

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Agenda Item 23
Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Monitoring Outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of
Climate Change Adaptation

Date of Meeting: 19 July 2011

Report of: Strategic Director of Place

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report enables the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to monitor and track progress on the scrutiny recommendations on Climate Change Adaptation. The recommendations and progress update appears as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.2 The report will help the Commission to assess the impact and consequences of the scrutiny recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the Commission considers the action taken against the scrutiny recommendations on Climate Change Adaptation, and provides feedback to the Executive
- (2) That the Commission determines whether a further tracking report relating to this scrutiny review is required.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Scrutiny Review

The Scrutiny Review of Climate Change Adaptation was established in March 2010 by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to investigate 'what work needs to be done to make good progress in planning for a changing local climate.'

- 3.2 The panel comprised University of Sussex Professor Gordon MacKerron (Chairman) and Councillors Tony Janio, Gill Mitchell and Vicky Wakefield-Jarrett.
- 3.3 The Panel's completed report was endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 20 July 2010 and referred to the Council's Executive.
- 3.4 The 23 September 2010 Cabinet considered and agreed the actions in reply to the scrutiny report. The Scrutiny report and cabinet response were reported to full Council for information on 16 December 2010.
- 3.5 The work of scrutiny members and officers on this panel won 'Good Scrutiny Award 2011 Winners for Innovation'- judges were particularly impressed by joint working with the University of Sussex and cross-public service approach.

3.6 Monitoring Scrutiny Reviews

The usual arrangements for monitoring the outcome of scrutiny recommendations are:

- a) The decision-makers, to whom the recommendations are addressed, are asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations normally within two months, including an action plan and timetable for implementation with named contact officers to action the recommendations.
 - b) The report of the scrutiny review and response from the decision-makers are then reported together to full Council for information.
 - c) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee normally receives a report of progress against the agreed recommendations, six months after the decision is made.
 - d) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may at that stage determine if any further monitoring is required; whether a progress report is required after a further six months or one year. Otherwise the Committee may resolve that no more monitoring is necessary.
- 3.7 A summary of the Scrutiny Recommendations and replies plus progress in implementation appears at Appendix 1 to this report.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

- 4.1 Our climate is changing. Across the country the trend for winter rainfall has increased in recent years & summer rainfall has decreased. There has been an upward trend in average temperatures & mean sea level has risen. Climate projections are telling us that we will experience hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, disruption in usual weather

patterns & more frequent or intense weather events (e.g. heat waves, droughts, and flooding) and continued rising sea level. This is likely to have an adverse impact on water quality & availability, biodiversity, human health, buildings & infrastructure, soils & the economy.

- 4.2 It is important to make the distinction between emergency planning and adaptation planning. Emergency planning relates to a reactive response to situations, whereas adaptation planning is about developing a proactive approach and looks to save money in the long term through building resilience. The goal of adapting to climate change is to minimise impacts and therefore reduce the requirements for an emergency response in the first place.
- 4.3 The new administration have identified three key priorities going forward, one of which is the greenest city in the UK. A core component in establishing the greenest city will be establishing an action plan for adaptation. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability has agreed to be the lead member for climate change adaptation and will approach this from a citywide perspective.
- 4.4 Appendix 1 provides a detailed update on the recommendations and progress made during the last 6 months. The key points are:
 - A Local Climate Impact Profile study using national methodology has been undertaken.
 - Basic analysis of Climate Projections has been undertaken but further work is required.
 - The Climate Change Action Plan is developing and is now being aligned with the One Planet Framework, and will be considered as part of the work around developing a new Corporate Plan, City Performance Plan and developing an Intelligent Commissioning plan.
 - Phase 1 (of 4) of the Surface Water Management Plan has been completed and the information produced used to inform the preparation of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment.
 - Key adaptation considerations are being integrated into tools and guidance for commissioners and report writers.
 - There has been some progress against the former National Indicator on adaptation planning.
 - A risk for severe weather and climate change adaptation is being drafted for consideration in the Strategic Risk Register.
- 4.5 Although steps are being taken it is felt that the organisation and city, with a focus on residents, businesses and the community/voluntary sector, would benefit from a co-ordinated long-term approach to adaptation, following the framework as set out in the former National Indicator 188.

- 4.6 The adaptation scrutiny panel emphasised the importance of tracking progress against the NI188 framework. The Sustainability Team reviewed progress against this in May 2011 and the prognosis was that the organisation remains at Level '0' but is heading towards Level '1' on this framework with a number of actions achieved at this level.
- 4.7 The Local Climate Impact Profile work made steps towards raising awareness of climate change adaptation across the organisation. Much more could be done across the city to improve resilience and preparedness, including detailed analysis of the local climate projections, a comprehensive assessment of risks and opportunities of our changing climate and a community engagement programme to increase resilience in severe weather.

Rather than producing a lengthy report with the findings of the LCLIP, a short summary paper has been produced and a database has been developed with detailed information. This can be drawn upon during the next stages of work when analysing the climate projections and undertaking risk assessments with service areas.

- 4.8 In order to progress along the framework for NI 188 and indeed the adaptation agenda, it is hoped that a programme of work may be developed, agreed and implemented – following agreement on resources. This would need to be considered as part of the Councils new Corporate Plan, City Performance Plan and Intelligent Commissioning plan.

4.9 Next steps

Based on current resourcing, future adaptation work could be based on a set of options:

- further integration into existing planned projects / services e.g. Core Strategy, emergency planning, Surface Water Management Plan, Biosphere Reserve bid etc
- Explore funding bids to build on this work, following the NI 188 framework
- Explore commissioning options
- Develop joint programmes with neighbouring authorities and the universities
- Share learning with strategic partnerships in the city to broaden scope of work

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The scrutiny panel met six times and heard evidence in public from a wide range of contributors, including: the Environment Agency,

Southern Water, Sussex Wildlife Trust, ESFRS, Kent County Council, the PCT and internal officers from BHCC.

6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 6.1 Progressing adaptation work requires resources to be identified which will need to be considered in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the availability of external funding. Funding of £275,000 from DEFRA supports the development of the Surface Water Management Plan for Brighton and Hove City Council.

Finance Officer consulted: Anne Silley

Date 29 June 2011

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 Monitoring and reviewing the outcomes of its recommendations is a legitimate function of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.

The options available to the Commission on reviewing the outcomes are set out at paragraph 3.6(d) above.

Lawyer consulted: Oliver Dixon

Date: 8 July 2011

Equalities Implications:

- 6.3 Severe weather events increase the vulnerability of residents within the community, including the elderly, those living alone, having a pre-existing disease, being immobile or suffering from mental illness and being economically disadvantaged. An Equalities Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken on any programme of adaptation work going forward.

Sustainability Implications:

- 6.4 Planning for climate change adaptation will include consideration to environmental, social and economic risks and opportunities.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 6.5 There is much debate about the association between hot weather and crime. However, many reports of the association between crime and hot weather are more speculative than definitive. Hot weather is linked with higher levels of street violence and attacks as well as unrest (Rotton and Cohn, 2000a, 2000b). There is also the likelihood that road rage increases during periods of anomalous warmth (Kenrick and MacFarlane, 1984), as does domestic violence (Auliciems and DiBartolo, 1995) and the number of police call outs (LeBeau and Corcoran, 1990). In contrast, warm weather may reduce crime as people chose to go elsewhere during hot weather, thus diverting incidences (Bailey K, Exeter News, August 3, 2004).

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 6.6 It is advised that risk and opportunity assessments should be performed for each service delivery area looking at future climate projection scenarios. A Strategic Risk for severe weather and climate change adaptation is being drafted for consideration during the next review of the Strategic Risk Register.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 6.7 These are significant given the nature of severe weather events and the increased probability of greater frequency, so work with Strategic Partnership will be essential. Climate Change is likely to have an impact on water quality & availability, biodiversity, human health, buildings & infrastructure, soils & the economy, agriculture and tourism.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Climate Change Adaptation, 23 September 2010 Cabinet response and progress against the recommendations.

Documents In Members' Rooms/ Background Documents

None.