

THE CUMBRIA CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN AND COMMITMENT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Leader, Councillor Elaine Woodburn

LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy

REPORT AUTHOR: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy

SUMMARY: This report provides details of the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment and outlines our work programme to assess Copeland's strategic position and priorities against the Cumbria Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Members are recommended to

- a) sign up to the principle of the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment;
- b) prioritise resources to enable the delivery of this commitment in Copeland including the use of the annual settlement from government for climate change issues;
- c) use the annual settlement resource through the Area Based Grant of £22,500 per annum (three year period) to establish a temporary strategic post in partnership with Allerdale Borough Council i.e. Climate Change Officer;
- d) re-commit to the need for a Copeland Sustainability Officer;
- e) support our approach to develop the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan to deliver against the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan. This to be the subject of a future Executive Report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The government expects local authorities to lead the national response on climate change.
- 1.2 The Cumbria Strategic Partnership's (CSP) Climate Change Strategy has been produced following extensive consultation in 2008. A draft CSP action plan on climate change has been produced to deliver the strategy. The Cumbria action plan has 146 recommendations across 11 topic areas.
- 1.3 At a meeting of the Cumbrian Local Authority Strategic Board (CLASB) in January 2009, there was agreement that all CSP organisations should consider the draft action plan. In particular, the CSP have developed two Cumbria Climate Change Commitments, one for local

authorities and one for voluntary and other partners. Copeland Borough Council has indicated its support to the Commitment and is looking for formal in principle sign up to this. This report also details progress to consider the Cumbria action plan and how this should best be implemented within Copeland.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 Copeland Borough Council has been a partner in signing up to the Cumbria Local Area Agreement priorities on climate change and therefore needs to play its part in delivering against the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan. The council in formally engaging with the Commitment will continue to be in control of the priority of its resources to deliver Copeland specific actions in support of the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan.
- 2.2 Climate change is a fundamental cross cutting issue affecting the Council services and integral to the Energy Coast Masterplan. The Council has been gathering baseline data and preparing to progress and report on six new national indicators relating to Climate Change. These are:
 - NI 185 CO2 reduction from local authority estates and operations
 - NI 186 per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in local authority areas
 - NI 187 Fuel poverty
 - NI 188 Planning to adapt to climate change
 - NI 189 Flood and coastal erosion
 - NI 194 Reducing NOx and PM10 emissions from local authority estate and operations
- 2.3 The Executive at its meeting in February, 2009, signed up to a Copeland appropriate Nottingham Declaration statement which included specific reference to the low carbon issues within Copeland Borough. Signing up to the principles of the Cumbria Commitment and developing the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan as a local delivery response to the Cumbria Action Plan are the next two steps in the process to expand our current work on climate change.
- 2.4 Currently the work on climate change is being undertaken by existing staff and being incorporated into service plans to deliver against Corporate Plan targets. Two small consultancies are just completing: A strategic assessment of Copeland's position and opportunities for action against the Cumbria Action Plan is due to report in April 2009 along with the first stage of the LDF sustainability appraisal to underpin the issues and options stage ready for consultation in late Spring / Early Summer 2009.
- 2.5 Our capacity is stretched to deliver against the evidence base requirements on national indicators and to engage with the Cumbria

Climate Change action planning. We are also working with both the Energy Saving Trust and the Carbon Trust to enable specialist support and guidance but require dedicated officer support as part of the deal. As we develop the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan to respond to the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment over the next six months it is clear that it will be difficult to deliver against priority actions identified with existing resources. Our Copeland Action Plan will set out implications and additional resource requirements for each action. This will include joint working with partners where we will have a key role in leading, co-ordinating and progressing action.

- 2.6 With the recent Nuclear and Sustainability Adviser vacancy we have taken the opportunity to assess our specific staffing needs to support the climate change and wider sustainability work. Whilst still requiring activity from a range of service teams, specifically through the sustainability officer working group, there is a need for a dedicated Sustainability Officer. Alongside this a strategic post able to work closely with our partner authority as part of the Energy Coast Masterplan delivery and temporary in line with funding and specific work programme is required, that of Climate Change Officer. Both officers will be linked into the LDF stage 2 and 3 sustainability assessment work reducing the need for consultant support and enabling the knowledge and learning to be retained within the authority.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 To respond to the leadership challenge in signing up to and delivering on climate change within Copeland as part of the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment.
- 3.2 To enable increased capacity within existing resource constraints to support our continued progress on climate change and specifically a focused and targeted Copeland Climate Change Action Plan in support of the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Copeland Borough Council is part of the Cumbria Strategic Partnership work on Climate Change and has indicated through this work its wish to play its part on delivering actions. Formally signing up to the principle of the Commitment is a necessary progression from signing up to the Nottingham Declaration.
- 4.2 The expectation of priority actions for Copeland will be provided through the detail in our developing Copeland Climate Change Action Plan. This is being developed with the support of external capacity but will require additional focused staff resources to co-ordinate, progress and deliver specific activities. The resources requested in this report

are seen as the minimum to enable Copeland to respond to the Cumbria climate change commitment challenges.

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

- 5.1 The annual settlement from government for climate change amounts to £22,500 for the next three years. The grant, which is through the Area Based Grant mechanism was confirmed after the Budget papers were prepared, and agreed by Council. This represents additional resources which government expects will be used to support planning and climate change. The application of this grant to fund the temporary Climate Change Officer post would satisfy this requirement.
- 5.2 The 2009/10 budget build process has included resources for the sustainability officer position. This post has been kept vacant in line with a previous decision by executive to look at using this resource to support a proposed graduate development programme.
- 5.3 Signing up to the principle of the Cumbria Commitment will require resource implications to deliver on the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan. The strategic assessment and resulting Copeland action plan will deliver against the Cumbria climate change commitment and set out resource requirements, implications and estimates for the Council. This will be detailed within a future Executive report to gain approval for the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The strategic lead within the Council for this work is with the Head of Development Strategy.
- 6.2 The Sustainability Officer Working Group meets monthly and is advising and monitoring the climate change activity. This will continue to perform an important project team approach to engage all services within the council.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 Signing up to the principle of the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment and the development of the Copeland Climate Change Action Plan will underpin our sustainable approach to promoting prosperity, delivering quality of life for Copeland residents and providing leadership on climate change to enable transformational change across the borough in support of the Energy Coast Masterplan.
- 7.2 This would support and help deliver on key climate change national indicators.

List of Appendices

Background Documents

Cumbria Climate Change Strategy, Action Plan and Commitment

List of Consultees

Leader – Cllr Elaine Woodburn
 Deputy Leader – Cllr Cath Giel.
 Deputy Leader – Cllr Allan Holliday
 Deputy Leader – Cllr George Clements
 Corporate Team.
 John Hughes, Strategic Planning Manager
 Catherine Ponting, PIT

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	Supports
Impact on Sustainability	These actions would have a positive impact on sustainability
Impact on Rural Proofing	Positive
Health and Safety Implications	Supports
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Supports
Children and Young Persons Implications	Supports
Human Rights Act Implications	Supports
Section 151 Officer Comments	No further comments
Monitoring Officer Comments	No comment

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision Yes

The Cumbria Climate Change Commitment

Overwhelming scientific evidence makes it clear that average global temperatures are rising largely due to the ever increasing volume of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity. As a result, extreme weather events are causing widespread environmental damage, taking lives and disrupting social and economic activity around the world.

Without effective and immediate action to significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions climate change will be more difficult and more expensive to deal with than previously thought and will result in unacceptable human, environmental and economic costs.

This Commitment to act on climate change has been developed by the Cumbria Strategic Partnership. It recognises that Cumbria must contribute a proportionate and fair share of the national target to reduce greenhouse gases by a minimum of 80% by 2050.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and planning to adapt to the impacts of climate change signifies a commitment by all the organisations who make up the Cumbria Strategic Partnership and one that will ensure the long term resilience of our communities and outstanding natural environment by moving towards a low carbon society that is sustained by a low carbon economy.

This Commitment recognises the varying capacity of partners to deliver this range of challenging actions and targets particularly at this time of economic recession (March 2009) nonetheless it marks the beginning of Cumbria's ambition to lead international thinking on climate change mitigation and adaptation, to generate and use sustainable energy locally, and encourage low carbon lifestyles in sustainable communities.

We, the undersigned, commit our organisation to implementing the actions set out in the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan assigned to our organisation. Specifically **we commit to:**

1. **Taking immediate action** to draw up a carbon reduction programme, calculate baseline emissions, identify and deliver projects to reduce greenhouse gases arising from energy use in buildings, employee commuting, business travel, fleet transport, waste, procurement and other organisational activity, including outsourced functions, by 25% by 2014 at the latest.
2. **Publicly reporting annual progress** on greenhouse gas reduction from organisational activity and on actions needed to adapt operations to climate change.
3. **Investing in low carbon sources of energy including renewables** and microgeneration technologies to stimulate the local economy and encourage the installation of low carbon technologies in homes, businesses and public buildings throughout Cumbria.
4. **Championing action on climate change** in the Northwest region that demonstrates the use of best practice to the wider public and the business community and helps people and companies to adjust and adapt through a programme of communication and information.
5. **Taking action to build and embed adaptive capacity** and contingency planning within our organisations to better understand the risks, consequences and likely costs of climate variability and the impact of extreme weather events on organisational aims, operations, future policy, and investment programmes.
6. **Producing a risk based adaptation strategy** and action plan to reduce vulnerability to climate change and provide a flexible approach to managing priority risks and exploiting any opportunities presented by changing climatic conditions by 2011.

