

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**15 MARCH 2007**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Environment – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Steve Nelson**

#### **TEES VALLEY CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND THE STOCKTON ACTION PLAN**

1. Summary

This report seeks cabinet endorsement for the Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy that establishes a baseline position, targets, and broad sub-regional actions for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. These targets will be delivered through individual action plans delivered by each of the five local authorities in the Tees Valley.

Stockton has developed an action plan that reflects local priorities and recognises the progress that has been made in tackling these issues. Cabinet is being asked to approve the Stockton Climate Change Action plan which sets out the approach needed to make our contribution towards these sub-regional targets.

2. Recommendations

Recommended that:

1. Members note the emerging Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy includes a target of 1.25% CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions reduction per annum.
2. Members adopt the draft Stockton on Tees Climate Change Action plan as the basis for further consultation and delegate approval of the final Action Plan to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

1. Supporting the Tees Valley strategy will ensure that our response to climate change is more effective, there are shared objectives and common actions as well as an agreed baseline and protocol for reporting on progress. It is seen as an example of best practice in the region and is a model that could be adopted elsewhere in the country.
2. The reduction target is achievable and in doing so will place Stockton at the forefront of local authorities in their response to tackling climate change. Reducing our greenhouse gas emissions can be achieved through a range of actions including energy efficiency measures, supporting appropriate renewable energy

options, reducing waste, improvements in recycling, reduction in traffic volumes, use of cleaner fuels, adopting higher building standards in new developments.

3. As signatories of the Nottingham declaration on climate change we committed to publicly declare targets for significant reductions in emissions and to develop an action plan to deliver on these targets. This report and the accompanying documents enable the Council to meet these obligations.

#### 4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraph 10 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held, whilst the matter is being considered; not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc.; whether or not they are a member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting, and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room during consideration of the relevant item.**

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#### **SUMMARY**

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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#### **DETAIL**

##### Background

1. Stockton Borough Council has been very pro-active in tackling some of the significant environmental issues such as energy consumption and waste management. We have been very successful with projects such as the warm zone initiative, achieving a high level of energy efficiency improvements in the housing stock and leading on a waste management project with partners in Europe.
2. In November 2002 the leader of the council and the chief executive signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, which committed the authority to:

- Work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK climate change programme.
- Participate in local and regional networks.
- Develop plans to progressively address the causes and impacts of climate change.
- Publicly declare, with appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services.
- Assess the risks associated with climate change and the implications for services and our communities and adapt accordingly.
- Encourage all sectors in the community to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- Monitor the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the result.

### 3. Stern Review – The Economics of Climate Change

4. Sir Nicholas Stern, Head of the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change and Head of the Government Economic Service said:

*“Climate change has important implications for future economic growth and development in all parts of the world. Some of the most severe impacts of the changing climate will be felt by people already struggling with extreme poverty, reinforcing still further the need for international action to fight poverty and promote development.*

*But it is not too late to take action to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. If governments set clear, credible, and long-term incentives, then businesses and individuals will respond, and emissions can be shifted to a more sustainable pathway.*

*The issue demands a global response. Effective action requires the involvement of the fast-growing developing countries. The world’s richest nations, who bear much of the historical responsibility for the problem, should lead the international effort”*

5. The Stern review made it very clear that there is a strong economic case to take action against climate change in particular:

- Using the results from the economic models the review estimates that if we don’t act it will be equivalent to losing at least 5% of the global GDP each year and if a wider range of risks and impacts are included this could rise to 20%.
- It is no longer possible to prevent climate change, but it is possible to protect our societies and economies to some extent.
- The costs of stabilising the climate are significant but manageable; delay would be dangerous and more costly.
- The world does not need to choose between averting climate change and promoting growth and development. Changes in energy technologies and in the structure of economies have created opportunities to decouple growth from greenhouse gas emissions.

### Strategic Context

#### *Global action:*

6. Internationally, the government is working with partners in the EU to secure further action in the EU, in particular by extending and strengthening the Emissions Trading Scheme and the Clean Development Mechanism.
7. The UK is also working with the EU to help India, China, Brazil and other large emerging countries to evolve as low-carbon economies.

8. The government has also committed to helping poorer countries to adapt to changes in the climate that are occurring and to make their economies more resilient to future changes.

*National action:*

9. There is a whole range of measures in place or being introduced by the government to tackle climate change such as:

*For the domestic sector:*

- Raising energy standards of new build and refurbished buildings through updating the Building Regulations.
- Introducing the Code for Sustainable Homes, which will have minimum standards for water and energy efficiency at every level in the code, with the lowest levels being raised above the level of mandatory building regulations.
- Maintaining the Energy Efficiency Commitment, Warm Front and Decent Homes schemes to deliver energy efficiency measures in low-income households to help meet fuel poverty targets.
- Support for the activities of the Energy Savings Trust and the Climate Change Communications Initiative to raise awareness about climate change and the actions that individuals can take to help tackle it.

*In the transport sector:*

- The government plans to introduce the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation from 2008 to increase the uptake of bio-fuels.
- Using fiscal instruments such as Vehicle Excise Duty and Company Car Tax to give incentives to purchase less polluting vehicles.
- Maintain the momentum in the EU to secure agreement to the inclusion of aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme from 2008 or as soon as possible after that.

*For the business sector:*

- The government will continue to use the climate change levy to encourage businesses to improve energy efficiency.
- Use the EU emissions trading scheme as a central element in driving energy efficiency savings in business.

*For the public sector:*

- A revolving loan fund of £20m for the whole public sector to finance investment in energy efficiency is to be set up.
- A package of measures is to be introduced to drive additional action for local authorities to include a focus on action on climate change.

*Regional Action:*

10. In the year 2000 the northeast contributed 13.3% of England's emissions with 17 million tonnes carbon.
11. The North East Assembly, DEFRA and the Environment Agency have contributed to the establishment of a regional climate change co-ordinator in September 2006, who has been tasked with producing a North East Climate Change Action Plan by March 2008.
12. This plan will:
  - Provide a focus and tackle issues preventing action
  - Encourage participation by showing the benefits of doing so.
  - Provide a framework to enable local organisations to address climate change coherently.
  - Identify gaps in action and seek to encourage actions to address these.

- Add value to existing climate change action.

#### The Tees Valley Climate Change Partnership

13. Established in 2005, the Tees Valley Climate Change Partnership is a pioneering sub-regional initiative between the 5 boroughs of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Redcar & Cleveland.
14. Working in partnership with the Environment Agency, Renew Tees Valley, Tees and Durham Energy Advice and Scottish Power, as well as a number of strategic delivery partners, the Partnership is leading the way in effective collaborative response to the threat of climate change, principally in supporting a full-time Climate Change Co-ordinator to develop a sub regional strategy.
15. Officers from the five Local Authorities, together with the Environment Agency, Renew Tees Valley, and the Tees and Durham Energy Advice Centre have subsequently met monthly since October 2005 to establish appropriate sub regional targets on emission reductions, and reached consensus on a 1.25% annual reduction.
16. By sharing resources in this way the Partnership is able to avoid duplication of effort, and work in the most efficient way possible, ensuring a coordinated and consistent approach across the sub-region.

#### Tees Valley Baseline and Emissions Reporting Protocol

17. From the outset the Partnership recognised the importance of establishing a baseline and consistent methodology for the sub-region, allowing for meaningful comparisons of emissions over time.
18. Data on energy use, transport and waste has been obtained from a number of reliable sources, including the DTI, DEFRA and the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. From this consumption data, a series of conversions and calculations have enabled the development of the Emissions Inventories for each Local Authority area, using the year 2000 as a baseline. These inventories are updated with the release of new data and used to monitor long-term progress.
19. Working in conjunction with the Environment Agency, the Partnership has also been able to disaggregate emissions from industry from Local Authority sub-totals, ensuring targets for Local Authorities are based on emissions from the domestic and SME sectors only. Achieving an average 1.25% annual reduction in the industrial sector will lie within the remit of the Environment Agency, who will provide the Partnership with annual progress reports.

#### The Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy

20. A Strategy for the sub-region is being developed and represents a high-level, comprehensive approach to documenting the current situation in the Tees Valley. It is driven by the partners (5 local authorities and the Environment Agency) to achieve both short-term and long-term emission reduction targets. Stockton's Climate Change Action Plan will influence the final version of the Tees Valley Strategy and represent Stockton's contribution to the partnership goals:
  - A minimum 8.75% reduction below 2000 levels from 2006-2012
  - A further minimum 27% reduction from 2012-2030
21. In addition, the strategy outlines broad sub-regional actions for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change, and identifies the Partners responsible for implementation.

22. The target of 1.25% reduction has been arrived at following extensive analysis of emissions data, potential savings from a range of activities and those local authorities that have historical data on emissions savings, such as Stockton and its comprehensive database compiled largely due to the warm zone initiative. The target will also see us make a significant contribution to the national targets.
23. There has been significant interest already in the collaborative approach that the five Tees Valley Local Authorities have taken in base-lining the sub regions emissions, particularly at Government Office level. We are also demonstrating that as a borough and an authority we are committed to better protecting our communities from the known impacts of extreme weather events and are contributing to the national Climate Change Programme.
24. A copy of the final Tees Valley Strategy will be made available in the Members Library when completed.

#### Stockton Climate Change Action Plan

25. The Stockton Climate Change Action Plan (**Appendix 1**) has been developed in tandem with the developing Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy. It has involved staff from a variety of disciplines and service areas within the authority as well as a number of external agencies that will be involved in the delivery of the plan.
26. The plan focuses on actions that can contribute towards the sub-regional target as well as measures to adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change. These include short-term actions such as installation of insulation measures, medium term such as the development of renewable energy technologies and the longer-term impacts from revised planning policies.
27. Underpinning this will be initiatives to encourage and enable individuals to understand their role and responsibility in tackling climate change.

### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Financial**

The current temporary post of environmental projects officer dealing with climate change is to be made permanent in order to steer the delivery and monitoring of the action plan. This is to be met from existing resources.

#### **Legal**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) places a statutory duty upon local authorities to assess local risks to inform Emergency Planning, and to put in place Emergency Plans. These will need to include the implications of climate change and extreme weather events.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Failure to address climate change has economic social and environmental consequences, which have been well documented in reports such as the Stern Review.

## COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Community Strategy Key performance indicators that will support the delivery of climate change action:

- Adopt and implement planning policies to reduce environmental impact of new housing developments by 2008 (BRE ECO homes very good rating)
- Maintain high levels of diversion of waste from landfill: maximum of 10% of waste to be land filled each year.
- Reduce household waste arising to national average by 2008.
- Increase the % of household waste that is recycled or composted from 10.9% in 2003/04 to 22% in 2007/08.
- 2000 energy efficiency improvement measures installed in domestic properties by 2008.
- Vulnerable households removed from fuel poverty by 2010.
- Tees Valley Climate change action plans implemented by 2008.
- Increase the % of renewable energy generation in the Borough by 10% by 2010.

## CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

The draft climate change action plan has been discussed at the environment partnership on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2006. The draft policy if approved will be circulated to all Members for comment and any amendments discussed in detail at the LSP Environment Partnership prior to adoption of a final version.

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### Background Papers:

Draft Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy  
Draft Stockton on Tees Climate Change Action Plan

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

All

### Property:

Not applicable