

Statement from the

Scrutiny Board
(Environment and
Neighbourhoods)

The Council's CO₂
Emissions

Introduction



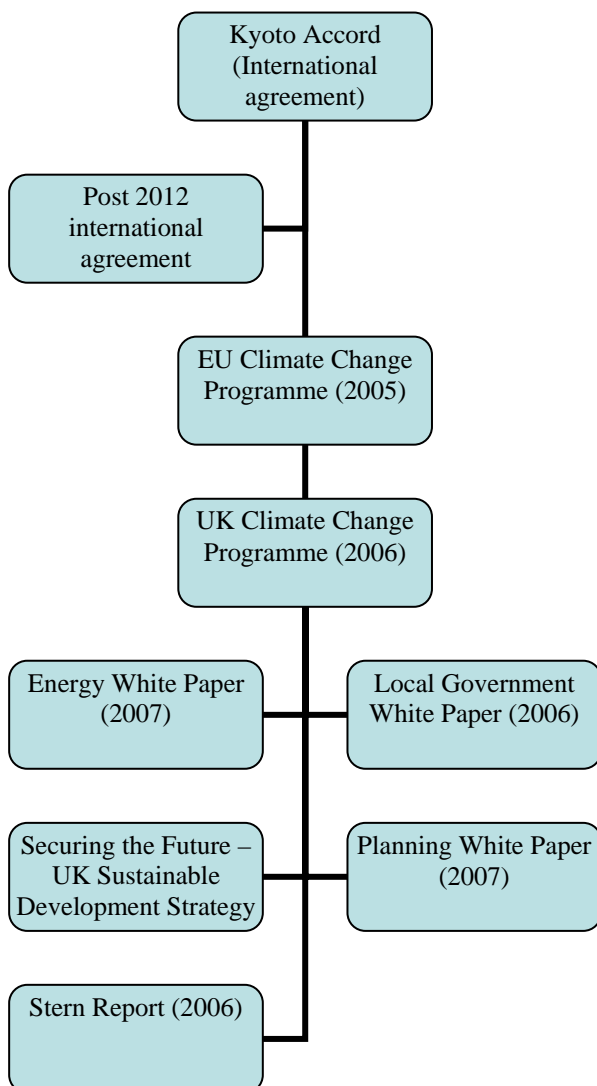
Introduction

1. There is now near universal acceptance by world governments that climate change is occurring as a result of man-made greenhouse gas emissions. Previously, the drive for reducing the levels of carbon emissions has come from a small, but increasing, number of committed individuals.
2. However, it is now generally recognised that local councils are uniquely placed to provide leadership, raise awareness and influence behaviours across a range of issues and councils are now recognising that systemic changes locally could have a significant contribution on the level of carbon emissions in general.
3. In addition, it is also recognised that action by local councils is crucial to the achievement of the Government's climate change objectives.
4. In September 2007, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) included an inquiry into the Council's Climate Change agenda on its work programme.
5. Given the breadth of this subject area, it was subsequently agreed that such an inquiry should initially focus on the issues associated with the Council's own CO₂ emissions. As such, the following areas would be considered:
 - Review of the DEFRA indicators relating to CO₂ reduction; the definitions, targets and current performance.
 - Resourcing the climate change agenda in general and specifically with regard to reducing CO₂ emissions
 - Role of external advisers/bodies in helping the Council to reduce its CO₂ emissions
 - Energy management and the work of the departmental champions
 - Future Council estate – sustainable building
 - Travel policies for staff and fleet management
6. A working group was established and comprised:-
 - Cllr B Anderson (Chair)
 - Cllr A Blackburn
7. Attending the working group as witnesses were:-
 - Chief Asset Management Officer
 - Head of Sustainable Development
 - Environment City Manager
 - Head of Fleet Services
 - Climate Change Officer
8. The following comments and recommendations provide a summary of the areas and issues considered to date.

Comments and Recommendation



1. We considered a brief overview of the policy drivers, targets and current performance around CO₂ emissions. As illustrated below, this focused on the hierarchy of International and National policy framework, which helps to identify the key drivers.



2. We also considered the current performance baseline, existing targets and future target setting.

Current performance baseline

3. In 2006/07, the total corporate CO₂ emissions arising from the use of Leeds City Council assets amounted to 95,000 tonnes (approx.) and a breakdown of this total is provided in the table below¹.

Element	CO ₂ (tonnes)	% of total
Buildings	79000	83%
Fleet	9700	10%
Street Lighting	5300	6%
Waste	800	1%
TOTAL	94800	100%

4. This showed us that in 2006/07 emissions from the Leeds City Council building stock was 60% (approx.) lower than they were in 1991/2. However, discounting the CO₂ reductions associated with purchasing green electricity (66,000 tonnes of CO₂ in 2005/06) this figure reduce to below 30%.

¹ Current work around (the national indicator) NI 185 is producing some different figures for our baseline, partly due to a new methodology and partly due to better data collection, so it should be noted that the table included is indicative and a full baseline for 2008 is currently being established, in line with NI 185.

Comments and Recommendation



5. We heard that figures for other elements of the baseline, i.e. emissions associated with staff travel for official duties and for employee commute, had not yet been calculated. It is hoped that these can be included by 2008/09.

Existing targets and future target setting

6. We heard that the Council, through its Energy and Water Management Plan, had committed itself to achieve a 15% reduction in CO₂ emissions from its building stock between 2004-08.
7. We were also advised that, while the Council was on track to meet this target, currently, local authorities do not have any specific national targets relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Despite the current lack of any national targets, we heard that it may be possible that local councils will need to adopt targets in future, potentially emerging through:
- Climate Change Bill;
 - Carbon Reduction Commitment;
 - Comprehensive Area Assessment
9. We believe that by signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in June 2006, the Council has identified climate change as a strategic issue for the City.
10. We acknowledge the development of a holistic climate change strategy for Leeds that, while

recognising the need to adapt to climate change, will also contain specific actions both to reduce emissions from the Council's estate and from the whole city. We welcome the intention to publish this strategy by June 2008.

11. We heard that the Leeds Climate Change Strategy will contain an emissions target for the City, likely to be in the order of 60-90% below 1990 levels by 2050, with an interim target for 2025.
12. We welcome the intention to publish the Leeds Climate Change Strategy by June 2008, and feel that the development of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) provide strong opportunities to access specific new resources to tackle climate change within Leeds.

Recommendation 1

That, to provide much needed new resources, at least one of the 35 LAA priorities for Leeds focuses on climate change.

13. We also note the Joint Commitment, drawn up by the Core Cities and launched in November 2007, contains a series of commitments from both Government and the each of the cities, including:
- Achieve or exceed targets for reducing CO₂ emissions,

Comments and Recommendation



increasing air quality standards and reducing landfill in line with the new Climate Change Bill and related legislation.

- Reduce our own energy consumption and work jointly on increasing renewable energy generation, e.g. through Energy Service Companies.

14. We also welcome the news that Leeds has been selected as one of the partners of choice by the Carbon Trust. We believe that this reflects the high level of commitment by the Council and its local partners to turn advice into action. The Council has much to gain from this professional advice available through the Carbon Trust and should use this to further strengthen the Leeds Climate Change Strategy.

Energy Performance in Building Directive (EPBD)

15. We heard that the absence of government software is preventing the issue of Energy Certificates being taken forward. While we acknowledge that a thorough data validation exercise is taking place in lieu of the arrival of the software, we believe it is vital that the Council identifies those buildings where energy performance is poor and agrees an appropriate improvement plan.

Recommendation 2

That all major sites are surveyed as soon as possible and where the certificates are poor, a clear plan of action to improve them up to the maximum feasible and viable score is drawn up

Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC)

16. Formerly known as the Energy Performance Commitment, we heard about the government's proposals to apply mandatory emissions trading to cut carbon emissions from large commercial and public sector organisations. Given the Council's utility bill is in the region of £20m, we acknowledge that the Council is likely to be part of the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme.
17. We believe this provides an opportunity and additional fiscal incentive to increase efforts to reduce emissions from the Council's buildings. However, we also believe that failing to prepare sufficiently for the introduction of the CRC scheme, could leave the Council exposed to significant financial risks arising from poor pricing of auctioned credits and from poor management of trading arrangements.

Comments and Recommendation



18. As such, we believe this is likely to have budgetary implications and will need to be factored into the 2009 budget calculations.

Recommendation 3

That the Carbon Reduction Commitment implications are factored into the 2009 budget calculations.

Street Lighting

19. As part of a multi-million pound Public Finance Initiative (PFI) contract, the Council is systematically replacing all street lights with more efficient units. We heard that based on current usage patterns, it is estimated that this could lead to a 15% reduction in emissions. However, we believe that further reductions in emissions may be possible through altering the times that street lights are on and potentially through selective dimming late at night.
20. However, we recognise that any changes to the current usage patterns as a means of further reducing emissions, requires a detailed review prior to assess the likely reduction and associated implications.
21. We subsequently heard that technological advances, such as the use of Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting, could enhance the controllability of street lighting,

which in turn could result in an associated reduction in emissions.

Recommendation 4

That the potential for further reductions in CO₂ emissions through changes to the current usage patterns of street lighting be reviewed in more detail, and includes consideration of the implications associated with altering the times that street lights are on and potentially through selective dimming late at night.

Reducing emissions from future buildings

22. We recognise that considering the energy efficiency of the Council's current estate needs to be supported by a suitably robust approach when producing specifications for new-build and major refurbishment projects.
23. We believe this could be achieved through the use of Whole Life Costing analysis that could be linked to a ring-fenced fund to pay additional capital costs where revenue costs would be recouped within an agreed time period, for example, 10 years.

Comments and Recommendation



Recommendation 5

That a policy be developed and implemented to ensure the use of Whole Life Costing analysis when specifying new-build and major refurbishment projects, including the development of a linked, ring-fenced, fund to pay additional capital costs where revenue costs would be recouped within an agreed time period.

Fleet Management

24. We note the work being undertaken by Fleet Services and Environment City to minimise the impacts of emissions from Council fleet activity and believe that emissions from the Council's fleet should not be overlooked.
25. We were advised that Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel was introduced into the Council's vehicle fleet in 1998 and that exhaust particulate traps have been fitted to all fleet vehicles (over 7.5 tonnes) to help improve the air quality in the Leeds area.
26. We were also advised that to further enhance the Council's commitment to minimising the environmental impact of its vehicle fleet, where possible, all vehicles purchased meet the current noise and emissions standards. In addition, future vehicle purchasing procedures will ensure that the engines of such vehicles meet the

EURO 5 criteria, well in advance of any legislative requirements.

27. We also heard that an alternative fuelled vehicle seminar was held by the Council during 2007, with invitations being extended to both the public and private sectors from around the City. The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for participants to attend and see / drive the vehicles first hand.
28. It is clear to us that new initiatives are constantly being developed and in conjunction with Cenex, a government led organisation, and the Energy Savings Trust, Fleet Services are investigating the possible use of alternative fuelled vehicles in the Council's fleet of the future. This work supports the review currently being undertaken to map the level of CO₂ emissions from vehicle deployment and develop a targeted reduction programme.

Recommendation 6

That the Board, or its successor body be kept up-to-date regarding:

- (i) The on-going investigations around the use of alternative fuelled vehicles in the Council's fleet.
- (ii) The outcome of the current review of CO₂ emissions from vehicle deployment and the arising targeted reduction programme.