

WIRRAL COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

SUBJECT:	CLIMATE LOCAL SUBMISSION 2014
WARD/S AFFECTED:	NONE
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF UNIVERSAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR BERNIE MOONEY
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree a submission to the Local Government Association's (LGA) 'Climate Local' programme to set out Wirral Council's current planned actions on climate change. Wirral Council is a signatory to the Climate Local programme and under the terms of the programme is expected to make an initial submission before the end of June 2014.
- 1.2 Wirral Council is already committed to develop a new climate change strategy. Work on this strategy has been progressed via the Wirral Climate Change Group and is nearing completion. It is proposed that the remaining steps to complete and approve the new strategy form the basis for the initial Climate Local submission (see Appendix 1). It is proposed that future submissions are made on the basis of annual reports to Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 Climate Local

- 2.1.1 Wirral Council has a long held commitment to action on climate change and was a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change (Council, 13 February 2006, Minute 91). In June 2012, the LGA introduced the Climate Local initiative as a successor to the Nottingham Declaration. Climate Local involves councils making a public declaration, identifying actions on climate mitigation and adaptation, regular public reporting of progress and sharing of learning and experiences with others.
- 2.1.2 In January 2013, the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the proposal that Wirral Council should participate in the 'Climate Local' initiative (Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 29 January 2013, Minute 63). The Committee agreed that the Leader of the Council be asked to sign a 'Climate Local Commitment' on behalf of the authority. This was subsequently signed and submitted to the LGA.
- 2.1.3 Under the terms of Climate Local an initial submission to identify planned actions on climate change is expected by the end of June 2014. Regular annual progress reports are expected thereafter.

2.2 Wirral strategy for climate change

- 2.2.1 The first strategy on climate change for Wirral was produced in 2007. Work to develop a replacement was agreed in 2012 (Sustainable Communities Overview and

Scrutiny Committee, January 2012, minute 67) with the new strategy to be developed through the Wirral Climate Change Group – a group hosted by Wirral Council involving various partner organisations including representatives from local public bodies, community, voluntary and faith interests.

2.2.2 A working draft of the new climate strategy was produced for summer 2013. This drew on the outcomes from a programme of consultation activities including online questionnaires and public workshops run between July 2012 and April 2013. The working draft was refined through consultation with partners in the Wirral Climate Change Group. It was then made available for public consultation between December 2013 and February 2014. The results of this public consultation were reported to the Wirral Climate Change Group in March 2014.

2.2.3 Final modifications are now being made to the new climate strategy. These will take into consideration consultation responses, equalities issues and a sustainability appraisal. A final version of the strategy for endorsement by partners is expected this summer. Thereafter it is envisaged a supporting action plan will be put in place with annual progress reports to follow.

2.3 Reporting arrangements

2.3.1 Arrangements for reporting climate change work have evolved overtime as committee structures and staff resources have changed. Most recently an annual report of the Wirral Climate Change Group was made via Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2013. The proposal is to make an annual report on climate change work to Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 A failure to make an initial submission in a timely manner may undermine the Council's credibility in relation to climate change-related action.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The option to delay the initial submission to Climate Local was considered. Waiting until after the climate strategy is complete would enable a more detailed submission to be made. It would also mean the Council would fail to fulfil the initial Climate Local submission deadline. Making a short submission now will not preclude a more detailed submission later; indeed it is expected that a more detailed submission will be made once the new strategy has been approved and an action plan is in place.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Discussions have taken place with member services to determine a suitable pathway for reporting future climate change activity. The development of the new climate change strategy has been the subject of wider a consultation programme.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 There are no implications for voluntary, community and faith groups arising from this report. The development of the new climate change strategy has involved representatives from these sectors via the Wirral Climate Change Group. The successful implementation of the new strategy will rely on participation from across all sectors.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are no financial implications or additional resource implications arising from this report. The recommendation is designed to avoid creating an additional reporting burden by combining reporting on Climate Local with that of the new climate change strategy.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The legal implications are set out in the main body of the report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific equalities implications associated with this report. The decision to develop a new climate change strategy was subject to an equality impact assessment. The emerging strategy will also be assessed.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct implications for carbon reduction associated with this report. The previous decision to develop a new climate change strategy is designed to drive co-ordinated action in this area.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no planning or community safety implications associated with this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That an initial submission to the LGA Climate Local programme be made on the basis of the Council's existing commitment to develop a new climate change strategy.

12.2 The proposed Climate Local submission set out in Appendix 1 be approved for submission to the LGA

12.3 That the Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services be authorised to submit (as appropriate) progress reports to the LGA that are consistent with annual reports on climate change work approved by the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 To fulfil the Council's initial commitment under the Climate Local programme.

13.2 To reflect the status of the replacement climate change strategy as a work-in-progress nearing completion.

13.3 To ensure that future Climate Local reporting requirements are dovetailed with those for the climate strategy, rather than made in addition to them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Proposed first submission to the LGA in accordance with the Climate Local Commitment

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Climate Local Commitment

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny	January 2013
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny	January 2012

APPENDIX 1

Proposed first submission to the LGA in accordance with the Climate Local Commitment

Climate Local Wirral Council

Our commitments and actions

Wirral Council has a long-held commitment to action on climate change as a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change the forerunner to the Climate Local initiative. Actions we have taken since signing the Nottingham Declaration include:

- Adopting a climate change strategy in 2007
- Establishing an annual carbon budget process to help ensure that we achieve our corporate goal of reducing emissions by 60% by 2025 (based on a 2008/09 base year)
- Running a public campaign to encourage the wider community to pledge carbon reduction action
- Recording a local climate impact profile to highlight existing vulnerability to weather related episodes

The Leader of the Council signed our Climate Local Commitment in December 2012. This signalled our continued pledge to take action on climate change. By making this commitment we agreed to set out our planned actions on both mitigation and adaptation and publish these within six months. Our initial actions are set out below and focus on steps to finalise a new climate change strategy for Wirral. This strategy is currently being developed with our partners in the Wirral Climate Change Group and is based on consultation with the wider community. The new strategy will form the foundation for identifying and reporting our future actions relating to climate change.

Goal: *Substantially cut climate pollution associated with Wirral*

Objective Develop a widely agreed framework to cut climate pollution associated with Wirral		Justification: Wirral Council's first climate change strategy is due for replacement. The Council's direct emissions represent a relatively small part of local climate pollution. To make a wider impact it makes sense to develop a new climate change strategy for Wirral not just Wirral Council.	
Action	Lead	Measure	Timescale
Complete development of replacement climate change strategy through the Wirral Climate Change Group	Universal and infrastructure services, Wirral Council	New climate strategy agreed by Wirral Climate Change Group	July 2014
Approval and endorsement of the new climate change strategy	Partners in Wirral Climate Change Group	Number of partners endorsing the new climate change strategy	October 2014
Develop a first year action plan in support of the approved strategy	Universal and infrastructure services, Wirral Council	First year action plan in place	January 2015

Goal: Adapt Wirral to unavoidable climate change

Objective: Develop a widely agreed framework to co-ordinate climate adaption work		Justification: Wirral Council's first climate change strategy is due for replacement. Co-ordinated action on climate adaption has thus far been limited. The creation of a new climate change strategy presents an opportunity to develop a co-ordinated approach	
Action	Lead	Measure	Timescale
Complete development of replacement climate change strategy through the Wirral Climate Change Group	Universal and infrastructure services, Wirral Council	New climate strategy agreed by Wirral Climate Change Group.	July 2014
Approval and endorsement of climate change strategy	Partners in Wirral Climate Change Group	Number of partners endorsing the new climate change strategy.	October 2014
Develop a first year action plan in support of the approved strategy	Universal and infrastructure services, Wirral Council	First year action plan in place.	January 2015

Goal: Build capacity for mitigation and adaptation action

Objective: Support a partnership approach to climate action with local stakeholders		Justification: The Wirral Climate Change Group provides a mechanism to encourage and co-ordinate wider climate action and to share information and learning locally. The group is leading the development of the emerging climate change strategy and is the obvious vehicle to develop the strategy on a partnership basis going forward.	
Action	Lead	Measure	Timescale
Organise a programme of regular meetings of the Wirral Climate Change Group	Universal and infrastructure services, Wirral Council	Hold three meetings during 2014	December 2014