

CABINET

7 December 2011

FINAL REPORT OF THE CITY COUNCIL'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE ITS CARBON
FOOTPRINT INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
CABINET

REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Contact Officer: Colin Veal 01962 848438 email: cveal@winchester.gov.uk

RECENT REFERENCES:

[OS23](#) - The City Council's Efforts To Reduce Its Carbon Footprint Informal Scrutiny Group - Final Report – 14 November 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its meeting held on 14 November 2011, The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations of the City Council's Efforts to Reduce its Carbon Footprint Informal Scrutiny Group (Report OS23 refers). The Committee agreed to refer the recommendations to Cabinet for implementation and these are as set out below.

Report OS23 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report and Cabinet should refer to its content as background to its consideration of the recommendations of the Group.

Cabinet should also refer to the relevant extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2011 which is set out in Appendix 2 and supports the recommendations of the ISG.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the following be agreed (and recommendations 9 – 14 be referred to Personnel Committee):

1. While recognising that ISGs are Task and Finish Groups, because there is a need for early action by the City Council if carbon reduction targets for 2012 and 2015 are to be met, an additional meeting of this ISG should be held in April 2012 to take stock of the progress being made on the matters raised in this report.

Leadership and Review

2. The Leader and Chief Executive need to take particular responsibility for ensuring that the City Council achieves its carbon reduction commitments. At least twice a year the Leader should attend the regular meetings of the Climate Change Programme Board and, at least twice a year progress in reducing the Council's carbon footprint should be reported to, and discussed by the Corporate Management Team. Additional measures needed to achieve the agreed targets should be adopted as and when needed.

The Council's Estate

3. Priority for investment in the Council's Estate should be given to major refurbishment of the River Park Leisure Centre and of the City Offices. For each of these two properties two approaches are needed: (a) a programme of 'quick wins', i.e energy saving measures that can be introduced relatively quickly and at relatively low cost – having regard to an initial list prepared by the Energy Manager; and (b) a major capital programme based on a 'business case'.
4. In the case of the River Park Leisure Centre that officers investigate the options for ensuring the costs of investment in energy saving measures should be fairly borne between the Council and DC Leisure
5. As a matter of urgency, the Council should re-visit the costs and benefits of investing in solar PV panels for Council house roofs; and explore possible new sources of borrowing (other than through the HRA).
6. That Corporate Management Team be asked to consider making the Energy Manager's post permanent.
7. The City Council should create an energy saving ring fenced budget £30,000 as the start of a 'revolving fund' for energy saving measures – any savings made as a result of initial investments to be invested in further energy saving measures.
8. With a view to increasing the City Council's capacity for making long term energy and environmental investments, comparable to those made in Woking over the last decade, and in the light of current plans for Combined heat and power/District Heating schemes in Winchester, the Council should continue to work with the County Council to establish an Energy Services Company (ESCO)

Transport

9. With effect from 1 April 2012, a new and attractive pattern of incentives to be introduced for staff who share cars, walk, cycle and use public transport. These to include interest free loans for rail season tickets (and, if possible, discounts on season tickets negotiated with SWT).
10. Except for Essential Car Users, registered disabled, and those who regularly car share, no free parking to be provided for staff, other than at Park and Ride sites. This should come into effect on 1 April 2012.
11. While recognising the importance of appropriate retention and recruitment policies, the City Council should plan for – and negotiate - a steep and steady reduction in the number of Council posts attracting an ‘Essential Car User’ contribution. The aim, by 2015, should be to reduce the number of ‘Essential Car Users’ to a minimum number of posts that genuinely meet a stringent definition, with appropriate arrangements for other ‘essential car use’ to maintain and enhance a fully effective and efficient Council. (All existing ‘Essential Car Users’ who do not qualify or who wish voluntarily to resign from the ‘Essential Car User’ category to be compensated; this will come into effect at an appropriate date suiting their current car rental leasing agreement).
12. As and when leases on cars come up for renewal in 2012 and thereafter, to reduce the emissions limit on lease cars from 140g to 120g.
13. With effect from 1 April 2012, car expenses on business travel should not normally be payable to staff (except for disabled staff or when heavy equipment is being carried) to locations within the urban area of Winchester (the six wards represented on the Winchester Town Forum). Unless there are compelling reasons to use a car, staff will be encouraged to use public transport or to walk or cycle (including motor-assisted cycles where needed) for short journeys.
14. In the light of the additional incentives referred to in recommendation 9 above, the Head of Organisational Development and the Head of Access and Infrastructure to lead an officer working group:
 - to revisit the City Council’s Travel Plan and to set significantly more ambitious targets for ‘modal shift’ including a reduction in ‘single occupancy’ car trips for the journey to work of 10% a year for each of the next three years: 2012, 2013 and 2014.
 - to conduct a Business Process Review with the aim of promoting smarter travel, encouraging more home working as appropriate, minimizing ‘sole occupancy’ car use as a mode of business travel, promoting greater car sharing and encouraging more walking and cycling.

The working group to report to the Personnel Committee before the end of the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:1. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

The City Council has a priority to reduce its own Carbon Footprint within not only the Community Strategy but also within the High Quality Environment Change Plans. The work also supports the Climate Change Programme within those plans.

2. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The resource implications of some of the recommendations have not yet been quantified and this will be done as part of considering their implementation if agreed.

The recommendation to establish a £30,000 revolving fund to procure energy saving measures would be a one off growth bid and as such will need to be considered alongside any bids as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process.

Whilst the post of Energy Manager is currently a temporary post for 12 months it is funded from existing budgets within the Estates Team. The proposal to make this permanent would therefore not have additional budget implications and some of the cost would be offset by utility bills savings.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The main risk associated with this report are in terms of the reputation of the City Council if they are not implemented because it has committed to the priorities within the Community Strategy which include the reduction of greenhouse gases and carbon emissions. In terms of reducing carbon emissions across the District then individuals and organisations look to the City Council to show leadership in addressing these issues.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Files held in the Democratic Services Division.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Relevant extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2011

Appendix 2 - *is attached for Cabinet Members and Group Leaders only, with a copy available in the Members' Library and on-line via the following link:*

[OS23](#) - The City Council's Efforts To Reduce Its Carbon Footprint Informal Scrutiny Group - Final Report – 14 November 2011

Extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2011

1. **THE CITY COUNCIL'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE ITS CARBON FOOTPRINT
INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP – FINAL REPORT**

[\(Report OS23 refers\)](#)

As Chairman of the Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG), Councillor Hutchison, introduced the Report and advised that the ISG's recommendations were timely so as to influence the Council's budget process. He also drew attention to the wider benefits from reducing carbon emissions. These were listed at the four bullet points on the first page of Appendix One.

The Chief Executive referred to the Recommendations relating to transport (9 -14). The Council was already changing its transport policies with regard to its staff, but was it was necessary to achieve a balance with running the Council in an efficient and effective way.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Councillor Hutchison and the other ISG members and officers for their work in the scrutiny investigation.

RESOLVED:

1. **While recognising that ISGs are Task and Finish Groups, because there is a need for early action by the City Council if carbon reduction targets for 2012 and 2015 are to be met, an additional meeting of this ISG should be held in April 2012 to take stock of the progress being made on the matters raised in this report.**

That Cabinet be recommended to approve:

2. **The Leader and Chief Executive need to take particular responsibility for ensuring that the City Council achieves its carbon reduction commitments. At least twice a year the Leader should attend the regular meetings of the Climate Change Programme Board and, at least twice a year progress in reducing the Council's carbon footprint should be reported to, and discussed by the Corporate Management Team. Additional measures needed to achieve the agreed targets should be adopted as and when needed.**

3. **Priority for investment in the Council's Estate should be given to major refurbishment of the River Park Leisure Centre and of the City Offices. For each of these two properties two approaches are needed: (a) a programme of 'quick wins', i.e energy saving measures that can be introduced relatively quickly and at relatively low cost – having regard to an initial list prepared by the Energy Manager; and (b) a major capital programme based on a 'business case'.**

4. In the case of the River Park Leisure Centre that officers investigate the options for ensuring the costs of investment in energy saving measures should be fairly borne between the Council and DC Leisure.

5. As a matter of urgency, the Council should re-visit the costs and benefits of investing in solar PV panels for Council house roofs; and explore possible new sources of borrowing (other than through the HRA).

6. That Corporate Management Team be asked to consider making the Energy Manager's post permanent.

7. The City Council should create an energy saving ring fenced budget £30,000 as the start of a 'revolving fund' for energy saving measures – any savings made as a result of initial investments to be invested in further energy saving measures.

8. With a view to increasing the City Council's capacity for making long term energy and environmental investments, comparable to those made in Woking over the last decade, and in the light of current plans for Combined heat and power/District Heating schemes in Winchester, the Council should continue to work with the County Council to establish an Energy Services Company (ESCO).

That Personnel Committee be recommended to approve:

9. With effect from 1 April 2012, a new and attractive pattern of incentives to be introduced for staff who share cars, walk, cycle and use public transport. These to include interest free loans for rail season tickets (and, if possible, discounts on season tickets negotiated with SWT).

10. Except for Essential Car Users, registered disabled, and those who regularly car share, no free parking to be provided for staff, other than at Park and Ride sites. This should come into effect on 1 April 2012.

11. While recognising the importance of appropriate retention and recruitment policies, the City Council should plan for – and negotiate - a steep and steady reduction in the number of Council posts attracting an 'Essential Car User' contribution. The aim, by 2015, should be to reduce the number of 'Essential Car Users' to a minimum number of posts that genuinely meet a stringent definition, with appropriate arrangements for other 'essential car use' to maintain and enhance a fully effective and efficient Council. (All existing 'Essential Car Users' who do not qualify or who wish voluntarily to resign from the 'Essential Car User' category to be compensated; this will come into effect at an appropriate date suiting their current car rental leasing agreement).

12. As and when leases on cars come up for renewal in 2012 and thereafter, to reduce the emissions limit on lease cars from 140g to 120g.

13. With effect from 1 April 2012, car expenses on business travel should not normally be payable to staff (except for disabled staff or when heavy equipment is being carried) to locations within the urban area of Winchester (the six wards represented on the Winchester Town Forum). Unless there are compelling reasons to use a car, staff will be encouraged to use public transport or to walk or cycle (including motor-assisted cycles where needed) for short journeys.

14. In the light of the additional incentives referred to in recommendation 9 above, the Head of Organisational Development and the Head of Access and Infrastructure to lead an officer working group:

- to revisit the City Council's Travel Plan and to set significantly more ambitious targets for 'modal shift' including a reduction in 'single occupancy' car trips for the journey to work of 10% a year for each of the next three years: 2012, 2013 and 2014.**
- to conduct a Business Process Review with the aim of promoting smarter travel, encouraging more home working as appropriate, minimizing 'sole occupancy' car use as a mode of business travel, promoting greater car sharing and encouraging more walking and cycling.**

and that the working group to report to the Personnel Committee before the end of the 2011/12 Municipal Year.