

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	26 February 2013
Subject:	Climate Change Action Plan, and Delivering Warmer Homes (HECA) report
Responsible Officer:	Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Councillor Stephen Wright – Policy Lead for Environment and Enterprise Councillor Sue Anderson – Performance Lead for Environment and Enterprise
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix A – Response to O&S comments (18 Dec 2012)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report provides responses to the Committee's comments on the draft Climate Change Action Plan and Delivering Warmer Homes (HECA) report, (originally reported to Cabinet on 22 November 2012) which were considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2012

Recommendations:

To consider the responses and provide comments to Cabinet on the strategies.

Section 2 – Report

Appendix D, of the November Cabinet report, set out a draft revised action plan for the climate change strategy.

Appendix I, of the November Cabinet report, set out the draft Delivering Warmer Homes (HECA) report.

Both drafts were subject to public consultation from 30 November 2012 to 28 January 2013.

As part of this consultation, Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the consultation documents on 18 December and submitted comments. Appendix

A sets out those comments and the responses. These will be reported to Cabinet on 14 March.

Financial Implications

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Performance Issues

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Environmental Impact

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Risk Management Implications

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Equalities Implications

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Corporate Priorities

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 13 Feb 2013.		
Name: Matthew Adams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 14 Feb 2013.		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Andrew Baker, Head of Climate Change
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Background Papers:

Set out in the report to Cabinet

Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments	Response
<p>Concern was expressed at the apparent inconsistencies between this and the previous report on the agenda (Changes in Public Realm Services), citing numerous examples, and the lack of joining up of information across the Council. The officer advised that Appendix A was an old Action Plan which had included everything officers had thought might be required. Appendix D took a more 'broad brush' approach as it was now recognised that the previous Action Plan was too detailed. A consequence of this was that the reports had had to summarise a large amount of the information received from a number of departments</p>	<p>The Climate Change Strategy Action Plan has been revised (following public consultation) to ensure that performance measures are consistent.</p> <p>A separate appendix (Appendix B) has been introduced setting out how we will measure progress.</p>
<p>A Member, referring to page 96 of the report, stated that the population figure was not included in the waste section of Appendix D but that somehow the waste per head and recycling figures were included without this figure. He questioned why, on page 14 of the previous report the figures differed. The officer reassured Members that Appendix D would be completed prior to its further consideration by Cabinet in March 2013 and that these figures would be checked. The figures relating to number of households and population were provided by the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>See above response</p>
<p>There appeared to be no mention of the two main strands in relation to the Council's carbon footprint within Appendix D. In addition, carbon emissions did not appear to have been considered during the commissioning process and there was no activity that monitored the carbon impact of capital spend or commissioning.</p> <p>The officer drew Member's attention to the section in the appendix which recorded the council's carbon footprint and stated that the carbon impact of capital spending was taken into account as part of the capital bidding process but accepted that more weight could be given to this.</p> <p>Another Member stated that there should be a way of ensuring that the embedded carbon effect of capital spend was monitored and recorded.</p>	<p>As indicated above, Appendix B of the revised Action Plan sets out how progress will be measured.</p> <p>There are no plans to report on the embedded carbon implications of capital expenditure.</p>

<p>The officer replied that, at present, embedded carbon was not measured and that this would be a significantly more complicated exercise. Current government regulations did not require embedded carbon to be measured</p>	
<p>In response to a Member's question in relation to paragraph 2.2.2 and the bid submission for Warmer Homes, Healthy People, the officer advised that £82,000 funding had been received and that the aim was to launch the scheme in January 2013. Officers were in contact with Age UK and the Citizens Advice Bureau with a view to allocating funding.</p> <p>He added that Harrow had submitted a joint bid with five other West London Boroughs to DECC for various energy reduction projects. If the bid was successful this project would be delivered by the end of March 2013.</p>	<p>No further comments.</p> <p>Note that the bid for DECC funds had been successful.</p>
<p>In relation to the paragraphs on Biodiversity and the Natural Environment, a Member questioned how officers were going to ensure that the Council's plans were up to date given the financial constraints. The officer advised that this information had been provided by another team and he was therefore unable to answer detailed questions on this area. The Divisional Director added that the documents were currently draft and would be updated.</p>	<p>Council's Green Grid project has been confirmed for a further year and the introduction of the Harrow Community Infrastructure Levy will provide a potential funding source for the delivery of green infrastructure in accordance with Harrow's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Officers are continuing to look at ways of funding the revision to the Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>
<p>A Member asked whether a new application for Harrow to be recognised as a Fair Trade Borough had been submitted. Officers undertook to check the position.</p>	<p>Recognition of Harrow as a Fair Trade Borough is not part of the revised Action Plan in the Climate Change Strategy.</p> <p>During the past year, work on Fair Trade has concentrated on developing a solid local network of premises, employers and community organisations making a commitment to Fair Trade principles. This has been quite successful with many groups signing up and some key local employers expressing an interest in supporting the local campaign. Once this has been completed a fresh application will be made to the Fair Trade organisation for Harrow to be recognised as a Fair Trade Borough.</p>
<p>A Member indicated that clarity was required in relation to the reference to the Cold Weather Plan and the 27,000 excess deaths</p>	<p>No further comments.</p>

Appendix A

<p>during December and March each year. She stated that the report read as if these deaths were all in Harrow.</p> <p>The officer clarified that this was a national figure.</p>	
<p>The officer clarified that AMR was an abbreviation for Automatic Meter Reading. This technology allowed the council to monitor energy use on a half-hourly basis in schools and corporate buildings and enabled energy wastage to be more easily identified.</p>	<p>No further comments.</p>
<p>In response to a Member's question on businesses and the public sector, the officer advised that it had been difficult to get a response from SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) and that the Council was looking to work with the body replacing the Primary Care Trust on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p>	<p>No further comments.</p>
<p>Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the inconsistencies in the report and indicated that, in the future, they would like all relevant officers who were able to answer their detailed questions to attend the meeting. It was questioned how members of the public could make an informed decision when elected Members were having difficulty in getting the information they needed and it was stressed that the Officers needed to ensure that reports were complete, correct and meaningful. The Chair suggested that some of the issues could be raised with the Corporate Director when she attended the Committee in February 2013 and that, if possible, a further draft be provided to the Committee at that meeting.</p>	<p>Revised drafts of the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan and the Delivering Warmer Homes (HECA) report will be reported to Cabinet on 14 March 2013.</p>