

**Report of: Strategy & Review Business Manager**

**To: Executive Board**

**Date: 20 February 2006**

**Item No:**

**Title of Report: Oxford Climate Change Action Plan**



### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To gain Executive Board approval for the principles embodied within the Oxford Climate Change Action Plan (OCCAP), and to be a process whereby these principles and those of the Nottingham Declaration (ND) can be converted into effective action by the City Council.


**Key decision:** No

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr John Tanner


**Executive Responsibility:** Environment

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report Approved by:** Janet Banfield, Strategy & Review

 Cllr John Tanner, Environment Portfolio Holder

Lindsay Cane, Legal Services

 Andy Collett, Finance

**Policy Framework:** Supports Oxford Local Plan 2006-2009 priority: "Become a leader in environmental resource management". The Local Plan calls for continued efforts to reduce fuel poverty, promote alternative energy sources and maximise fuel efficiency, while reducing energy use in our business premises and public buildings.

**Recommendations:** Executive Board is asked to:

1. Welcome the production of the OCCAP;
2. Give delegated authority to the leader and CEO to enter into the Nottingham Declaration on behalf of the Council in the event that they deem it an appropriate thing to do;
3. Request the Strategy and Review Business Manager to establish a cross-Council Climate Change Team, and bring back an implementation plan to the April Executive Board that incorporates the requirements of the OCCAP.



4. To request the Climate Change Team to consider the possibility of the City Council joining the 120-strong Energy Cities European network ([www.energie-cities.org](http://www.energie-cities.org)).

## 1 Summary

1. Dr. Rajat Gupta of Oxford Brookes University developed the OCCAP. The report focuses on the measurement, and potential for reduction of, energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Oxford through a series of recommended actions.

Based on feedback received from a number of Business Units, it is recommended that the top three priority actions comprise:

- Energy audits and surveys of non-domestic Council buildings, with the goal of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 25% by 2010;
- Raising awareness and understanding of climate change in Oxford, including encouraging energy conservation and local generation of energy among residents *and* businesses;
- Improving energy efficiency standards of new developments;



## 2 Issues

2. According to the OCCAP, Oxford City as a whole releases almost 1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year into the atmosphere. The City Council cannot tackle global warming on its own, but it can play a part in creating a more sustainable planet for our children and grandchildren.

3. In order for Oxford to become a sustainable city and meet national CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets by 2030, the OCCAP recommends that Oxford City Council should aim to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 15% by 2010. City Council intends to lead by example and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council owned buildings by up to 25% by that date.

4. However, we will not achieve this without a radical change in our approach to climate change:

- Energy efficiency and climate change work across the Council is not well communicated or cohesive;
- Energy efficiency and climate change work are under resourced and lacking coordination;
- There is need for a cross Business Unit implementation team to coordinate actions related to the OCCAP, in line with the Environment Scrutiny recommendations of 12 December 2005; staff time and budget allocation for relevant actions need to be prioritised;
- Although small budgets exist to achieve small gains in energy efficiency, no direct budget allocation for implementation of the OCCAP currently exists.

## Resource implications

5. A preliminary estimate of the resource needs for full implementation of the recommended OCCAP actions over a four-year period could be as much as

£350K. £50K (over 4 years) has been identified from an S&R business unit revenue budget that is available for the delivery of the Action Plan. There are two possibilities for meeting any shortfall and the Climate Change Team once established should explore both possibilities. (1) Additional budgets might be forthcoming through the normal budgetary processes over the 4-year period. (2) It might be possible to align existing revenue budgets from the business units represented on the Climate Change team to achieve OCCAP objectives.

5 **Priorities:**

6. Based on suggested actions within the OCCAP, combined with comments on the OCCAP received from Built Environment and Planning Policy, priority actions for investigation over the next four years include:

6 Years One (2006/7) & Two (2007/08)

- Energy audits and monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for non-domestic Council buildings, with the goal of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 25% by 2010;
  - Energy audits by Oxford Brookes students (no additional cost)
  - Expand energy monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across Council (£25K<sup>1</sup>) from within existing resources
  - Consider implementing energy saving and renewable energy options in Council buildings (£50-150K)
- Raising awareness and understanding of climate change in Oxford, including encouraging energy conservation and local generation of energy among residents and businesses;
  - Work with diverse partners to communicate climate change and encourage energy conservation and renewable energy across Oxford (£10-20K) from within existing resources, as far as possible.
  - Identify most effective ways to reduce energy emissions within Oxford City Council based on outcomes of energy audits and monitoring.
- Improve energy efficiency standards of new developments;
  - Work with Planning to ensure planning guidance promotes high standards of energy efficiency;
- Consider options for appointing a Climate Change Officer to monitor and drive forward implementation of the OCCAP and related climate change and energy initiatives (£45K annually).

*Year One projected cost: £55K*

*Year Two projected cost: £175K*

7 Years Three (2008/09) & Four (2009/2010)

- Increase uptake of low carbon systems among residents and businesses, as well as within City Council

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<sup>1</sup> Figures based on estimates of similar current expenditures.

- Identify finance to continue with phase two of communications campaign to encourage renewable energy options with added focus on the transport sector in Oxford (£10-15K)
- Transforming Oxford into a sustainable city
  - This is a long term (5 year) goal and ties in with the City Council objective to “Become a leader in sustainable resource management”. The aim, based on a recommendation from the OCCAP, would be to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the city overall by 15% by 2010.

*Year Three projected cost: £60K*

*Year Four projected cost: £60K*

8 7. Where actions cannot be met within existing resources, implementation of actions will be subject to budget bids in future years.

9 **What is needed**

8. In approving the report, City Council is demonstrating a commitment to tackling climate change. In April, Executive Board will be presented with an implementation plan for the OCCAP that outlines actions within existing resources and identifies future actions for which additional resources may be required. The City Council should aim to focus its existing resources, both in personnel and revenue, to implement the OCCAP. Annual reductions in the Council’s own CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions and those of the city as a whole should be a key performance target for the Council.

10 **Name and contact details of author:** Bronwen Geddes,  
[bgeddes@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:bgeddes@oxford.gov.uk), 01865 252709

11 **Appendices:**

- Executive Summary “Oxford Climate Change Action Plan”, Dr. Rajat Gupta, Oxford Brookes University
- Nottingham Declaration

12 **Background papers:**

- “Oxford Climate Change Action Plan”, Dr. Rajat Gupta, Oxford Brookes University
- “Natural Resources Impact Analysis Supplementary Planning Document”, Planning Policy, Oxford City Council

