

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 27 MARCH 2007

SCOTTISH CLIMATE CHANGE DECLARATION

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the preparation of a Scottish Climate Change Declaration.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) have prepared a Scottish Climate Change Declaration as a mechanism by which local authorities and other public bodies may demonstrate a commitment to developing appropriate strategies which will reduce the impact of their activities on the environment, and more specifically on reducing the effects of climate change.
- 2.2 The Declaration allows local authorities to demonstrate that they believe climate change will have a significant impact on services and that action is necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A similar declaration has already been supported in England and Wales.
- 2.3 The Declaration has been developed by a partnership of public agencies and received the support of CoSLA at the Leader's meeting on 27 October 2006.
- 2.4 Local authorities have now been invited to sign the Declaration and demonstrate their commitment to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The Declaration can be found in Appendix 1 to this report.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 In signing the Declaration, the Council would be committing to producing an action plan with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all Council properties, services and other activities. Further, it would be necessary to demonstrate that climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are in place across all services.
- 3.2 In developing an appropriate action plan, it would be necessary to assess the risks and opportunities for the Council's services and communities of predicted climate change scenarios and impacts, and take action to adapt accordingly and in line with sustainable development principles.

- 3.3 It would also be necessary to publish an annual statement on the monitoring and progress of the Council's response to climate change and outline the targets set as well as the actions taken, outcomes achieved and further actions required.
- 3.4 It can be seen that a considerable resource input would be required to produce and implement this plan. Further, it may be necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the plan produced.
- 3.5 The Council has the opportunity to highlight examples of current good practice and demonstrate the significant work which has already been taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions should the Declaration be signed.
- 3.6 The Council can demonstrate good practice through the commitment to establish a base-line position in terms of carbon emissions. Further, the Council's partnership with the Carbon Trust, has permitted the on-going development of an action plan to minimise carbon emissions from buildings, waste, street lighting and transport activities.
- 3.7 Examples of practical measures to reduce carbon emissions include the development and implementation of a Waste Prevention Action Plan which aims to minimise the amount of resources the Council consumes and to ensure that waste is re-used or recycled wherever possible. Another significant example of good practice can be seen in the energy savings measures introduced by providing energy saving lighting, draft-proofing and insulation wherever practical.
- 3.8 Responsibility for developing and implementing an action plan to address climate change is required to be assumed by each Department of the Council. However, the development, monitoring and review of the action plan may be facilitated by the Sustainable Development Officer's Working Group which is attended by a representative of each Department.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Making a commitment to deliver Scotland's Climate Change Declaration is consistent with the aims of the Improving the Environment section of the Community Plan and reflects the content of the Action Plan for this section.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Nil

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There will be financial costs and benefits to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change in East Ayrshire over the long term. It is currently not possible to quantify these costs.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Scotland's Climate Change Declaration acknowledges the reality and importance of climate change and allows Councils to demonstrate a commitment to local action.
- 7.2 The Declaration commits signatory authorities to take appropriate action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- 7.3 The Declaration has been developed by a partnership of public agencies and received the support of COSLA at a COSLA Leader's meeting on 27 October 2006.
- 7.4 Delivery of the commitment made by the Council in signing the Declaration may be facilitated by the Sustainable Development Officers Working Group with each Department taking responsibility for the development and implementation of their individual mitigation and adaptation measures.
- 7.5 This report has been considered by and has the support of the Corporate Management Team.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Committee is invited:-
- (i) to make a commitment to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change by signing Scotland's Climate Change Declaration;
 - (ii) to remit to the Chief Executive to make the necessary administrative arrangements; and
 - (iii) to note the report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

5th March 2007
WS/MT

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - Nil
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Scotland's Climate Change Declaration

We acknowledge that

- Climate change is occurring and human activities are having a significant negative and potentially dangerous influence.
- Climate change will have far reaching effects on Scotland's people and places, impacting on our economy, society and environment.
- There are significant social, economic and environmental benefits in taking action to combat and prepare for climate change.
- We all in Scotland have duties and responsibilities to take action to both mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote the sustainable development and well-being of our local communities.

We welcome the

- Scottish and UK Climate Change Programmes and targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Opportunity for local government in particular and other agencies, businesses, voluntary and community organisations and individuals to show leadership at a local level to respond to climate change.
- Opportunity to address climate change by promoting the sustainable development of our local communities.

We commit _____ from this date _____ to

- Work with the Scottish Executive and the UK Government to contribute to the delivery of Scotland's and the UK's Climate Change Programmes, including to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to future climate change scenarios.
- Produce and publicly declare a plan, with targets and time-scales, to achieve a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from our own operations. This will include our energy use and sourcing, travel and transportation, waste production and disposal, estate management, procurement of goods and services, and improved staff awareness.
- Ensure that greenhouse gas reduction and climate change adaptation measures are clearly incorporated into our new and existing strategies, plans and programmes, in line with sustainable development principles.

- Assess the risks and opportunities for our services and our communities of predicted climate change scenarios and impacts, and take action to adapt accordingly and in line with sustainable development principles.
- Encourage and work with others in our local community to take action to adapt to the impact of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- Publish an annual statement on the monitoring and progress of our climate change response, detailing targets set, actions taken, outcomes achieved and further actions required.
- Collaborate with other organisations to promote good practice on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

_____ acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community, Scotland and other countries during the 21st Century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate within our local area.

Signatories

Council Leader

Chief Executive

Scottish Ministers welcome this declaration and will work in partnership with the signatories and their representatives to support the delivery of these commitments.

Scottish Executive Minister (note 23/11: final ministerial titles to be confirmed)

SCCDECLARATION FINAL VERSION