



**Executive
15 March 2010**

**Report from the Director of
Policy and Regeneration**

Wards affected:
ALL

Climate Change Task Group

Forward Plan Ref: PRU-09/10-15

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny task group investigation into climate change in Brent, focussing on a review of the council's Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (CMS&IP).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive are asked to note the recommendations and the service department response.
- 2.2 That members of the task group be thanked for their work.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 At its meeting on 10 October 2007 the Overview and Scrutiny committee commissioned a review to consider climate change in Brent. The task group included the following members:

Councillor John Detre (who stepped down from the task group on appointment to the Executive)
Councillor Derek Jackson
Councillor Harshadbhai Patel (Chair)
Councillor Harbhajan Singh

The aims of the task group were to:

- Monitor the implementation of the CMS&IP and review individual projects to investigate progress with work and challenging poor performance.
- Identify and examine other opportunities for the council to reduce its co2 emissions further to consider if more ambitious targets could be achieved in a cost effective manner.

Findings of the Task Group

- 3.2 Climate change has been deemed the biggest environmental threat facing the modern world and Brent council is taking firm action to deal with this challenge. In 2001 Brent signed up to the Nottingham declaration on climate change, sustainability is a strong theme running through the council's corporate strategy. The council also recently agreed its first Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.3 During the course of this review, the councils plans to tackle climate change has been moving at a fast pace. Brent has agreed its first borough wide climate change strategy and developed a more appropriate way of measuring carbon emissions through setting a new baseline using more accurate data. In this respect, this work became a review of Brent's approach to carbon management. Many of the early emerging findings of the task group have already been included in the Climate Change Strategy such as developing sustainable schools forums and working with local builders to raise awareness about sustainability measures.
- 3.4 Overall the task group found that the council has made some headway in tackling climate change, however conflicting priorities and lack of resources has affected progress. In concluding the review the task group were concerned about the progress of our approach to reducing our carbon emissions but were cautiously optimistic about the range of measures in place to take this work forward.

4.0 After considering all the evidence the task group developed the following recommendations:

Recommendation One

Brent to develop its own sustainability targets within the Building Schools for the Future Programme (when selected) to ensure that they are ambitious and fit within our local circumstances.

Recommendation Two

Use Mosaic to develop a targeted approach to communicating with residents on climate change issues.

Recommendation Three

A stronger role for climate change awareness within Area Forums

Recommendation Four

Develop a role for a councillor to become a climate change champion

Recommendation Five

Provide training for members to become Climate Change Champions

Recommendation Six

That each report presented to the council's Executive contains a paragraph outlining its environmental impact, in order to mainstream climate change mitigation in service delivery

5.0 Service Department Response

Recommendation	Service Response	Officer Responsible
develop its own sustainability within the Building Schools for the Programme (when selected) to that they are ambitious and fit our local circumstances	The BSF team in conjunction with the Environmental Projects and Policy Team will develop sustainability targets for BSF	BSF Project Director
Use Mosaic to develop a targeted approach to communicating with residents on climate change issues.	The GIS team and PRU will assist in using MOSAIC and a new project using social media to engage communities in climate change issues.	Jeff Bartley
A stronger role for climate change awareness within Area Forums	The Environmental Projects and Policy Team will work with all Area Forums to increase awareness.	Jeff Bartley
Develop a role for a councillor to become a climate change champion	The Environmental Projects and Policy Team will work with councillors to become climate change champions.	The Environmental Projects and Policy Team
Provide training for members to become Climate Change Champions.	The Environmental Projects and Policy Team will provide training for members.	The Environmental Projects and Policy Team
"That each report presented to the council's Executive contains a paragraph outlining its environmental impact, in order to mainstream climate change mitigation in service delivery".	The Director of Policy and Regeneration is reviewing the template for the Executive meeting reports.	Director of Policy and Regeneration

6.0 Legal Implications

The Council has power under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 to do anything which it considers likely to promote the environmental well-being of its area. In exercising this power the Council is required to have regard to its Community Strategy. Furthermore the Council has the power under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.

6.2 Brent's Community Strategy 2006-10 includes the statement under, 'Our Vision', 'Brent will be a prosperous and lively borough full of opportunity and welcoming to all, a place that will thrive for generations to come, whose future will be determined by local people'. One of its themes is to be, 'A Green Place' and included under this theme is an aspiration to, '... minimise our contribution to climate change.' It is therefore considered that the Community Strategy supports the exercise of the Council's powers under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000.

6.3 The Government has a duty under the Climate Change Act 2008 to reduce carbon emissions in the U.K. by 80% by 2050 (as compared to 1990). Under section 62 of the Act the Secretary of State may direct a reporting authority (which would include a local authority) to prepare a report containing any of the following—

(a) an assessment of the current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to the authority's functions;

(b) a statement of the authority's proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise of its functions and the time-scales for introducing those proposals and policies;

(c) an assessment of the progress made by the authority towards implementing the proposals and policies set out in its previous reports.

Under section 61 the secretary of State may issue guidance to reporting authorities about—

(a) assessing the current and predicted impact of climate change in relation to the authorities' functions,

(b) preparing proposals and policies for adapting to climate change in the exercise of their functions, and

(c) co-operating with other reporting authorities for that purpose

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The task group's recommendations have been reviewed, and apart from recommendation 5 relating to training for Members can be implemented within existing workplans and budgets.

7.2 A number of providers undertake specialised training for Councillors. This could cost up to £5k, depending on the extent of the package supplied. No specific budget provision exists for this, but it could be considered within the priorities for overall Member Training.

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