

To: City Executive Board

Date: 31 July 2013

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

Title of Report: LOW EMISSION STRATEGY

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report:	To agree the adoption of the Low Emission Strategy
Key decision?	No
Executive lead member:	Councillor John Tanner
Policy Framework:	Cleaner Greener Oxford
Recommendation:	To approve the Low Emission Strategy for adoption

Appendix 1: Low Emission Strategy

Appendix 2: Risk Register

Appendix 3: Equalities impacts assessment

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council is taking large strides in developing programmes to respond to climate change by significantly reducing its carbon footprint for its own estate of buildings, vehicles and operations.
2. In the first phase to end March 2012, - *Getting Our House in Order* - measures were implemented to reduce carbon emissions by the target 28% relative to the 2005/06 baseline.
3. In the second phase - *Carbon at the Heart of Everything We Do* – the target is to implement measures for 5% year on year reduction in carbon emissions. This was achieved in the first year of this phase – 2012/13.
4. However, carbon emissions from Oxford City Council estate and operations are only about 1% of those from the city as a whole. It is in

this context that the council established Low Carbon Oxford to bring together key local pathfinder organisations, and set an ambitious target for city-wide carbon emissions reduction of 40% by 2020 (relative to 2005 baseline)¹.

5. It is recognised that in order to make further strides in combatting climate change across the city, it is necessary to consider activities that the Council is in a position to influence city-wide.
6. This report describes the Low Emission Strategy which offers an integrated approach to climate change and air quality management, promoting a consideration of how policies from a number of disciplines can all contribute to a sustainable approach to development of the city.
7. The Oxford Economic Growth Strategy 2013 recognises that growth needs to be well managed, in order to ensure it is sustainable and well balanced.
8. The Low Emission Strategy (LES) provides a framework for integrating all of the Council's activities to reduce carbon and air quality related emissions across the City, in order to maximise the co-benefits of tackling climate change and air quality in an integrated and co-ordinated way.

Low Emission Strategy

9. Emissions in Oxford come from three main sectors:
 - Domestic activity: emissions from domestic or residential dwellings
 - Non-domestic activity: emissions from commercial, industrial, business and public sector premises
 - Transport: all transport activity on the road and rail network in the City
10. As a City Council strategy the LES will focus on the measures and policies the City Council is responsible for or where we have clear influence.
11. The range of influence of the Council is categorised into three main groups:
 - City Council own estate: Measures to reduce emissions from the Council own estate defined as the council's own operational buildings, council owned housing and the Council's vehicle fleet;

¹ Sustainability Strategy for Oxford (2011-2020), Oxford City Council, 2011. Agreed by CEB 7th December 2011 and Council 19th December 2011

- Direct influence: Measures that will have a direct impact on the emissions of others through regulations, planning policies and procurement practices;
- Wider influence: Through partnerships, advice and leadership.

12. The scope of activities is shown in the diagram below.

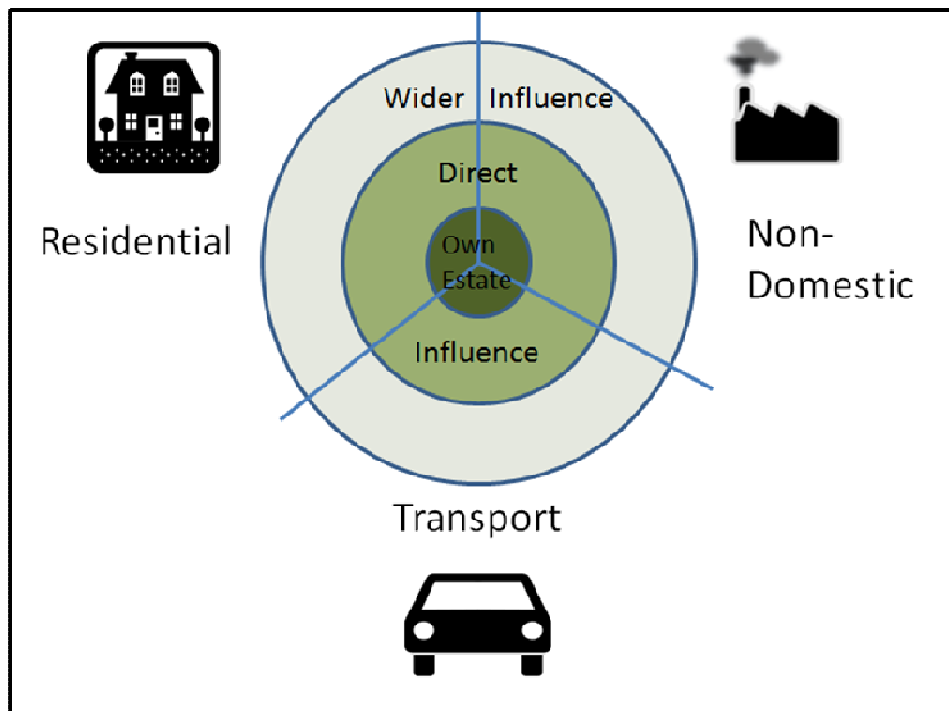


Figure 1: Scope of activities with the LES

LES Objectives and Targets

13. The objectives of the LES reflect the aspirations of the Sustainability Strategy, as well as national targets and obligations with respect to climate change and air quality. The goal of the LES is :*”To provide an integrated approach to the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and particulate matter in Oxford.”*

14. The aspiration for the Low Emissions Strategy is to achieve:

40% reduction in the CO₂ emissions footprint
50% reduction in the NO_x and PM emissions footprint of the City from 2005 to 2020

Implementation of LES Action Plan measures

15. The implementation of measures will take place through existing programmes and policies owned by specific departments in the Council.

16. Therefore the LES will pull together and track existing activity and help formulate new measures, within existing policies and programmes. The benefit of this approach is that the delivery of measures lies within the programmes and policies of departments responsible for their delivery.

Priority Actions - Residential

17. Priority R1: Improve the average energy efficiency of private sector homes. The target is to improve the energy efficiency of private sector homes by 25% by 2020.
18. Priority R2: Develop a programme of community renewable energy schemes. The target is for a 20% reduction in residential CO₂ emission through the use of renewable energy.
19. Priority R3: Ensure all Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and that the average rating is improved to the average rating of C. From 2016 the Council will have powers to require energy efficiency improvements.

Priority Actions – Non-Domestic

20. Priority N1: Continued annual reduction in Low Carbon Oxford pathfinder's CO₂ emissions. Pathfinders² have committed themselves to at least, an annual 3% reduction in their carbon footprint which would save 5000-6000 tonnes CO₂ per year by 2020.
21. Priority N2: Improve the energy efficiency of Oxford City Council leased estate. EPC assessments are a legal requirement from 2018, but we will explore options of bringing forward roll out to 2015 and generate improvements to ensure an average EPC rating of "C" by 2020.
22. Priority N3: Planning for low carbon developments. The Council will seek to strengthen its activity in this area in particular through:
- continuing to update planning policy and supporting documents which require low carbon and energy efficient development;
 - supporting qualifying developments to supply a minimum of 20% of their energy needs from renewables or low-carbon technology.
 - promoting the use of district heating and other larger scale renewable energy schemes.

² Signatories include Oxford City Council, University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, Oxfordshire County Council, Mini Plant Oxford, Unipart, Stagecoach, Marks & Spencer, B&Q, Buildbase, Serco, a2dominion, 2degrees, Blake Laphorn, Thames Valley Police, Grosvenor Estates, Oxford Student Hubs and the Hub Commercial Venture (parent company of the Turl Street Kitchens) and community groups such as Low Carbon West Oxford.

23. Priority N4: Showing leadership with continued reduction of the Council's own carbon footprint, through an annual improvement target of 5% year on year.

Priority Actions – Transport

24. Priority T1: Production of a City wide sustainable travel plan. We will set an improvement target for this measure in terms of a reduction in car vehicle-kilometres (vkm) in the city, with complementary targets on walking and cycling trips. These targets will be developed as part of the overall travel plan. However, an indicative target of a 10% reduction in car vkm by 2020 is suggested.

25. Priority T2: Emission reduction measures for the freight sector. The City Council will aim to work closely with the County Council to develop a set of measures to reduce emissions from the freight sector, including:

- A freight consolidation centre aimed at reducing freight traffic by 10% by 2020.
- A freight Low Emission Zone (LEZ) building on the successful work done on the bus LEZ.

26. Priority T3: Promote zero emission vehicles in the light duty fleet. The aim is to facilitate a 10% uptake of electric vehicles in the light duty sector, in both the business and private fleets by 2020.

Risk

27. The Low Emission Strategy sit within the Council's Sustainability Strategy which has already been risk assessed. The risk assessment for the sustainability strategy has been updated within Appendix 2 to reflect the links to the LES.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

28. The LES contain objectives and targets to reduce emissions from a range of the Councils' programmes that are designed to reduce impacts on climate and air pollution.

Equalities Impact

29. There are no likely equality impacts and an equalities impact assessment is attached as Appendix 3.

Financial Implications

30. There are no immediate direct financial implications of the LES, as the LES reflects programmes that are funded within existing budgets. However there is likely to be an extension of programmes to deliver further carbon and emissions reductions in later years, which will all be subject to individual approvals to extend or develop new programmes.

Legal Implications

31. There is no current statutory requirement for a Low Emission Strategy.

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List of background papers:

Version number: V2