

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 2014

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S LOW CARBON AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

(Contact: Louise Croot Tel: (01993) 861349)

(The Committee decision on this matter will be a recommendation to Cabinet)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) Low Carbon and Environmental Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That, the Low Carbon and Environmental Plan, attached as Appendix A, is recommended to Cabinet for approval.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. WODC's Climate Change Policy 2008-12 set out the Council's key actions to tackle climate change. An annual Climate Change Action Plan was developed for each climate change policy area with tasks assigned to staff. Many actions had been achieved or were close to completion by 31 March 2013.
- 3.2. The WODC Low Carbon and Environment Plan, attached as an appendix to this report, will replace the Climate Change Policy 2008-2012. This is a public facing document detailing key actions the Council will undertake and it will be reviewed and performance monitored each year and updated where necessary. An annual Carbon Management Plan will be produced internally to take forward the actions, which can be embedded in Service Plans and individual staff appraisals.
- 3.3. The WODC Low Carbon and Environmental Plan was developed with experts from the National Energy Foundation (NEF) and has been through a consultation process with staff including two facilitated workshops and the Portfolio holder-led Climate Change Board.
- 3.4. The plan includes: details of our performance over the last 4 years, an update on national policies and initiatives and an action plan that sets out WODC's aims and actions for the environment and to reduce carbon emissions.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

The Committee could choose not to support the Plan or suggest amendments.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Some Actions set out in the Plan will require funding, for example, energy efficiency measures for the Council's own buildings and operations, however individual business cases will be prepared for these and brought before Cabinet in the future to seek funding allocations.

6. RISKS

- 6.1. The Council does not have a current policy to supersede the Climate Change Policy 2008-12, which has now expired.
- 6.2. The Council has made a public declaration to support Climate Local Oxfordshire therefore a relevant and current policy is necessary to help achieve the 3% carbon emission reduction target. There is therefore a reputational risk to the Council, if plans aren't put in place to deliver this target.
- 6.3. There is a risk that actions necessary to reduce carbon usage and environmental impact will present a financial burden to the Council however initial estimates suggest that strong business cases can be brought forward which will deliver both financial and carbon savings to the Council.

7. REASONS

- 7.1. Corporate aim to 'protect and enhance the environment of West Oxfordshire and maintain the district as a clean, beautiful place with low levels of crime and nuisance'.
- 7.2. Reducing the Council's own impact on climate change and supporting local residents, businesses and groups in reducing their impact and adapting to climate change.

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Background Papers:
None