

CABINET RESPONSE TO COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CARBON AND ENERGY POLICY FROM 2015 TO 2019

(considered by COSC on 29 January 2015)

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

That:

- (a) the Cabinet reviews the targets set out in the Carbon and Energy Policy to ensure they are appropriately ambitious, and then adopts the policy.
- (b) the Council carries out a staff awareness campaign to highlight the costs and CO₂ emissions associated with current energy use and encourage the efficient use of energy.

RESPONSE:

(a) Ambition of the target

Further consideration has been given to the ambition of the target for a 10% net reduction in emissions.

The Council faces a number of challenges in delivering absolute emissions reductions including growth pressures from schools expansion to meet additional needs, increasing IT requirements; whilst at the same time facing reductions in government funding and the need to ensure acceptable rates of return on investment to the council. Further to this, the Council is changing its approach to financing energy efficiency measures in schools and in the future more schools will need to take on debt financing to deliver carbon savings (with associated cost savings funding the repayments) and subsequently delivering savings.

A 10% net emissions reduction is a challenging target for the Council in this context. Progress against the target will be subject to detailed review in Autumn 2016, considering emissions reductions in 2014/15 and 2015/16 since the 2013/14 baseline year, with a view to setting a higher target for the remaining period, if this can continue to deliver both carbon and cost benefit to the County Council.

(b) Staff awareness campaign

Work is now underway to launch and implement a staff awareness campaign to ensure we are using energy as efficiently as possible. This has included research into best practice in other organisations and assessing the opportunities for staff actions to influence energy consumption and the scale of benefit of behaviour change, in relation to the wide range of building structures and management systems in operation across the council's estate.

A campaign will be launched in spring 2015, involving the use of S-net and other communications channels, as appropriate to the target audience.

Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
24 March 2015

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