

Agenda item:

Full Council

On 17th January 2011

Report Title. First Annual Carbon Report

Report of **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**

Signed :

Contact Officer :Jessica Sherlock, Policy & Projects Manager, Environmental Resources
Ext: 3525

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non key decision**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Council's carbon reduction activity and carbon footprint and establish a transparent framework for reporting on progress to reach the Council's carbon targets. The report also sets out the next steps for the development of a Carbon Management Plan for Haringey.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

2.1. For the last few decades, scientists, politicians and the media have been engaged in lengthy debates about global warming or, as we now refer to it, climate change. However, as we go into 2011 the question is now not whether human activity is causing climate change, but to what extent we can limit it. There is a general agreement that the average global temperature cannot rise more than two degrees centigrade without there being catastrophic consequences, but there is little consensus yet on how preventing this increase in temperature will actually be achieved.

Even at two degrees we are likely to face significant damage to our environment, alongside severe social and economic challenges. The Stern Review into Climate Change estimates that climate change unchecked will cost at least £1.85 trillion or £272

for every human being on the planet, which is equivalent to 5% of the global economy.

While there can be no doubt that overall global success to contain climate change will rely on inter-governmental agreement and collaboration, the progress at Cancun does not offer enough hope that action will be taken in time. It is too easy to fool ourselves that climate change is some far off issue that we can deal with later, but in truth if we don't start to take action now to ensure our emissions reach their peak by 2015, the costs of taking sufficient action later will not be affordable. In short, the longer we leave it, the more it will cost later, and the more it will impact on our lives and the lives of our children.

In the current fiscal climate, when the current Government is slashing local government budgets, many are falling into the trap of saying that the Green agenda is now a luxury we cannot afford. However in Haringey, we made a real commitment to tackle climate change – and to tackle it locally – by becoming the first major authority to sign up to a pledge to a 40% reduction in carbon emissions in our borough by 2020.

Admittedly it is an extremely ambitious target. The only real reductions in carbon emissions we have seen so far have been associated with economic decline, and the prospect of an end to this recession may lead to emissions going back up again. However, with the potential severity of the impact on the people of Haringey, tackling our emissions is an imperative we simply cannot afford not to take seriously. It is an investment to safeguard our future.

When we talk about *One Borough, One Future*, there is an added pertinence to this promise in the context of climate change. The effects of climate change will impact each and every one of us who live and work in Haringey, but the vulnerable in our society will be worst hit. It is likely to widen inequality, and create a future that is uncertain, unstable and bleak for us all.

Uneven access to environmental resources is a fact in our global society. The poorest pay more as a proportion of their total income for energy, than wealthier people. Managing carbon more effectively is therefore not only a matter of good environmental stewardship, it is also a matter of social justice.

We will not achieve our target alone. Reaching a 40% reduction in emissions will require support from national government and, more importantly, coordinated action from everyone in the borough, be that, businesses, faith groups, schools, public bodies, charities and every individual who lives in the borough. We all have a role to play, which is why we are creating Haringey 40:20, a membership organisation for all those who want to get involved in delivering the Borough's Carbon Management Plan.

This Annual Carbon Report is the first of its kind to be produced by a local authority. Furthermore, I am making a commitment to providing one at the start of each calendar year, so that everyone can see the progress we are making and the investment we are committing to safeguard our future.

Just like any Annual Budget, the objective is to give transparency, accountability and tangibility to the carbon emission levels of both the Council, and the Borough as a whole. My hope that our example will be followed elsewhere round the country and that through greater accountability will come greater understanding, and ultimately greater action.

This is a dramatic and ambitious new chapter for the borough. I hope you find this report an interesting source of inspiration to come and join us on the journey to a more sustainable future for Haringey.

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

3.1. This report links to priority 3 and 4 of the Greenest Borough Strategy, (supporting the Haringey's Sustainable Communities Strategy), and includes commitments to reducing carbon emissions and to demonstrating leadership by example. The report also relates to the commitment that has been made to reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2020 on a 2005 baseline and the Council Plan Priority to develop an action plan to achieve this target.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. The report provides a framework for making transparent the progress that is being made by the Council and other organisations, in order to support work towards a 40% reduction target by 2020.
- 4.2. It is recommended that Council discuss and debate the issues raised by this report and that Councillors provide their full support to the development of a Carbon Management Plan for Haringey in 2011. This success of the Carbon Management Plan for Haringey will depend on the coordinated action of businesses, faith groups, schools, public bodies, charities and every individual who lives in the borough.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

5.1. The recommendation is made on the basis that climate change poses a severe threat to the environment, community and to the local economy in Haringey as has been widely acknowledged in key Council strategies and plans.

6. Other options considered

6.1. No other options considered.

7. Summary

- 7.1. Climate change poses a severe threat to the environment, to our community and to our local economy. Following a campaign organised by Friends of the Earth involving hundreds of local residents, there was cross party political support to work towards a 40% carbon reduction by 2020.
- 7.2. A Carbon Management Plan covering the Council's operations was agreed in 2010 and sets out an ambitious plan to deliver a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2015; ahead of the community wide target, demonstrating leadership by example and providing a benchmark for other organisations in the borough.
- 7.3. Haringey is one of 9 local authorities in England to have been selected to take part in the Department of Energy and Climate Change, Local Carbon Frameworks

pilot. The aim of this pilot is to develop best practice in local carbon reduction action planning and brings together a core group of experts to support those pioneering action on climate change. During 2011 Haringey will lead on the development of a Carbon Management Plan for the borough. This will require support from residents, businesses, organisations and voluntary groups across Haringey and for this reason, a membership organisation for all those wishing to support action on climate change, known as Haringey 40:20, will be established.

7.4. This report provides an overview of the carbon emissions baseline for Haringey and sets out a transparent framework for reporting on progress towards attaining the carbon target. The report also explains the next steps being taken to develop a Carbon Management Plan for Haringey.

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

8.1 The costs of preparing this report have been contained within existing budgets. This report does not commit the Council to any direct expenditure other than the cost of maintaining the staff resources required to produce a Carbon Budget report each year. The Council has been very successful in securing grant funding for Carbon reduction work in recent years, however it needs to be acknowledged that firstly the level of external funding available is likely to be severely restricted in years to come, and secondly the level of Investment required in order to achieve targets and to implement projects such as Decentralised energy and setting up an ESCO is likely to exceed the funding the Council can provide itself. Therefore it will be necessary to have the skilled resources available to maximise the level of external grant funding received as well as being able to secure funding from partner organisations. As individual schemes are developed relevant funding packages will need to be agreed by Cabinet. However it should also be noted that Carbon Reduction work has the potential to deliver significant savings or cost avoidance to the Council particularly with regard to Energy costs.

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

9.1 The Head of Legal Services notes the contents of the report and confirms there are no legal implications for the Council at this stage.

10. Head of Procurement Comments –[Required for Procurement Committee]

10.1. N/A

11. Equalities &Community Cohesion Comments

11.1. Climate change is an issue that affects all people living and working in Haringey and is likely to have a disproportionately high impact on the poorest and most vulnerable in our community. Managing carbon emissions and limiting climate change is therefore not only a matter of environmental stewardship but also supports Haringey's commitment to equalities and community cohesion.

11.2. Haringey 40:20 is a membership organisation being established to take forward action on climate change and will be open to all residents, voluntary groups, businesses and organisations in Haringey who are committed to tackling climate

change.

12. Consultation

12.1 No consultation is required in relation to this report.

13. Service Financial Comments

13.1. (See Chief Financial Officer comments)

14. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

14.1. The full First Annual Carbon Report is provided in the Appendix.

15. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

15.1. There is no exempt information associated with this report.