

Cabinet – 8 November 2006

The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change

Portfolio: Councillor Rachel Walker – Environment and Street Pride
Councillor Adrian Andrew – Regeneration and Enterprise

Service: Environmental Regeneration

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

Summary of report

Combating climate change is recognised as a major issue for us all. Recently, the Local Government Association (LGA) called for all councils to sign the new Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This voluntary declaration is attached at Appendix A. To date, over 130 local authorities have made public their commitment to tackling climate change by signing this declaration and the government is seeking to have 200 Local Authorities committed to the preparation of a Climate Change Action Plan by the end of the year, and to double this number again within the next two years. By signing the Declaration, the Council will be acknowledging its role in providing leadership for its communities in helping to address this critical challenge.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) agree to the Council making a public commitment to tackling climate change, by signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.
- (2) authorise officers to develop a council-wide strategy on climate change and a Climate Change Action Plan by December 2008 and to ensure that all Service Areas within the Council are integrating climate change actions within their areas of responsibility.

Resource and legal considerations

Funding for the preparation of a Climate Change Action Plan has been accommodated within Walsall's Local Area Agreement with relevant staff in post to oversee the management of the Plan for the first two years. Additional funding for surveys and for the ongoing monitoring of environmental data will be identified within the Action Plan and these costs will be considered against other competing demands for Council funding at that time, or found from other sources of external funding.

The adoption of a Climate Change Action Plan will impact positively on Council resources by encouraging, for example, recycling and more efficient energy use. It will also, as part of the procurement transformation project, help the Council to develop a “green procurement” policy with the adoption of a written procedure supplier appraisal assessment.

Citizen impact

Through the development of a Climate Change Action Plan, it will be necessary to fully engage with Walsall’s communities and businesses and to ensure that they are able to identify their environmental impacts and able to receive advice and support from the council and the government in minimising these impacts. This could include changes in lifestyle, travel and transport, energy consumption and efficiency, disposal of waste and methods used, water, etc.

Community safety

The overall aim is to improve quality of life for all within the borough through reductions in the levels of land and air pollution, water contamination, waste and nuisance.

Environmental impact

Preparation of a Climate Change Action Plan will require the Council and partners to assess the risks associated with climate change and the implications for Council services and Walsall’s communities, of climate change impacts, and to adapt accordingly to these risks.

The Council will encourage all sectors in our local community to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action. A greater connection between cause (the aspect) and effect (the impact) of what we do as an authority, and the wider community will need to be made. Some examples of impacts which are natural and everyday occurrences are:

- use of electricity contributes to air pollution (carbon dioxide)
- use of paper contributes to depletion of natural resources (wood)
- use of heating contributes to depletion of finite natural resources (fossil fuels)
- use of IT consumables (toner, ink cartridges) to landfill) contributes to land pollution
- use of transportation contributes to local air and noise pollution as well as loss of biodiversity (petrol/diesel), CO2 emissions (global warming).

Performance and risk management issues

Annual CPA reporting now includes a new key line of enquiry (KLOE 5.2.16) relating to the environment. The Council will need to demonstrate that it is **“effectively addressing significant local and global environmental issues and actively communicating environmental issues to the wider community.”** To address some

of these issues, the environment is now included as a project within the corporate transformation programme with the aim of delivering changes in Council practices such as reducing the use of paper and potentially rationalising building accommodation needs through more flexible working arrangements.

The signing of the Declaration on Climate Change is entirely consistent with the Council's Vision 2008 and its wider ambitions to become a leading council in the field of environmental sustainability by 2021.

Equality implications

A Climate Change Action Plan will have to take into account the needs of the elderly, children and young people, vulnerable people ie people with disabilities, those on low income or the unemployed.

Resources are already in place and will pay for interpretation and translation. This is very important in terms of delivering savings on energy consumption as a result of changes in lifestyle, travel and transportation, etc.

Consultation

Consultation on the proposed Climate Change Action Plan will be a key requirement of the plan adoption process. The Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership, Environment Forum, the Economic Forum Local Neighbourhood Partnerships, Environment Agency and other key environmental partners will be fully engaged with the process. Also, within the community some of the various community umbrella groups (ie Multi-Faith forum, Walsall Voluntary Action, UMO, Disability Forum, Youth Opinions Unite (YOU), Over 50s Forum) will also need to be consulted.

Vision 2008

The signing of the Nottingham Declaration would fully support the council's environmental objectives as set out in Vision 2008, in particular:

Vision priority 1 – ensure a clean and green borough. By developing a coherent approach to reducing carbon emissions and adapting to changes in climate as a result, the Council could benefit not just in terms of saving energy (and money) but also an improvement in overall environmental performance, enhancing the living conditions of local residents and protecting local people from threats posed by our changing climate.

Background papers

- The Nottingham Declaration.
- **Leading the way:** how local authorities can meet the challenge of climate change. This is a Local Government Association report written in collaboration with the Energy Saving Trust and the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Johnson', with a vertical line to its right.

Tim Johnson
Executive Director
23 October 2006

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Walker', enclosed in a yellow rectangular box.

Cllr Rachel Walker
Portfolio Holder
30 October 2006

The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change

We acknowledge that

- Evidence shows that climate change is occurring.
- Climate change will continue to have far reaching effects on the UK's people and places, economy, society and environment.

We welcome the

- Social, economic and environmental benefits which come from combating climate change.
- Emissions targets agreed by central government and the programme for delivering change, as set out in the UK Climate Change Programme.
- Opportunity for local government to lead the response at a local level, encouraging and helping local residents, local businesses and other organisations - to reduce their energy costs, to reduce congestion, to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to improve the local environment and to deal with fuel poverty in our communities.
- Endorsement of this declaration by central government.

We commit our Council from this date _____ to

- Work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010.
- Participate in local and regional networks for support.
- Within the next two years develop plans with our partners and local communities to progressively address the causes and the impacts of climate change, according to our local priorities, securing maximum benefit for our communities.
- Publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own authority's operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services.
- Assess the risk associated with climate change and the implications for our services and our communities of climate change impacts and adapt accordingly.
- Encourage all sectors in our local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- Monitor the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the results.

Council

acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate on our city/county/borough/district.

		<i>Ellist Morley</i>	<i>Kate Andrews</i>
Leader of the Council	Chief Executive	Minister of State Climate Change and Environment	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister