



Executive
18th June 2007

**Report from the Directors of
Environment and Culture and
Finance and Corporate Resources**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Carbon Management in Brent – Achieving the Target

Forward Plan Ref: E&C - 07/08 – 001

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report introduces the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (CMS&IP) to the Executive for approval. The CMS&IP details how the Council intends to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by 2011 as committed to in the Corporate Strategy. In addition, support is sought from Members in both ensuring the success of this plan and steering Brent's wider response to climate change through the set up of a Climate Change Task Group at Member level.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Executive are recommended to:

- Approve the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (Appendix A) and to note that the co-operation of schools is required.
- Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Climate Change Task Group as discussed in paragraph 3.5.5.
- Agree to receive an annual progress report.
- Note the decisions taken by the Corporate Management Team in February 2007.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (CMS&IP) outlines how Brent Council will reduce its emissions of carbon dioxide by 20% by 2011 as committed to in the Corporate Strategy. This report introduces the CMS&IP to the Executive, its scope, ownership, finance and management. The full document is included as appendix A. The Executive are recommended to approve the CMS&IP.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 The CMS&IP is solely focused on Brent Council's own emissions of carbon dioxide, making it an internal document. A carbon management strategy differs from a climate change strategy in that it does not attempt to address adaptation to climate change, but focuses on the management of emissions of green house gasses, specifically carbon dioxide.

3.2.2 To develop this CMS&IP Brent Council participated in the fourth phase of the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. The programme is highly competitive with vigorous vetting and qualification criteria. Brent, by qualifying for, and fulfilling the programme, is now in a good position to take advantage of a variety of opportunities to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, such as the Local Authority Energy Efficiency Fund (see CMS&IP sections 3.2 and 4.1.3 and section 4.2 of this report). In addition, Brent is advanced in its position to respond to the alterations to performance framework (see section 3.3.1).

3.2.3 On average, Local Authorities participating in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme stated a 20% reduction in emissions as their target.

3.2.4 In February 2007 a report was presented to the Corporate Management Team introducing the CMS&IP. The report concentrates on the role of the Corporate Management Team in ensuring the successful delivery of the CMS&IP to achieve its objectives and targets, and makes a number of recommendations which the Corporate Management Team have endorsed (Appendix B).

3.3 Key Drivers

3.3.1 There is a growing body of policy and legislation driving local government to act to address climate change (see CMS&IP section 1.3.2). These include:

- anticipated changes to the Audit Commission's performance framework to include a greater focus on environmental performance from 2008. Early indications are that three new performance indicators for Local Authorities on climate change will be introduced; one to cover the authorities own emissions, one to cover the emissions of the borough as a whole, and one to cover adaptation to climate change;
- the developing energy performance commitment, a proposed emissions trading scheme for the large non-energy intensive sector;

- the recent local government white paper, setting out the role to be played by Local Authorities in addressing climate change; and
- the energy performance of buildings directive requiring the efficiency of public buildings, including schools, to be displayed publicly in the form of an energy performance certificate.

3.3.2 In addition to this, rising energy prices can not be ignored. Brent's annual energy bill is currently £5.8 million, this includes council buildings, schools, street lighting, and water costs. If we fail to act to manage and reduce the Council's carbon dioxide emissions this is projected to rise to over £7m annually by 2011 (see CMS&IP section 1.4.1).

3.3.3 Brent Council is also voluntarily committed to reducing and managing its carbon emissions through the Corporate Environmental Policy and signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change (see CMS&IP section 1.5).

3.3.4 The case for immediate action to mitigate and adapt to climate change is building. The UK Climate Impacts Programme, a partnership between the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs and the University of Oxford, has analysed and outlined the major challenges facing local authority services from climate change (see Appendix C). A number of service areas have had to address these challenges already.

3.4 Carbon Management Projects

3.4.1 The carbon management strategy will be delivered through an implementation plan of carbon management and reduction projects. The current list of 37 projects cover buildings, transport, waste, street lighting, water, management, policy, training, and raising awareness to facilitate behaviour change.

3.4.2 The target is to reduce the council's 2005-2006 emissions baseline by 20% by 2011. This equates to a 13,000 tonne reduction in emissions based on our best emissions inventory to date, as information improves this may change.

3.4.3 The implementation plan is a live document. The projects will be signed off at a senior level and new projects must take their place to ensure that the target is achieved. Currently, if all carbon management and reduction projects are delivered and perform to their projected potential, the implementation plan will achieve up to 91 percent of the required emissions reduction to meet the target.

3.4.4 This leaves two areas of risk. The first is that the projects do not perform to their potential, and the second is that projects to make up the outstanding 9 percent carbon dioxide emissions savings are not found. To overcome this risk and be certain that we can achieve our target, projects to reduce carbon dioxide emissions well above the outstanding 9 percent will be needed.

3.5 Project Ownership

- 3.5.1 All areas of the council are responsible for the emissions of carbon dioxide, whether it be through using a PC to lighting the streets. Therefore, all areas of the Council have the ability to take action to reduce emissions.
- 3.5.2 To achieve the emissions reduction target, each department, or service unit, will need to measure and monitor its emissions of carbon dioxide and devise, fund, and deliver projects to reduce emissions.
- 3.5.4 This work will be coordinated by the Carbon Management Steering Group and Environmental Projects and Policy Team, but the emphasis is on the producer of the emissions taking responsibility for their reduction which is the most effective and efficient approach (see appendix B for the recommendations agreed by the Corporate Management Team).
- 3.5.5 In addition, ownership for the CMS&IP at Member level would provide the incentive, confidence, and momentum necessary to make substantial steps forward to Brent being a Borough leading in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The CMS&IP is just one front on which action can, and is, being taken to mitigate climate change, however, a wider climate change strategy is needed to respond to all of the drivers for action. The Executive are recommended to ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Climate Change Task Group to oversee this work in Brent, and in particular to consider whether more ambitious carbon reduction targets could be achieved in a cost effective manner.

3.6 Project Management

- 3.6.1 The CMS&IP was put together by the Carbon Management steering Group and Carbon Management Working Group (see CMS&IP sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). The steering group receive project progress reports from each project owner twice a year, and when a project owner wishes to raise a specific issue with the group. The steering group has only recently moved into the implementation phase of the carbon management project.
- 3.6.2 The steering group seeks to have all completed projects signed off by the relevant department director and to have signed off projects replaced by other suitable opportunities for carbon management or reduction.
- 3.6.3 The steering group recommends that the executive receive an annual progress report. The report would ensure that the Executive remain updated so that they can both inform Brent residents of the Council's efforts, and support the project to ensure that it remains on course to be a success.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 Risk

- 4.1.1 Funding for projects totalling 34 percent of the required 13,000 tonne emissions reduction is as yet undetermined. These project areas are micro-

renewables such as solar thermal water heating and panels, wind turbines, and biomass burners, improvements to the social housing stock, and improvements to the fleet, the provision of bio-diesel from used cooking oil, and the council's travel plan.

- 4.1.2 The government's Low Carbon Buildings Programme offers 40-50% grant funding for micro-renewable installations on public buildings, but currently there are no funds available to make up the remainder in order for Brent to take advantage. The Carbon Management Steering group will review options to secure funding to facilitate these projects (see CMS&IP section 3.2.2) or will seek additional allocations within overall existing funding levels as part of the 2008/09 budget setting process. Renewable energy technologies serve a dual purpose, they reduce carbon dioxide emissions and they also provide a visible commitment to the public.
- 4.1.3 BHP has recently adopted an Environmental Policy, based on Brent Council's. BHP is currently developing proposals for projects to improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock and these are expected in June 2007.
- 4.1.4 Achieving carbon savings from transport related activities remains an area of risk. The new oyster card system, the anticipated introduction of assisted purchasing for bicycles, and a new GIS based site visit system being developed by Building Control are some of the low and no cost measures being implemented to reduce emissions in this area. The travel plan implementation group will be reporting to the Executive in a separate item.

4.2 Energy Efficiency Fund

- 4.2.1 Brent Council has set up an Energy Efficiency Fund worth £600K. Brent succeeded in obtaining £300K of limited public funding through a successful bidding and vetting process, and match funded this internally through prudential borrowing. The fund provides interest free internal loans for the installation of proven energy saving technologies in council buildings and schools. The loan is repaid to the fund through the savings made in energy bills and subsequently reinvested in other projects.
- 4.2.2 The fund has enormous potential to help to establish Brent Council as a leader in energy efficiency. It provides a mechanism for all areas of Brent Council to proactively reduce energy consumption and achieve their 20% reductions in carbon dioxide emissions.
- 4.2.3 There is a risk in that if Brent fails to spend the fund within the constraints set by the grant fund provider, Brent would have to repay the money. Realistically, there is enough potential offered by the current building stock for energy efficiency work to meet these constraints. For example, the majority of schools have no or minimal loft insulation. However, budget holders will need the support of Members and senior managers in order to have the confidence to take advantage of this opportunity.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.0.1 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 (known in Brent as the Community Plan). 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.
- 5.0.2 Furthermore, ODPM Circular 03/2003 on Best Value and Performance Improvement reiterates that sustainable development and equity are fundamental to the Best Value regime. It states that “the Government’s definition of Best value is “the optimum combination of whole life costs and benefits to meet the customer’s requirement”.
- 5.0.2 In addition, mandatory requirements regarding reporting and trading carbon emissions and the transparent display of public building energy performance certificates are expected in the short and medium term. This CMS&IP will place Brent Council in a good position to efficiently comply and improve performance (see CMS&IP section 1.3.2).

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.0.1 Climate change particularly affects those who are vulnerable physically including the elderly and the young – as they will be exposed to greater temperature extremes and potentially new or increased threats of disease.
- 6.0.2 Climate change effects will be felt most acutely in areas of the world where communities are less able to adapt. These areas include countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Australia. Many of our staff and residents have strong ties with these nations.
- 6.0.3 The actions proposed in this report will help mitigate these adverse impacts.

7.0 Staffing Implications

- 7.0.1 Brent Council staff are enthusiastic about rising to the challenge of climate change. Recently, over 400 staff from across the council took the opportunity to sign a pledge to combat climate change and signed up to the Brent Green Network to find out how they can keep it.
- 7.0.2 This energy to change behaviour in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions is a crucial part of achieving the 20 percent reduction target. Staff will need to be encouraged and supported by senior management in order to take leading roles as climate change champions in their service areas. In turn, senior management will need to be in a position to confidently make difficult or unpopular decisions in order to achieve emissions reduction targets.

Background Papers

- Carbon Management in Brent Council – CMT Report February 2007
- Climate Change – Strategic Overview – CMT Report February 2007

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Claire Smith, Environment Project and Policy Officer, Policy Information and Performance, Brent House, Tel: 020 8937 5324.

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APPENDIX A CARBON MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

See separate document.

APPENDIX B RECOMMENDATIONS ENDORSED BY THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM:

- Note the case for action driving the CMS&IP
- Agree to undertake the actions required to achieve the carbon emissions reduction target. These are:
 - o Support project delivery
 - o Support project implementation in their service areas
 - o Take responsibility for the corporate carbon reduction target and develop carbon emissions reduction plans
 - o Refrain from making decisions that increase carbon dioxide emissions
 - o Where decisions are unavoidable offset emissions by formulating and funding action elsewhere, and
 - o Submit all decisions with significant energy implications to the Carbon Management Steering Group for review.

APPENDIX C UK CLIMATE IMPACTS PROGRAMME – CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS ON LOCAL SERVICES

Activity	Some Impacts Of Climate Change
Forward Planning & Development Control	Higher risk of flooding of susceptible developments on floodplains
	Climate change influences suitable design for sustainable buildings and the scope of application necessary
Emergency Planning	Increased risk and frequency of flooding and severe weather
Housing	Increased risk of subsidence as soils shrink in hotter drier summers
	Higher risk to houses in floodplains
	Temperature increases affect living space environment
Management of Public Buildings	Temperature increases affect thermal comfort and staff satisfaction / sickness rates
	Wetter winters causing damp, condensation and mould problems
	Higher risk to buildings currently located in floodplains
Building Control	Drier summers increase risk of foundation subsidence
	Wetter winters and severe weather increase damp problems
	Increased demand for air conditioning and building alterations to adapt to new climate
Transport Planning	Increased risk of flood disruption due to wetter winters and severe weather
	Increased temperature causing service disruption and heat stress to traveling public
Highway Maintenance	Increased rainfall intensity affecting embankments and bridge piers, and washing more debris into gullies
	Drier summers increase risk of road subsidence and higher temperatures increase risk of surface damage
	Higher risk to roads located in floodplains or areas with poor urban drainage
	Increase in rate of growth and length of growing season of road verges
	Warmer winters with reduced risk of frost
Health and Social Services	Higher risk of skin cancer / sun burn due to hotter summers and increased outdoor recreation
	Heat stress to the old, poor and vulnerable communities and people likely to increase
	Fewer cold related fatalities
Environmental Health	Higher temperatures likely to increase cases of food poisoning and pests
	Higher levels of dust in the air due to drier summers
Green space Management	Increase in rate of growth leading to year-round grass maintenance
	Loss of trees and shrubs due to drier summers and wetter winters
	Climate change influence on natural environment, especially bio-diversity

Activity	Some Impacts Of Climate Change
Watercourse Management	Wetter winters and increased rainfall intensity causing local flooding
Waste Management	Rubbish will decay more rapidly in higher summer temperatures
	Higher summer temperatures and higher, more intense, winter rainfall may affect landfill design and operation
Community Awareness	Climate change will impact unprepared and vulnerable communities
Business support / Town Centre Management	Climate change provides changing markets, e.g. tourism and agriculture, and demand for new products