

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 1 SEPTEMBER 2009

**EXECUTIVE
15 SEPTEMBER 2009**

PROGRESS UPDATE - ENVIRONMENTAL & CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIES

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report outlines the progress that has been made by the Council in terms of implementing the action plans of both the Environmental and Climate Change Strategies.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Environmental Strategy (2007-2012) was adopted by the Council in 2007. The Strategy sets out how the Council intends to tackle the key environmental challenges facing Exeter and explores how to reduce the city's impact on the global environment. The Strategy also draws together and evaluates the effects of the Council's own policies and practices on the environment, with the aim of reducing environmental damage.
- 2.2 The Climate Change Strategy was adopted by the Council in January 2008. The Strategy sets out key proposals for how the Council, working with others, can take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions within Exeter by 30% by 2020 from 1990 levels. The Strategy covers five policy areas for action: energy, transport, waste, community leadership and adapting to the effects of climate change.
- 2.3 Members will recall that in 2007 we took part in the fifth phase of the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, to calculate and analyse our carbon footprint and explore opportunities to reduce emissions from Council buildings, vehicles and waste production. Our carbon footprint for 2006/07 was estimated as 2,880 tonnes of carbon dioxide - roughly equivalent to the emissions from about 300 homes. To achieve a significant reduction in carbon dioxide emissions the Council produced a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan, which was adopted by the Council in March 2008. This identifies key actions for the Council to take to reduce emissions by 20% by 2013, an ambitious target.

3 PROGRESS MADE

- 3.1 Examples of progress that have been made by the Council in relation to the Environmental Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan during 2008/09 are outlined in Appendix I to this report. These are listed under the main areas highlighted for action in the Strategies:
- Climate Change
 - Energy/water use
 - Waste/recycling
 - Sustainable purchasing
 - Sustainable transport
 - Street cleanliness

- Air/land/water quality
- Countryside/wildlife
- Sustainable construction
- Other

3.2 The current status of projects contained in the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan can be found in Appendix II, whereas progress updates for the Environmental Strategy and Climate Change Strategy are available on the intranet at <http://intranet/environmentalstrategiesupdate>.

4 REVIEW OF ACTION PLANS

4.1 The original action plan for the Climate Change Strategy covered the period to Spring 2009. For this reason a full review of the action plan has been undertaken to set out actions to be undertaken over the next 2 years. This includes further development of the ideas set out in the original plan, as well as the addition of new actions, such as the establishment of a Carbon Club for businesses and the development of a CHP plant for the Cranbrook development. The revised plan is set out in Appendix III of this report.

4.2 Due to the current economic situation it has been necessary to review projects identified in the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan to identify those projects that can be taken forward in the short-term. The implications of this review are that the target of 20% reduction by 2013 will be very difficult to achieve.

5 INDICATORS

5.1 Since 1996, the Council has monitored a set of sustainability indicators to measure progress made in meeting the Council's Local Agenda 21 objectives. Upon the adoption of the Environmental Strategy for Exeter this list of indicators was expanded to include further environmental indicators. A number of Corporate Environmental Performance Indicators are also monitored on an annual basis to assess the Council's environmental management performance. A summary of the progress made in this respect is the subject of a separate report to Scrutiny Committee Community.

5.2 A summary of the results for the environmental and sustainability indicators is provided in Appendix IV. As can be seen, improvements have been made in a number of areas, including the recycling of domestic waste, energy efficiency of housing, standard of street cleanliness and the number of complaints received about dog fouling. The indicators also enable us to identify where further work may be needed in the future, such as addressing the increase in nitrogen dioxide levels observed in some parts of the city.

6 RECOMMENDED

That Scrutiny Committee – Community support and Executive approve:

- (1) the examples of progress made to date be noted;
- (2) that the revised action plan for the Climate Change Strategy be approved for adoption;
- (3) that the Council reaffirms its commitment to manage and continually improve its own sustainability performance;

- (4) that the current status of the Council's Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan is noted;
- (5) that the Council continues to work in partnership with other organisations within the City and with the community to tackle climate change and improve quality of life in the City;
- (6) that progress continues to reported to this Scrutiny Committee - Community on an annual basis.

HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

S:PA/LP/Committee/909SCC7
19.8.09

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

Environmental Strategy
Climate Change Strategy