

PAPER NO. 3

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 22nd APRIL, 2013

Meeting: Executive
Date: 22nd April 2013
Subject: Climate Local
Report of: Norman Proudfoot , Assistant Director-Community Services
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ackerley
Status: Decision

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise the Executive that Climate Local has replaced the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, which the Council signed on 22 January 2007, and to recommend that the Council renews its commitment to taking action on climate change by becoming a signatory to Climate Local.

2 Recommendations:

- 2.1 **That Executive approves signing up to the Climate Local commitment as set out in Appendix A**
2.2 **That a Climate Local Action Plan be developed and brought back to a future Executive meeting for approval.**

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council is already a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change
- 3.2 Becoming a signatory to Climate Local will renew the Council's commitment to action on Climate Change.
- 3.3 Through the Leicestershire Together Partnership: Environment Board, all partner councils have been encouraged to sign up to the initiative as detailed in the minute 47 of the Leicestershire Environment on Wednesday 28 November 2012.

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 The Climate Local commitment highlights the important role that council's have in helping its residents and businesses to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy

bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting the natural environment.

- 4.2 An important part of the Climate Local initiative is the community leadership role that the council can play in encouraging residents and businesses to become more energy efficient.

5 Key Facts

- 5.1 Climate Local is a refreshed version of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change which the Council signed in 2007.

- 5.2 Climate Local results from the Local Government Group (LGG) and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and acknowledges the pivotal role of local authorities in reducing carbon emissions. It sets out how DECC and the LG Group propose to work together to help and encourage all local authorities to take firm actions to reduce their own carbon emissions, reduce emissions in their area and participate in national carbon reduction initiatives.

- 5.3 The initiative plans to drive, inspire and support councils' efforts both to reduce carbon emissions and also improve their resilience to the effects of a changing climate and extreme weather.

- 5.4 Climate Local will provide web-based resources and it would be expected that the Council will report progress to enable other authorities to benefit from our experiences.

- 5.5 By signing up to Climate Local the Council would declare its on going commitment to reducing carbon emissions and responding to changes in the climate within our own operations, services and the local community. It will enable the Authority to seize opportunities and benefits accruing from climate action savings from lower energy consumption, generating income from renewable energy, investment in green industries and a reduction in fuel poverty. By becoming adaptable to the changing climate there is less risk from flooding and a greater awareness of the impacts of extreme weather conditions. The local natural environment will also be better protected.

- 5.6 By signing Climate Local the Council will commit to:

- Setting out specific, measurable and challenging actions we will take locally to further reduce carbon emissions and to manage climate impacts at a local level as a community leader, service provider and estate manager
- involving the local community by publishing our commitments, actions and progress for scrutiny
- Sharing the learning from our experiences and achievements with other councils
- Regularly refresh our commitments and actions to ensure they are current

and continue to reflect local priorities

6 Legal Issues

- 6.1 Climate Local Declaration will not be a legally binding document and no legal liability will accrue against the Council for a failure to meet any of the commitments within it. However both DEFRA and DECC have stated that they will be noting whether councils sign up and how they take this forward.
- 6.2 There is currently a duty to produce a Greenhouse Gas Report and a Home Energy Conservation Act report which the action plan will support.

7 Resource Issues

- 7.1 Finance related to any actions will be brought forward when the action plan is considered.
- 7.2 The majority of resource costs are met from the various services across the Council which will contribute to achieving the outcomes which is within current budgets. The forthcoming addition to the staffing structure of an Environmental Co-ordinators post will in part assist in developing and delivering the action plan, through collaboration with a whole range of council services .

8 Equality Impact Assessment Implications/Outcomes

- 8.1 There are no Equality Impact implications from this report.

9 Impact on the Organisation

- 9.1 Reducing carbon emissions and managing climate impacts at a local level will involve the co ordination and delivery of many council services. In particular planning, strategic and private sector housing and community partnerships will have key contributions to make in developing and delivering an appropriate action plan.

10 Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 Not applicable

11. Carbon Management Implications

- 11.1 Signing the Climate Local and delivering the action plan shows the Council's approach to carbon reduction and climate resilience.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 As Climate Local replaces the Nottingham Declaration there is a reputation risk through a lack of commitment to climate change

13 Consultation

13.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Portfolio Holder who is supportive of this approach. Wider consultation with other councils in the county has been undertaken through Leicestershire Together Environment Board.

14 Options Considered

14.1 Not signing up to Climate Local will risk reputational damage through lack of commitment to the climate change agenda.

14.2 The Council could opt out of Climate Local and publish its own Climate Change Action Plan independently of any national body. This would have no benefit to the Council and could prevent it from influencing policy development and accessing support from Climate Local.

15 Background Papers

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Environment Board held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday 28 November 2012.

Previous report(s): None

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: Y

Ward Members Notified: N

Appendices:

A. Climate Local