

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

10 FEBRUARY 2009

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON REDUCTION AND
CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To update the position following the Environment Scrutiny Panel's decision to include examination of the Council's Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation Action (CRACA) Plan as a topic in its current work programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) notes the updated position in terms of the Environment Scrutiny Panel's 2008/09 Work Programme.
- b) That the comments of the Environment Scrutiny Panel in respect of the Council's CRACA Plan be endorsed and the Executive advised accordingly.

BACKGROUND

2. In June 2008 meeting, the Environment Scrutiny Panel approved its work programme for the current municipal year. Among the agreed topics was examination of the Council's Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation Action (CRACA) Plan.
3. On 29 January 2009 the scrutiny panel considered a report on this topic. A copy of the report, which had been submitted to The Executive on 6 January 2009, is attached at **Appendix 1**.

4. The report was presented to the scrutiny panel by the Public Protection Manager from Environment, who was also questioned in respect of its content. While welcoming the report, and the approach being taken by the Council in respect of this topic, the scrutiny panel highlighted some issues which it wishes to draw to the attention of The Executive. These are as follows:

Local authorities' obligations to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and the use of the statutory emissions trading scheme (Para. 4 of Appendix 1)

5. The Environment Scrutiny Panel was advised that details of carbon dioxide emissions produced in each local authority area, together with reduction targets for each authority, will be produced at a national level. This will be done by a Government-appointed agent using a mapping exercise to calculate CO₂ emissions based on a breakdown of 1km grid squares for each local authority area. Emissions from energy consumption, industry and vehicles will then be calculated for each grid square and an overall reduction target (based on these calculations) will be set for each local authority area.
6. The panel suggested that the Council should request that it be supplied with the detailed breakdown on information, rather than just an overall reduction target. This will assist the authority to take steps in helping to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the highest emitting areas - for example by highlighting areas of housing where action could then be targeted to assist householders in reducing energy consumption.

The Council's involvement in reducing Middlesbrough's carbon dioxide emissions by 45,000 tonnes over three years to December 2005 (paragraph 9 onwards)

7. The panel made reference to the development of "eco-buildings" by some local authorities (for example Worcester County Council has won awards in this area). These are designed to ensure that the building specification meets the highest possible environmental standards through the use of environmental features such as timber from sustainable sources and recycled materials, or using rainwater to flush toilets.
8. In response, the scrutiny panel heard that part of the Council's CO₂ reductions have been achieved through the use of energy efficiency measures in older local authority buildings. In terms of new buildings, which by their nature are much more energy efficient, design schemes (for example Building Schools for the Future) will involve sustainability appraisals. A balance does, however, need to be struck between cost and energy efficiency measures.
9. The panel suggested that the authority - as a Beacon Council on climate change - should work towards developing the highest sustainability standards possible, including the development of "eco-buildings," and that this approach should be endorsed by The Executive.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

10. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Report submitted to The Executive - 6 January 2009 - "Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation Action (CRACA) Plan."

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