

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 September 2011</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rotherham Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

**5. Summary**

Rotherham Council, as the lead organisation, has developed an Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (enclosed) in consultation with Local Strategic Partners. The report was sanctioned by the Sustainability Partnership on 20 July 2011.

**6. Recommendations**

**Cabinet is asked to endorse the Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

Climate Change is one of the most important issues facing the United Kingdom and the rest of the World. Addressing it is a key national and local priority, and central Government is encouraging local authorities such as Rotherham to take the lead and play a crucial role in addressing climate change.

On 9 March 2011 Secretary of State for the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Vice-Chair of the Local Government Association, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) designed to acknowledge the pivotal role local authorities have in tackling climate change.

The MoU sets out how DECC and the Local Government (LG) Group will work together to take firm action to:

- reduce the carbon emissions from their own estate and operations
- reduce carbon emissions from homes, businesses and transport infrastructure, creating more, appropriate renewable energy generation, using council influence and powers; and
- participate in national carbon reduction initiatives at the local level, particularly the roll out of the Green Deal, smart metering and renewable energy deployment.

The MoU sets out the partnership approach to helping meet climate change mitigation targets (Climate Change Act 2008) and related objectives (underpinned by local targets) including:

- 80% greenhouse gas emissions reduction target in the Climate Change Act 2008 by 2050 (34% by 2020) against a 1990 baseline
- The fuel poverty targets arising from the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000
- The target to supply 15% of the UK's energy consumption from renewable energy by 2020 as set out in the 2009 Renewable Energy Directive.

In November 2007, Rotherham Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, through which a public commitment was made to develop a Climate Change Action Plan. The declaration is now under review with the Nottingham Declaration Partnership with a view to redefining its role, purpose and structure to better support local authorities and partners under the new arrangements Government, local government and the members of the partnership are making.

The development of this Strategy has been led by the Sustainability Partnership and supported by the Council's Sustainable Development Officers Group. It is proposed that the Sustainability Partnership will take responsibility for the ongoing monitoring of delivery within the partnership and the Sustainable Development Officers Group will performance manage the strategy from a RMBC delivery perspective.

The Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will set the direction for managing, combating and preparing for climate change across Rotherham. It not only considers the challenges associated with climate change but also the opportunities it presents. Following consultation and researching best practice from other areas, 10 key areas of action have been identified:

1. Strategic Planning and Policy
2. Built and Natural Environment
3. Emergency Planning and Recovery, Social Care and Health
4. Energy and Water
5. Engagement, Education And Awareness Raising
6. Housing
7. Procurement and Resources
8. Regeneration and Business
9. Transport
10. Waste and Recycling

## **8. Finance**

There is no cost directly associated with the development of this strategy. However, as climate change continues to climb the agenda of central government, more resources will be required in the future to deal effectively with new duties and responsibilities expected to be given to Local Authorities. There are also opportunities to adopt sustainable procurement practices and construction methods; reduce resource use; reduce transport and save money.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The main risk and uncertainty is ensuring that Rotherham Council and Rotherham Partnership work jointly to continue to improve environmental performance and meet increasingly strict government targets.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will assist in delivering the objectives contributing to Climate Change Act 2008, MoU and the refreshed Nottingham Declaration.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Contributions from a wide range of organisations and individuals have influenced the development of the Strategy and Action Plan. A workshop took place in January 2009 with a wide range of stakeholders and presentations have been given to a number of groups and organisations.

A more detailed consultation took place with partners to enable greater partnership working on environment and climate change issues. New structures and revised priorities have changed throughout this period and the strategy has been amended to reflect the changes.

The LSP considers sustainable development as a cross cutting theme across the new themes and boards (economic; crime and disorder; health and wellbeing). It has been agreed that the strategy will be circulated to members of the LSP, and that subject to the agreement of the Partnership Board, their Chair endorses the strategy on their behalf. The Board will be open to receive issues which it was felt had an LSP dimension.

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