases that the countries are allowed to emit in the 'commitment period' of 2008 to 2012. These targets represent either a cut in emissions or a lower rate of increase in emissions.

To achieve its emission targets, the Annex I country is expected to implement initiatives that will reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions. It can also make use of the three 'Kyoto Mechanisms' to assist in reaching its targets.

2.5 The Kyoto mechanisms

The three Kyoto mechanisms are:

1. Joint Implementation (JI): emission reductions which arise from project investments in other countries with their own Kyoto emission targets - other Annex I countries
2. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM): emission reductions arising from project investments in developing countries which don't have their own Kyoto emission targets - non-Annex I countries
3. International Emissions Trading: portions of Annex I country's emission allowances can be bought and sold on an international carbon trading market.

The principle on which the mechanisms are based is that the benefit to the global environment is the same wherever greenhouse gas emission reductions occur, so it is better to reduce emissions where the cost is lowest. The inherent assumption in this principle is that the country hosting the project will directly benefit and that the project should provide sustainable development in the host country.

2.6 Ratification and implementation

The Kyoto Protocol came into force on 16 February 2005 when the condition that it had to be ratified by at least 55 countries, including Annex I countries accounting for at least 55% of this industrialised group's emissions in 1990 was satisfied. 180 nations have ratified the treaty to date.

2.7 Kyoto Commitment

The UK has a legally binding commitment under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions of a basket of six greenhouse gases by 12.5% below 1990 levels over the period 2008-2012. Latest projections show UK emissions should be around 23% below by 2010, around double our commitment.