

**To:** Council

**Date:** 29 September 2014

**Report of:** Head of Environmental Development

**Title of Report: Covenant of Mayors**

# Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report**: To agree to sign the Covenant of Mayors

Report approved by:

**Executive lead member:** Councillor John Tanner, Board Member Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport

**Policy Framework:** The Corporate Plan/Sustainability Strategy

**Recommendation:**

1. Council is asked to support the Covenant of Mayors and authorise the Lord Mayor to sign the Covenant adhesion form.

2. Delegate officers to complete online application.

**Background**

1. The [Covenant of MayorsCovenant of MayorsThe Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities in the fight against climate change. It is based on a voluntary commitment by signatories to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Covenant-of-Mayors-+.html)[2](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Covenant-of-Mayors-+.html) [reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Covenant-of-Mayors-+.html) is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in their municipality. By committing to the Covenant [signatoriesSignatoriesSignatories represent cities, with different size from small villages to major metropolitan areas such as London or Paris, that have signed the Covenant of Mayors on a voluntary manner and are committed to implement sustainable energy policies to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Signatories,63-+.html)[2](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Signatories,63-+.html) [reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Signatories,63-+.html) aim to meet aim to meet and exceed the European Union 20% CO2 reduction objective by 2020.
2. In March 2007 the EU’s leaders endorsed an integrated approach to climate and energy policy that aims to combat climate change and increase the EU’s energy security while strengthening its competitiveness. To kick-start this process, the EU Heads of State and Government set a series of demanding climate and energy targets to be met by 2020, known as the "20-20-20" targets. These are:

* A reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions of at least 20% below 1990 levels
* 20% of EU energy consumption to come from renewable resources
* A 20% reduction in primary energy use compared with projected levels, to be achieved by improving energy efficiency.

1. After the adoption, in 2008, of the [EU Climate and Energy Package](http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/index_en.htm), the [European CommissionEuropean CommissionThe European Commission is the executive body of the European Union. The body is responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the Union’s treaties and the general day-to-day running of the Union. With the Covenant of Mayors initiative, the European Commission - DG Energy endorses and supports the efforts deployed by local authorities in the implementation of sustainable energy policies.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-European-Commission-+.html) launched the [Covenant of MayorsCovenant of MayorsThe Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities in the fight against climate change. It is based on a voluntary commitment by signatories to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO2 reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/../+-Covenant-of-Mayors-+.html) to endorse and support the efforts deployed by local authorities in the implementation of sustainable energy policies.
2. The [Covenant of MayorsCovenant of MayorsThe Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities in the fight against climate change. It is based on a voluntary commitment by signatories to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO2 reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/+-Covenant-of-Mayors-+.html) is open to all local authorities democratically constituted with elected representatives, whatever their size and whatever the stage of implementation of their energy and climate policies.

**Benefits**

1. Oxford City Council has an excellent track record on carbon reduction across its own estate and operations. The Council has reduced its own emissions through installed measures by 25% since 2008/09. In addition the Council set up the Low Carbon Oxford partnership which has a range of Pathfinders from across the public and private sectors including the Universities, BMW-Mini and Oxfam. Low Carbon Oxford pathfinders have signed up to a voluntary commitment for a 40% reduction in emissions by 2020 which meets and exceeds the Covenant of Mayors target.
2. The City Council is lead partner in the European funded programme ‘OxFutures’ which aims to mobilise and leverage investment in renewable energy in the city region which also contributes to reduction in CO2 emissions.
3. Signature of the Covenant of Mayors would make a further public statement refreshing commitment to CO2 reduction in the City. It would further reinforce and focus Low Carbon Oxford to ensure CO2 reductions across the City. Importantly it allows the City to qualify for funding available to Covenant [signatoriesSignatoriesSignatories represent cities, with different size from small villages to major metropolitan areas such as London or Paris, that have signed the Covenant of Mayors on a voluntary manner and are committed to implement sustainable energy policies to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO2 reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/+-Signatories,63-+.html).

**Actions**

1. Signatories to the Covenant of Mayors undertake to complete baseline data collection on CO2 emissions, create administrative structures and submit a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP). The process is shown in Figure 1.
2. The Sustainable Energy Action Plan shows how the Covenant signatory will reach its commitment by 2020. It uses the results of the Baseline Emission Inventory to identify the targets of action and opportunities for reaching the local authority’s CO2 reduction target. It defines reduction measures, together with time frames and assigned responsibilities, which translate the long-term strategy into action. Signatories commit themselves to submitting their SEAPs within the year following adhesion.
3. Earlier this year Councillor Van Coulter attended the Climate Alliance conference in Frankfurt winning free consultancy for the City Council for the development and implementation of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan. This work was commenced earlier this month.

Figure 1: Process towards 20% reduction in CO2 emissions.

1. In Oxford we have initial data and the potential to work with Low Carbon Oxford Pathfinders to develop this work. Given the level of support for the first ever Low Carbon Oxford week there is strong evidence to support that becoming a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors would be extremely positive for the City.
2. Other authorities that have signed the Covenant of Mayors include Brighton, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Southampton and Milton Keynes.

**Process**

1. To join the Covenant of Mayors the Council needs to agree the recommendations in this paper at Full Council which will authorise the Lord Mayor to sign the Adhesion Form (Annex 1). There is no deadline for the process.

**Legal Implications**

1. This is a voluntary process with no legal implications.

**Financial Implications**

1. There is no cost to join the Covenant of Mayors. Other resourcing issues will be covered within in existing work areas. Membership will allow the City Council to qualify and access further European funding opportunities.

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**List of background papers:**

**Annex 1: Adhesion Form**

Further information can be found on the web site link below:

<http://www.eumayors.eu>

**Version number: 1**

**Annex 1**

