



**Leicestershire  
County Council**

**CABINET – 15 JULY 2014**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND  
TRANSPORT**

**THE CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY FOR  
LEICESTERSHIRE 2014 - 2020 AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
2014 – 2017**

**PART A**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To seek approval of the Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire 2014-2020 and Implementation Plan 2014-2017. These documents are appended to this report as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

**Recommendations**

2. (a) That the comments of the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in Appendix 3 to this report be considered;
- (b) That the Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire 2014-2020 and associated Implementation Plan for 2014-2017 be approved;
- (c) That authorisation is given to the Director of Environment and Transport to make minor amendments to the Implementation Plan in future as circumstances change, provided that they are consistent with the overall Carbon Reduction Strategy.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

3. To put in place a programme to support the reduction of carbon emissions from the County which forms a key component of the County Council's Environment Strategy 2011-21. Authorising the Director to make minor amendments to the Implementation Plan as necessary will ensure that it is kept up-to-date and relevant throughout the lifetime of the Implementation Plan.

### **Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)**

4. The Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Carbon Reduction Strategy and accompanying Implementation Plan at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Further detail is given at paragraph 33 below and a copy of the minutes of this meeting is appended to the report (appendix 3).
5. Subject to the Cabinet's approval the Carbon Reduction Strategy and Implementation Plan will be published on the County Council's website shortly.
6. The adoption of a Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire is timely as the LLEP European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy 2014-2021 includes a minimum requirement of 20% of the European Regional Development Fund programme to be invested in activities to support the transition to a low carbon economy.

### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

7. Under the 2008 Climate Change Act the Government has committed to ensuring that the "net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline".
8. At its meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 the County Council approved the Environment Strategy 2011-2021 which includes a target to reduce Carbon emissions by the Authority.
9. As a signatory to Climate Local, the Local Government Association's commitment to help address climate change, the County Council has made a commitment to show leadership and help local people and business to reduce energy use. The Carbon Reduction Strategy forms part of this commitment to act on climate change.

### **Resource Implications**

10. The Implementation Plan does not commit the County Council to any specific action unless the appropriate resources are available to deliver it.
11. There is the potential to utilise private investment and external grant funding to support the actions in the Implementation Plan.
12. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the contents of this report. The current Medium Term Financial Strategy includes a £300,000 saving relating to reduced energy costs. Given recent Government funding announcements there is no doubt that the Authority will be required to make significant further savings and energy savings will need to be maximised.

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

13. None.

**Officers to Contact**

Hannah Moss  
Climate Change Officer  
Environment and Transport Department

Tel: 0116 305 6961  
Email: [hannah.moss@leics.gov.uk](mailto:hannah.moss@leics.gov.uk)

Holly Field  
Assistant Director, Environment  
Environment and Transport Department

Tel: 0116 305 8101  
Email: [holly.field@leics.gov.uk](mailto:holly.field@leics.gov.uk)

## **PART B**

### **Background**

14. Development of the Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire started in 2012.
15. The Strategy and Implementation Plan have been the subject of two separate consultation processes with key stakeholder in March 2013 and January 2014, respectively.
16. 24 individuals and organisations responded to the Strategy consultation. 11 responses were received through a consultation questionnaire made available online. A further 13 responses were received by e-mail.
17. 16 individuals and organisations responded to the Implementation Plan consultation. All responses were received by e-mail.
18. Following consultation with key stakeholders the Carbon Reduction Strategy and accompanying Implementation Plan are now being submitted for adoption by the County Council's Cabinet.

### **Carbon Reduction Strategy**

19. The proposed Carbon Reduction Strategy supports progress towards the Government's legally binding target to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 as outlined in the National Carbon Plan and the interim target to reduce carbon emission by 34% by 2020 compared to 1990.
20. The Strategy sets a carbon reduction target for Leicestershire of 23% by 2020 compared to 2005.
21. The Strategy identifies the four priority areas for carbon reduction in Leicestershire:
  - (a) Residential housing stock;
  - (b) Businesses;
  - (c) Transport;
  - (d) Community energy.

### **Implementation Plan**

22. The supporting Implementation Plan, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, has been developed through discussions with District Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Group (CLIMA) officers, Leicester City Council, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), community organisations, and voluntary sector organisations.

23. The Implementation Plan, covering the interim period to 2017, outlines the actions required underneath each of the four priorities to meet the 23% reduction target.
24. To give an indication of progress over the lifetime of the Plan an interim target has been set to achieve 50 kilo tonnes reduction in carbon emissions by 2017.
25. It is intended that the Implementation Plan will be a living document and will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Director should circumstances change (e.g. resources become available, Government policy changes). If any significant changes are considered necessary a report would be submitted to the Cabinet to seek approval for these.
26. The Plan does not commit the County Council to any actions unless the appropriate resources can be secured to deliver them.

### **Proposed Actions**

27. A summary of the key actions to support the Carbon Reduction Strategy's four priorities is presented below. Appendix 2 details all the actions in full.
28. **Priority 1:** Reduction of carbon emissions from residential housing stock are:
  - (a) Develop a marketing and information campaign to target specific sectors of domestic households;
  - (b) Develop a community energy share offer model to support the installation of photovoltaic panels on domestic housing stock;
  - (c) Provide support to planning officers on renewable technology regulations;
  - (d) Provide front line staff with training.
29. **Priority 2:** Reducing carbon emissions from businesses are:
  - (a) Partnership with the Leicester Energy Agency;
  - (b) Exploring the feasibility for district heating networks;
  - (c) Increased Renewable Heat Incentive applications (RHI) from businesses in Leicestershire;
  - (d) Reducing carbon emissions from the County Council's estates;
  - (e) Engage with planning offers to support on-farm renewable energy generation and anaerobic digestion.
30. **Priority 3:** Reducing carbon emissions from transport are:
  - (a) Encouraging active and sustainable travel;
  - (b) Improve the performance and reliability of the transport network;
  - (c) Reduce the impact of traffic on air quality;

- (d) Building the resilience of the transport network and transport assets to climate change.
31. **Priority 4:** Reducing carbon emissions from community energy are:
- (a) Develop a mechanism to support communities on energy projects in Leicestershire;
  - (b) Increase the number of community owned renewables in Leicestershire;
  - (c) Reduce carbon emissions from community buildings;
  - (d) Provide support to schools to reduce carbon emissions.

### **Comments of the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

32. In summary, the key points raised at the meeting include;
- (a) Whilst there was no legal requirement for the County Council to meet the targets laid out in the Strategy there are reputational risks if these are not met.
  - (b) Currently the Council is slightly ahead of the interim carbon reduction target for 2020 and as the Authority would meet its 2020 carbon reduction target with the completion of the RE:FIT programme.
  - (c) Ways to follow up the 4 Ways 2 Warmth work to support people in fuel poverty are being considered.
  - (d) Rail developments are not included in the Implementation Plan as it would not be possible to deliver a rail project within the lifespan of the Strategy up to 2020.
  - (e) The County Council could consider the possibility of hybrid cars as fleet vehicles where they were economically viable over the whole life of the vehicle; however, currently hybrid vehicles were expensive to purchase and maintain relative to standard cars.

### **Relevant Impact Assessments**

#### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

33. Individual projects will be assessed for equal opportunities implications as they are developed.

#### **Environmental Implications**

34. Implementation of the Carbon Reduction Strategy will reduce Leicestershire's carbon emissions and its impact on the environment

## **Background Papers**

35. County Council's Environment Strategy 2011-2021;  
[www.leics.gov.uk/environment\\_strategy](http://www.leics.gov.uk/environment_strategy)

2008 Climate Change Act;  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents)

Climate Local Commitment;  
[www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/climate-local/-/journal\\_content/56/10180/5831101/ARTICLE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/climate-local/-/journal_content/56/10180/5831101/ARTICLE)

LLEP European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy 2014-2021;  
[http://www.llep.org.uk/index/downloads/filename/img\\_1392026045\\_3039.pdf/catid/22/filetitle/eu-sif-strategy-31.1.14.pdf](http://www.llep.org.uk/index/downloads/filename/img_1392026045_3039.pdf/catid/22/filetitle/eu-sif-strategy-31.1.14.pdf)

Leicestershire County Council Medium Term Financial Strategy  
2014/15 to 2017/18;  
[http://politics.leics.gov.uk/Published/C00000134/M00003961/A100037151/\\$5aBudgetReportoftheCabinet.docx.pdf](http://politics.leics.gov.uk/Published/C00000134/M00003961/A100037151/$5aBudgetReportoftheCabinet.docx.pdf)

Minutes of the meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 to approve the  
County Council Environment Strategy 2011-2021;  
<http://cexmodgov1/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=3293&Ver=4>

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – The Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire 2014-20

Appendix 2 – Carbon Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2014-17

Appendix 3 – Minutes of Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

This page is intentionally left blank