

**To:** City Executive Board and Council

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**Report of:** Head of Environmental Development

**Title of Report:** Sustainability Strategy for Oxford 2011-2020

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To consider the outcome of consultation on the Sustainability Strategy for Oxford and to agree the adoption of the Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

**Key decision:** Yes

**Executive lead member:** Cllr John Tanner

**Policy Framework:** Cleaner Greener Oxford

**Recommendation(s):** That the City Executive Board recommends to Council the adoption of the Sustainability Strategy.

That Council adopts the Sustainability Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework

Appendices to report:

Appendix 1 - Sustainability Strategy for Oxford 2011-20

Appendix 2 - Risk Register

Appendix 3 - Equalities Impact Assessment

## **Introduction**

1. In February 2010 CEB approved a Sustainability Strategy for the City Council for public consultation. The Consultation was carried out via the council's web site over a period of one month. This Strategy document is the revised Sustainability Strategy and has been amended taking into consideration the following:

- Comments from the consultation – these were broadly supportive of the Strategy, the main area for discussion was the level of ambition being too low, in particular around influencing the low carbon agenda across the whole City. This has been addressed principally through the Low Carbon Oxford initiative.
- A change in National Government and associated reporting requirements including national indicators and audit requirements.
- Changes to key pieces of legislation e.g. Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC)
- Aligning ambition with available resources both internal and external to the Council
- Emerging programmes within the Council which will delivery this Strategy.

### **Content of the Strategy**

2. The Strategy sets out the overarching framework which for the first time addresses all material issues across the environmental sustainability agenda. It forms the foundation for addressing each issue through more detailed action plans and programmes.
3. It recognises that in common with most cities, Oxford currently has a unsustainable ecological footprint and that actions are needed to adjust the footprint to a sustainable level. Accordingly, the Strategy focuses upon climate change, energy use, transport, business, procurement, water, flooding, land and waste.

### **Building on Achievements**

4. The City Council has a track record of achievements in this area and examples include:
  - An active internal carbon management programme ‘Getting Our House in Order’ which has resulted in the installation of measures to reduce the Council’s carbon footprint by 25% against 2005/06 levels over the past 3 years.
  - Being the first local authority to achieve the BSI Energy Reduction Verification Standard.
  - Securing a £400k Salix fund to finance the installation of energy efficiency measures across the Council’s estate
  - Award winning staff engagement and training initiatives
  - Participation in the Carbon Reduction Commitment
  - An active adaptation programme
  - Launch of ‘Low Carbon Oxford’ to lead the facilitation of collaboration across the City to reduce carbon emissions from commercial, domestic and transport based activities.
  - Securing and investing in the community circa £400k of Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) funding to support the

creation and ongoing development of low carbon community groups.

- Securing a further £30k of DECC funding to support local organisations in creating a business case for renewables
- Leading the 'Green Deal Plus' working group to ensure that residents across Oxford benefit from lower energy bills and key issues such as fuel poverty are tackled.
- Improving the domestic energy efficiency in Council housing to a SAP rating in excess of 70.
- Achieving the Governments Home Energy Conservation Act requirement of a 30% improvement in energy efficiency by 2008, two years ahead of the requirement.
- Installing solar thermal systems in a number of council owned sheltered homes.
- Requiring all new building projects greater than 10 units (or 2000m<sup>2</sup>) to have 20% of energy provided through on-site generation using renewable and low carbon technologies.

### **Conclusion**

5. This Strategy has set out how Oxford City Council will address key sustainability issues over the next nine years. The Strategy seeks to build on areas which are well established and replicate the approach in new and emerging areas.

### **Risk**

6. Since the strategy sets out work that is currently in the Carbon and Natural Resources and associated programmes e.g the Carbon Management Plan, these existing pieces of work have already been risk assessed and where appropriate these risks are reflected in the appended Risk Register. New and emerging areas of work will be risk assessed as part of the project management process.

### **Equality**

7. There are no likely equality impacts and an equalities impact assessment is attached as Appendix 2.

### **Financial Implications**

8. The strategy has been written taking into account the current budget for FY 2011/12 and the indicative budget for the following four years.

### **Legal Implications**

9. The strategy assumes that as a minimum the Council's statutory and legal obligations under key legislation such as Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) will continue to be met. It presents the opportunity to explore the Council's powers in enforcing elements of pending

legislation such as the forthcoming Energy Bill. This will be monitored in line with all emerging legislation as part of an ongoing process.

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