

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 adherence form.
2. Delegate officers to complete online application.

Background

1. The Covenant of Mayors 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 Covenants signatories 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.

3. After the adoption, in 2008, of the EU Climate and Energy Package, the European Commission launched the Covenant of Mayors to endorse and support the efforts deployed by local authorities in the implementation of sustainable energy policies.
4. The Covenant of Mayors 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

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 signatories.

Actions

8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.

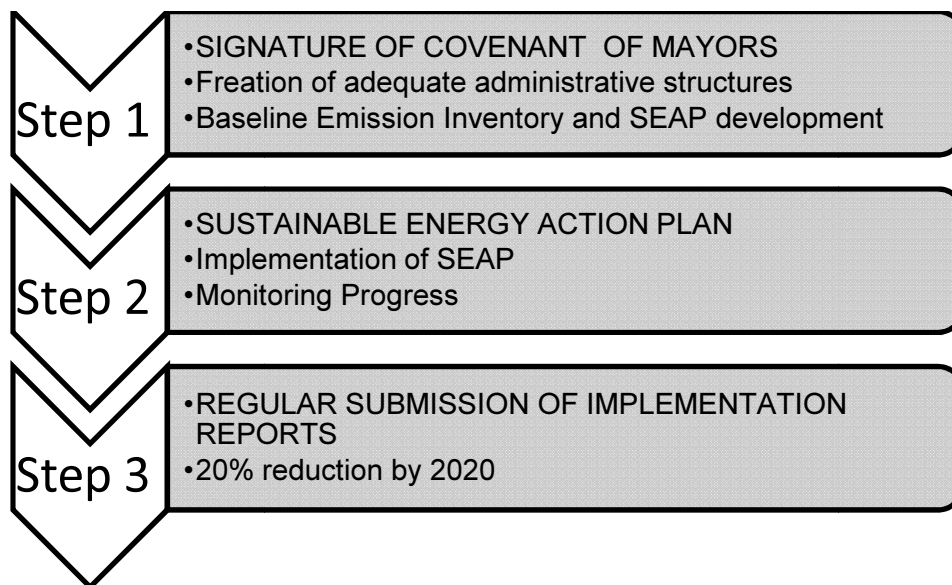


Figure 1: Process towards 20% reduction in CO2 emissions.

11. 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.
12. Other authorities that have signed the Covenant of Mayors include Brighton, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Southampton and Milton Keynes.

Process

13. 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

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

Financial Implications

15. 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



I, [Name of the Mayor or other authorised representative], [Mayor or Job title] of [Name of the city/town/region/territorial unit] inform you that the [City Council or equivalent decision-making body] decided at the meeting on [date] to mandate [me / legal representative: Mayor, President,...] to sign up to the Covenant of Mayors, in full knowledge of all commitments, in particular:

- to **go beyond the objectives set by the EU for 2020**, reducing the CO₂ emissions in our respective territories by at least 20%;
- to **submit a Sustainable Energy Action Plan** including a baseline emission inventory which outlines how the objectives will be reached, within one year of the abovementioned date;
- to **submit an implementation report** at least every second year following the submission of the Action Plan for evaluation, monitoring and verification purposes;
- to **organise Energy Days**, in co-operation with the European Commission and with other stakeholders, allowing citizens to benefit directly from the opportunities and advantages offered by a more intelligent use of energy, and to regularly inform the local media on developments concerning the action plan;
- to **attend and contribute to the annual EU Conference of Mayors** for a Sustainable Energy Europe.

[Name and complete address of the city/town/region/territorial unit]

[Name, e-mail and phone number of the contact person]

[Date],

SIGNATURE

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