

To: City Executive Board
Council

Date: 15 Dec 2016
6 Feb 2017

Report of: Executive Director for Community Services

Title of Report: Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) for Oxford

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek approval for the publication and submission of Oxford's sustainable energy action plan ('Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020') to the EU Covenant of Mayors scheme.
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Cllr John Tanner, Climate Change and Cleaner Greener Oxford
Corporate Priority:	Vibrant, Sustainable Economy & Cleaner, Greener Oxford.
Policy Framework:	Low Emissions Strategy.
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the 'Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020' report and the accompanying Sustainable Energy Action Plan to the European Commission's Covenant of Mayors initiative. 2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Community Services to amend and agree the final text and design; and then submit the Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020' report and the accompanying Sustainable Energy Action Plan to the European Commission's Covenant of Mayors initiative. 3. Recommend that Council notes that submission of the Sustainable Energy Action Plan to the Covenant of Mayors fulfils the Council's decision of 20 July 2015 to sign up to the Compact of Mayors as these two initiatives are merging into a single global initiative. 	

Appendices

Appendix 1	'Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020'
Appendix 2	Appendix A to 'Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020': Sustainable Energy Action Plan

Introduction and background

1. The Covenant of Mayors is a climate change mitigation initiative founded in Europe. Signatory cities pledge to reduce their emissions by at least 20% by 2020 and 40% by 2030.
2. Oxford City Council signed up to the Covenant of Mayors in September 2014. Signing up requires that the council set a target for 2020 and submit a sustainable energy action plan (SEAP).
3. In 2011 Oxford City Council set a target of reducing the city's emissions by 40% by 2020 on a 2005 baseline. This target assumed the standard UK Government method of carbon accounting which includes grid decarbonisation. The covenant of Mayors methodology focuses on actions that a local authority has control over and so doesn't include grid decarbonisation. Taking this into account the council's 2020 target is equivalent to 25% in the Covenant of Mayors framework.
4. This report details the work to develop a SEAP and an accompanying public summary of our findings: 'Low Carbon Oxford: A Route Map to 2020'.
5. The geographical scope of the SEAP is the city boundary. It covers 'scope 1 and 2' emissions: this includes emissions associated with the gas and electricity use and emissions associated with transport. It is reported as "carbon equivalent emissions" or tCO_{2e} which means that it accounts for all the major greenhouse gas emissions, not just carbon dioxide.

The Compact of Mayors

6. At its 20th July 2015 meeting the Council agreed to adopt a motion asking the Council Leader to sign up for the Compact and commit to engaging with the Compact's climate change management programme.
7. The Covenant of Mayors and Compact of Mayors initiatives announced in 2016 a global alliance to form the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The submission of a sustainable energy action plan to the Covenant of Mayors therefore fulfils Council's decision to sign up to both programmes.

Stakeholder engagement and development of the Route Map

8. Development of the Route Map and the associated stakeholder engagement has been carried out through the forum of Low Carbon Oxford: a partnership of over 40 organisations around the city that have committed to reduce their emissions by 3% per annum and to work together to achieve greater emissions savings. The engagement activity was not limited to those organisations that are formally members of the partnership.

9. The process included:

- Expert consultancy from Aether Ltd to analyse energy data and impacts of known policies and actions. This provided baseline emissions data and projections of likely emissions to 2020.
- Stakeholder workshops with circa 50 city experts on energy efficiency, transport, renewable energy and waste in order to validate the assumptions of the analysis and add any missing actions and data. Stakeholders were also engaged on the strategic interaction of the Route Map with other policies and decision making forums.
- Revisions to the Route Map and SEAP based on further analysis.

Key messages

10. The key findings of the Route Map are:

- We have made significant progress towards achieving the target of reducing our emissions by 40% by 2020 on a 2005 baseline.
- Taking into account grid decarbonisation: by 2012, Oxford had already secured a reduction of around 9% in absolute emissions.
- The actions we identified in our Low Emissions Strategy have been reviewed to assess their impact since 2012 and revise our estimates of how much they are likely to save from now until 2020. We have also engaged organisations operating in the city and included in our projections actions that we and others intend to take.
- The analysis predicts that the actions taken since 2012 and planned before 2020 will deliver a 38.5% reduction. However some of the identified actions, for example relating to domestic energy efficiency, rely on national policy measures and we will have to make a concerted effort to ensure they are secured. In addition further actions yet to be identified will be needed to the remaining 1.5% savings to meet the target.
- The equivalent figures which will be used in the EU submission and target (i.e. excluding grid decarbonisation) are: by 2012, Oxford had already secured a reduction of around 12% in absolute emissions. Which is equal to around 18% per capita emissions reductions.

Financial implications

11. The report itself has no direct spending implications. It has been delivered as part of the Low Carbon Oxford programme management and any follow up activity will be carried out by that programme.

12. The actions required to reduce carbon emissions do require significant investment and the report, and the stakeholder engagement undertaken in developing it has marshalled support for city-wide partnership working to find that investment. For example through identifying opportunities and low cost activities that would prepare the ground for potential funding bids in the future.

13. By having an approved SEAP the council would ordinarily become eligible to apply for additional channels of EU funding. While this may be less relevant in the context

of Brexit, as the refreshed initiative has a global scope, there may still be advantages in attracting grant funding by having a SEAP.

Legal issues

14. There are no legal implications of this report.

Level of risk

15. The main risks associated with the publication and submission of this report are as follows:

Risk/opportunity	Comment
Delay to submission a SEAP to the Covenant of Mayors	The CoM has recently announced a merger with the global Compact of Mayors. They have stated that they will revise their methodology in January 2017 and so delaying submission beyond this calendar year may mean that our current work is no longer compatible with their framework.
Stakeholders are disappointed that the Route Map is not more ambitious/contains the things they would like to see happen	The Route Map is a practical tool to help the council and city stakeholders understand how effective our action has been to date and what our priorities should be going forwards. It identifies actions for which there is a significant commitment (e.g. an approved carbon management plan or feasibility study) and likelihood of finance and resource along with national policy measures we may be able to access. It is more like a 'status report' than a target setting document. Where it specifically identifies sectors in which our confidence in making reductions are lower (e.g. domestic energy efficiency and renewables), it is a call to action. The energy of stakeholders could be directed towards these issues to help find solutions.

Equalities impact

16. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not necessary for this work which covers city-wide carbon emissions and seeks to assess the status of on-going and committed action on emissions reduction rather than propose new actions or programmes.

Report author	Mairi Brookes
Job title	Sustainable City Team Manager
Service area or department	Community Services
Telephone	01865 252212
e-mail	mbrookes@oxford.gov.uk