

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

To: Executive Board

Date: 21st April 2008 **Item No:**

Title of Report : Climate Change Impacts - Approval of Reports.



Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To invite the Executive Board to resolve that every report to the Board on matters that are Board functions, and reports to Area Committees, shall require a *Climate Change Approval* from Environmental Development.

Key decision: No

Risk: Low – assuming that the climate change implications of the recommended decisions are properly reflected within each respective report



This new approach will ensure that climate change implications are considered before significant decisions are made by EB or Area Committees. This will assist the Board in making informed decisions and will enable the climate change targets to be achieved.



Portfolio Holder: Councillor Van Zyl



Scrutiny Responsibility: Environment



Board(s) affected: All

Report Approved by: Portfolio Holder, Interim Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services, Financial & Asset Management



Policy Framework: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions associated with our own buildings and operations by at least 25% by 2010 (on a 2005 baseline) 3% year on year after 2010.



Recommendation(s): That the Executive Board resolves that every report to the Board on matters that are Board functions, and reports to Area Committees, shall require a *Climate Change Approval* from Environmental Development



Introduction

1. The cutting of carbon emissions is a key priority for all local authorities. The UK Government has identified the local authority sector as key to delivering carbon reductions across the UK in line with its national commitments. The City Council has rightly placed climate change as one of its core priorities and has committed to a target of reducing CO₂ by 25% by 2010/11 and 3% year on year CO₂ savings thereafter.

Achieving Targets

2. The City Council intends to become an exemplar low carbon Council and will push the boundaries of carbon management best practice. To this end, it will seek to set an example of what is possible within its own sphere of operation and assets. Elsewhere on this agenda, is the City Council's Carbon Management Strategy & Implementation Plan (SIP), which sets out more of the detail of how the targets will be achieved.
3. Full engagement of the entire City Council organisation will be key to the achievement of targets. There needs to be a high level of awareness in all levels and parts of the organisation if climate change objectives are to be properly prioritized as part of ongoing business. The Council will need to work smarter, thinking about tomorrow today.

Committee Processes

4. Council has already decided via a motion that it believes that information on climate change impacts should be available to Councillors before decisions are made. Council has resolved that that every report to Councillors on matters that are Council functions should contain a paragraph on the climate change implications of the recommended decision. Council has also invited the Executive Board to make a resolution along similar lines.
5. To this end, an active process needs to be standardised by which all proposals coming before the Executive Board and Area Committees will be required to obtain a *Climate Change Approval* from Environmental Development, which will require reports to:
 - (a) be assessed for their climate change implications,
 - (b) be set in the context of any alternative solutions,
 - (c) identify opportunities for grant assistance (eg., Salix funding), and
 - (d) be factored into the SIP monitoring regime.

Financial Implications

6. The Stern Review of the economics of climate change clearly concluded that the cost of inaction will be far higher than the cost of tackling climate change now. If life cycle costing is properly

considered, then the low carbon fix will generally be the cheaper option. The cost of not achieving significant carbon reductions will be unaffordable in the longer term.

Recommendation

7. That the Executive Board resolves that every report to the Board on matters that are Board functions, and reports to Area Committees, shall require a *Climate Change Approval* from Environmental Development.

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Background papers: None.

