

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY UNIT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 It was agreed by Cabinet on the 9th July, Minute 127, that a Sustainability Unit be created as part of the new department of Law, HR and Asset Management, and that a further report on this issue be presented to Cabinet outlining the proposals for this Sustainability Unit

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The 2008 Budget resolution (Cabinet minute 523 and Council minute 122) to establish and provide one-off funding of £115,000 in 2008/09 for this purpose. This is set out below:

- 2.2 “(F) Tackling Climate Change by reducing Wirral’s Carbon Footprint £115,000

That the Council recognises the urgency of tackling Climate Change and takes a lead in promoting Carbon Reduction across Wirral.

That in order to do so, it takes part in the CRed Carbon Reduction Scheme which seeks to achieve a 60% reduction in Carbon Emissions by 2025, which is significantly higher than the government’s own target.

That, as a first stage, the Council purchases the necessary CRed software and co-ordinates and implements the delivery of the Climate Change 2008/09 Action Plan, including using external resources as necessary.

That further work is undertaken on the setting up of a Sustainability Unit within the Council to improve energy efficiency and to work with Businesses and the Community to raise awareness of the urgent need to reduce Wirral’s Carbon footprint, to take action to reduce Carbon emissions and to sign up to the CRed target.

That the Council continue to set an example by reducing its own Energy use, and builds on previous programmes which included the installation of a building energy management system, installation of Burner Management Units, Water reduction schemes, Heat recovery schemes, a rolling programme of Boiler replacements, increased insulation and pilot micro-generation schemes.

That it be noted as an example that the average energy saving where the Building Energy Management systems have been installed is 18%.

That further action is now taken to move to Automatic Meter Reading, which will improve the accuracy of information, improve billing, increase energy

efficiency as usage can be monitored, improve budgeting and provide accurate information on Carbon Reduction to allow the Council to measure its progress against commitments to reduce Carbon emissions.

That a provision of £30,000 from the £115,000 above is set aside to fund the replacement of non-compatible gas or electricity meters as required.”.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 It is proposed that the Sustainability Unit be established by the appointment of a Climate Change Officer and a Sustainability (CRED) Liaison Officer who together with the existing Energy Manager and Energy Conservation Team would form the new Sustainability Unit.

3.2 The role of the Climate Change Officer would be to lead, coordinate, manage and evaluate all work going on across the Council to deliver the authorities sustainability projects and Climate Change Strategy, in order to meet our National Indicator targets 185, 186, and 194

(185 -CO2 reduction from local authority operations, 186 - Per Capita reductions in CO2 emissions in the Local Authority area, 194 -Air quality (emissions through local authority estate and operations)

3.3 This will be a key post to drive forward the work the Council is currently doing internally but would also support the joint work we have initiated and are developing with local partners. This post will also be responsible for driving forward Climate Change Adaptation work required by the Council in Minute NI188 – specified.

3.4 The role of the Sustainability (CRed) Liaison Officer will be to lead and actively promote the Wirral CRed initiative to the Council and the Council’s key partners, to develop and implement policies regarding climate change and sustainability programmes, to implement the relevant policies within the Council’s Corporate Plan and the Sustainability Commission Strategy, to develop and operate and manage the Wirral Cred website, and provide regular feedback on progress to the Council and key partners.

3.5 Cabinet Minute 127 directed that the Sustainability Unit should be located within the Asset Management Division of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The costs of the two posts will be in the region of £80,000 per annum. It is anticipated that the establishment of the Sustainability Unit will help the Authority further reduce expenditure on energy. The Unit will also spearhead efforts to reduce CO2 emissions, improve air quality and drive forward the climate change strategy. These are all critical matters that may well have financial consequences for the Authority if not addressed. It is therefore proposed that these costs be met from the Council’s Efficiency Budget.

- 4.2 The one-off £115,000 Policy Option relating to Sustainability mentioned in the report should be vired from Technical Services to the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management.
- 5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**
There are no direct implications as a result of this report.
- 6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**
There are no direct implications as a result of this report
- 7. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**
The creation of the Sustainability Unit will have a significant impact on environmental issues.
- 8. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
There are no direct implications as a result of this report
- 9. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**
The creation of this until will impact possibly on the delivery of sustainability issues.
- 10. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**
This unit is of interest to all members.
- 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
None

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) £80,000 be allocated from the Efficiency Budget to cover the costs of the new posts;
- (2) the report be referred to Employment Committee to agree the establishment of the new posts;
- (3) the one-of Policy Option of £115,000 relating to Sustainability be vied from Technical Services to the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management.

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