



# ***Vale of White Horse District Council Climate Change Strategy 2008 – 2010 and beyond***

November 2007

# **Vale of White Horse District Council Climate Change Strategy**

## **Foreword by Councillor Mary De Vere**

Climate Change is one of the most important influences facing society. Events similar to the 2007 floods in the district are expected to occur more frequently in the future.

Knowing what we do now about our effect on the climate, it is no longer possible to just hope that everything will be all right. The effects of climate change are already being felt, we need to act now, not only to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases but also to adapt to the climate as it changes.

To this end I am pleased that the Council has produced its first Climate Change Strategy. The Council will focus its efforts initially on its own operations and on those areas where it has powers that can be used to influence the actions of others. Leading by example is a key aspect of the Council's future climate change plans.

The Council will establish a series of indicators which can be used to monitor progress. These will be reported annually to ensure the Council's policies are making a difference.

# Vale of White Horse District Council Climate Change Strategy

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## Introduction

This Climate Change Strategy sets out a framework for action by the Council over the next three years to tackle the causes and effects of climate change. The Council plans to implement a range of measures over the coming years which will reduce the amount of greenhouse gas it produces directly and indirectly from its operations. The plan also contains actions to ensure Council services and infrastructure are resilient to future weather related events and that Council services are responsive to change. Through the powers the Council has it can also influence other organisations and individuals to reduce emissions and plan for the effects of climate change. This strategy is the beginning of a long term plan to drastically reduce emissions by 2050, as such these early years focus on developing the Council's capacity to deliver in the longer term.

The strategy focuses on those areas where the Council has either direct control via its operations and activities on greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation responses or has the ability to influence others through the services it provides. The Council acknowledges that there is a higher cost to saving carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) via our own operations than through using our influence and enforcement powers to save CO<sub>2</sub> in the wider community. This strategy aims to strike a balance between community leadership and cost effective internal CO<sub>2</sub> savings.

The Council aims to "get its own house in order" before tackling areas where it has limited influence. We will also be working with the Vale Partnership to ensure that the Community Strategy addresses climate change and that members of the partnership also have similar plans in place.

In March 2007 the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. In signing the declaration the Council;

- acknowledged that climate change is happening and will have profound impacts,
- has made a commitment to addressing climate change at a local level via the implementation of this strategy which it will publicly declare and regularly monitor,
- will encourage all sectors of the local community to follow the Council's example, and
- will work with our partners and local communities to develop plans to address the causes and effects of climate change according to local priorities.

The strategy addresses each of the Council's main functions and sets out an agreed programme of action which will be reviewed and updated annually as part of the Council's performance management process.

## **Aims and Objectives of the Strategy**

### **Aims**

#### Tackle the Causes of Climate Change

Reduce the amount of greenhouse gases arising either directly or indirectly from the Council's operations and to use our local authority powers where possible to influence the actions of others.

#### Deal With the Effects of Climate Change

Adopt an approach to service delivery and Council operations which takes account of the predicted changes in climate and to use our local authority powers where possible to influence others to adapt to climate change.

### **Objectives**

1. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions which are a direct result of Council operations. Targets:
  - a. Long-term - to reduce emissions by 60% of baseline position by 2050.
  - b. Medium-term - to reduce emissions by 20% of baseline position by the end of 2012/2013 financial year.
  - c. Short-term - to reduce emissions by 8% of baseline position by the end of 2010/2011 financial year.The baseline assessment will be part of the Council's Carbon Management Programme and Carbon Management Plan.
2. To adapt Council services and operations to climate change. Target – measures implemented by the Council to adapt to climate change should ensure that the Council is in the top 25% of local authorities for this indicator.
3. To use the Council's powers and influence get residents and other organisations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. Target – to deliver through the Vale Partnership district wide emissions reductions of 60% by 2050. Short term target to be set after further assessment.
4. To monitor, review and communicate the Climate Change Action Plan.

## How Will The Climate Change Strategy Be Implemented?

This strategy is supported by a list of actions, the implementation of which will be the responsibility of key officers across the authority with overall co-ordination being led by the Council's Principal Energy Officer. The actions that flow from this strategy will be built into the organisation's development programme, individual plans for each service and into the Council's performance management / corporate governance structure. Where appropriate the review of Council strategies and policies should take account of policies and actions in this strategy.

The strategy is dependent upon robust monitoring procedures being put in place to capture data on resource use and resultant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It is only with such data that informed decisions can be made about the best approach to take to reduce emissions in the most economic way. There are therefore some areas in the strategy which cannot be progressed without prior monitoring data being collected. To ensure all actions are progressed the Council will establish a cross departmental Climate Change Project Team which will be responsible to delivery of the action plan across the Council. A Climate Change Project Board will also be established to challenge the Climate Change Project Team to ensure the strategy delivers its stated objectives.

The Council has prioritised actions on the following basis. Each action in the plan below is colour coded indicating its relative priority.

	<b>Council has full control</b>	<b>Council has high level of influence</b>	<b>Council has some influence</b>
<b>Can be progressed quickly or already in place or ongoing</b>			
<b>Can be progressed quickly but requires prior investigation</b>			
<b>Not urgent or requires considerable investigation prior to implementation.</b>			

within 1 year	
within 2 years	
within 3 years	

The table below shows how many parts of the Council are affected by climate change.

	<p><b>Council as Corporate Manager</b></p> <p><b>Council can control activity</b></p> <p><b>Objectives 1, 2 and 4</b></p>	<p><b>Council as Service Provider and Community Leader</b></p> <p><b>Council can influence activity</b></p> <p><b>Objectives 3 and 4</b></p>
<p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p><b>Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property and Estates - Council's energy, waste and water use including contracted services</li> <li>• Contracts and Procurement</li> <li>• Transport (Green Travel Plan)</li> <li>• Organisational Development</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Strategy and Development Control</li> <li>• Community Strategy – Vale Partnership</li> <li>• Building Control</li> <li>• Housing Services</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Waste Management</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adaptation</b></p> <p><b>Manage the impacts / risks of climate change</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Planning and Business Continuity</li> <li>• Parks and Landscape Services</li> <li>• Property and Estates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Strategy and Development Control</li> <li>• Building Control</li> <li>• Vale Partnership</li> <li>• Parks and Landscape Services</li> </ul>

# What the Council Plans to Do

## Key Actions and Targets

The successful implementation of this strategy is dependent on the key actions set out below.

- All Council policies and strategies to take account of mitigation and adaptation responses when they are being reviewed. This will require an appraisal to be made of these strategies and policies.
- The Council will establish a cross cutting climate change team to help deliver the strategy and ensure it is integrated in to the day to day operations of the Council. A project board will also be established to ensure the strategy delivers on its stated objectives.
- Deputy Director Housing and Community Safety will have overall responsibility for the delivery of this strategy. Operational coordination will be handled by the Principal Energy Officer.
- Key elements of the Action Plan will be integrated into the Council's performance management framework. Accurate monitoring and the establishment of a baseline carbon footprint are critical to the Council being able to know if its actions are effective in meeting agreed targets. It is intended that targets for emissions reductions will be in line with those set out in the UK Climate Change Strategy i.e. 60% below 1990 baseline (or as best as can be calculated) levels by 2050 . A short-term interim target to reduce emissions by 2010 / 2012 can only be calculated once a baseline assessment has been carried out. The baseline assessment will be part of the Council's carbon management programme.
- Develop a Carbon Management Plan for the Council and aim to implement by 2009. **This will be the main mechanism by which the Council will reduce its own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Monitored via new performance framework indicator NI 185.**
- The Council's Communications Team will work with the Climate Change Team to involve staff and properly communicate what the Climate Change Strategy means in a way that is engaging and provokes positive action by staff.
- Carry out a Local Climate Impacts Profile to assess climate change impacts in the Council. **This will identify and prioritise those operations and services most at risk from climate change. Monitored via new performance framework NI 188.**
- Implement and enforce new standards for sustainability in new housing.



## What the Council Plans to Do

**Objective 1 To reduce greenhouse gas emissions which are a direct result of the Council's operations and where the Council has complete control.**

### Procurement

When purchasing goods and services the procurement decisions taken by the Council can have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions. By using its considerable purchasing power the Council can purchase goods and services that have minimal impact on the environment. The Council can also ensure its suppliers adopt practices which do not run counter to our own efforts to cut emissions.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Adopt a new Procurement Strategy for the Council ensuring it follows best practice in reducing CO <sub>2</sub> .	2008	Procurement Strategy operational early 2008.	Already budgeted	Contracts and Procurement
Provide appropriate staff training to ensure climate change policies derived from the new procurement strategy are followed.	Throughout 2008	As per Procurement Strategy training already budgeted for.	Already budgeted	Contracts and Procurement
Implement a programme to ensure impacts on the Council's carbon footprint are considered for major purchases. This will apply in the following order of priority over three years. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All large service contracts (initially in improvement plans and then in new contracts)</li> <li>2. Major commodity procurement decisions such as ICT equipment.</li> <li>3. All remaining procurement decisions.</li> </ol>	2009 and ongoing	Research and negotiate changes to contracts or improvement plans. This can be done as part of the contract preparation process.  Possible additional contract costs associated with additional requirements are unknown.	5 days per year for 2009 and 2010  £1,000 per year	Contracts and Procurement
Utilise the Contracts and Procurement Forum to develop workable solutions to sustainable procurement.	2008 and ongoing	Contracts and Procurement Forum will be made up of relevant Council officers.	No additional cost	Contracts and Procurement

## Transport

Transport within the district is a major source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This strategy acknowledges that the only way this can be tackled is through partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and through working with the local community. Other than through car parking in the district's town centres the Council has only limited opportunities to directly influence travel choice in the wider community. Reducing road transport emissions from its own operations is something the Council has some control over.

In 2006 the Council introduced its own Green Travel Plan for Council staff. Measures such as car sharing, encouraging cycling and home working are designed to reduce the commuting mileage of Council staff. The Green Travel Plan is an integral part of the Council's Climate Change Strategy as such it will be reviewed so that it can more effectively facilitate a reduction in Council's travel based emissions.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Establish monitoring procedures for all road transport relating to the Council's operations (including contracted out services and business mileage), to include fuel consumption data where applicable.	By April 2008	<p>½ day per month staff time required to collate this information if this cannot be done electronically.</p> <p>This requirement needs to go into contract improvement plans and new contracts.</p>	No additional cost or up to £1,600.	<p>Organisational Development (HR for business mileage)</p> <p>Client officers for contractor mileage</p>
In a future review of the Green Travel Plan it will be assessed for how effectively it contributes to climate change objectives including addressing the impact of business mileage on behalf of the Council, staff car park allocations to avoid Council travel contributing to traffic congestion in Abingdon and how the revised plan can be communicated to staff.	2008	<p>Review of Green Travel Plan in 07/08</p> <p>Identified measures may have some cost associated. Travel Plan budget may require some further funds to cover car share scheme administration.</p>	£1,000	Planning Services / Climate Change Team

<p>Car Parking Investigate how parking charges in Council operated car parks can be structured to encourage more effective use of cars and more use of public transport. Linked to review of fees and charges.</p>	<p>By end 2009</p>	<p>Some staff time to research best practice from other authorities and if appropriate prepare new policies and procedures.</p>	<p>£600</p>	<p>Planning Services (Car Parks)</p>
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## Council Energy, Water and Waste

The Council considers it important that it tries to reduce energy use associated with its own buildings and activities as a demonstration of its commitment to tackling climate change. The new National Performance Framework will now expect Local Authorities to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> from their own operations, this is likely to include contracted out services such as leisure and waste collection as well as local authority buildings. Cutting energy use will enable the Council to reduce its carbon footprint. This can only be done with proper monitoring of energy consumption and a programme of energy saving investments and behavioural change amongst staff. Currently, due to a lack of staff resource, the Council only has very limited programme of energy monitoring in place. The strategy seeks to make energy monitoring a high and properly resourced priority. As part of the legislation to comply with the European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, Communities and Local Government (CLG) have recently announced that all public buildings over 1,000m<sup>2</sup> will need to prominently display a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) by 1 October 2008.

Climate change is likely to increase pressure on water resources. It is often overlooked that water use also results in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due the energy used to pump and purify water. The Council will attempt to reduce water usage through the implementation of a water management plan this will apply to leisure centres even though they are not under the direct management of the Council.

The Council generates a substantial amount of waste from its own activities and could reduce both waste and associated costs by following the waste hierarchy - reduce, reuse recycle. Currently the Council has a limited programme of recycling in its buildings with plans to roll out a more comprehensive programme in 2008.

To tackle energy, water and waste from Council operations will require the Council to implement a Carbon Management Programme and set up a fund to pay for any capital investment required under the programme.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Collect energy, water and waste data for all facilities and ensure monitoring mechanisms are in place and that the Council has access to information. Audits may be required in some cases.	Early 2008	As soon as possible for those facilities where energy, water and waste is not monitored. Some staff time required to do this where it is currently not done – 8 days per year.	£1,600	Property and Estates, client officers and Waste Team
Using available data develop and a carbon management plan for the Council. Plan to be in place by end 2008.	By end 2008	<b>There is currently no capacity in the Council to develop or implement a carbon management plan. This is critical to the <u>Council reducing emissions which will be monitored via NI 185 of the New Performance Framework.</u></b>	Cost to develop Carbon Mgmt Plan assumed to be about £8,000 consultants fees	Property and Estates / Contracts and Procurement / Housing and Community Safety
Implementation will follow once the plan is complete and budget is in place to fund identified measures. Targets to be set for the reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions associated with the Council's resource use.  Work with sports / civic centre managers to implement site specific energy, water and waste management plans.	Implement Beginning 2009	Recycling pilot in west wing to be complete by end of 2007. To be rolled out to whole Council.  Initial work already carried out by SOL in conjunction with client officer and Vale Energy Team.	New Carbon Mgmt post costed at £40,000 per year for three years initially.	Positioning of the Carbon Mgmt role is undecided
Establish a revolving fund to be used to invest in CO <sub>2</sub> saving technology. The savings made to be reinvested into the fund.	For April 2009	The carbon management plan will identify the level of capital investment required. It is envisaged that the value of	Unknown until end 2008 This may	Positioning of the Carbon Mgmt role is undecided

		savings will make any investment cost neutral within 5 years.	be as high as £450,000 over 4 years	
<p>Once baseline consumption data has been established initiate an energy efficiency and climate change awareness programme for all staff to include the following elements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switch off campaign for monitors etc</li> <li>• Lighting and heating</li> <li>• Business travel and commuting</li> <li>• Council waste minimisation and recycling</li> </ul> <p>Include Council climate change work in induction programme for staff.</p>	End 2008	<p>ICT already monitors the number of computer monitors left on.</p> <p>Staff time to run campaign and promotional costs.</p>	£5,000 for all PR associated with the strategy.	<p>Organisational Development and Support</p> <p>(HR and Communications Team)</p>
Purchase electricity on a renewable energy tariff which will fund the development of more renewable energy capacity. This will need to be progressed via the Council's Procurement Strategy.	2008	This could be done on a rolling basis as contracts are renewed. This should be possible for no additional cost through the Office of Government Contracts.	No additional cost	Property and Estates / Contracts and Procurement
Where the Council is the land owner or developer it will strive to meet exemplary standards against the Code for Sustainable Homes. Up until 2010 this will mean building to code level 4 or above.	2009	This may require the Council to make a formal decision to set a threshold for reduced land values as a result of increased costs associated with developing to higher environmental standards.	Unknown and will depend on individual cases.	Property and Estates

## What the Council Plans to Do

**Objective 2** To adapt Council services and operations to climate change where the Council has complete control.

### Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

The Council has duty to coordinate civil defence in the case of certain emergencies. Many emergencies that require an emergency plan to be enacted are weather related. The UK Climate Impacts Programme predicts that extreme weather events of the type that would require the Council to enact emergency plan procedures will be more frequent in the future. The Council therefore recognises the need to be prepared for a range of weather related emergencies.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Undertake a Local Climate Impacts Assessment (LCLIP) to determine future weather related risks to the Council. Ensure results are considered in future decisions.	By end 2008	Some work already ongoing with July flood review which could feed into LCLIP. Officer time (20 days) key component of this work. <i>This is central to informing Council of required adaptation measures.</i>	£3,000	Climate Change Team
Review emergency planning procedures. Ensure the Council has adequate flood, heat wave and drought plans in place.	2008/09	Re-write of emergency plan currently taking place. Future revisions may be required as better risk data becomes available.	£3,000	Commercial Services (Emergency Planning)
Ensure that at the next review of the Business Continuity Plan that climate change impacts are recognised i.e. flooding and failed transport infrastructure will have an impact on the successful enactment of the plan.	Next review?		No additional costs	Commercial Services

## Biodiversity and Open Space Management

Leisure facilities and open space management at the Council are carried out under contract. The Council in its client role will be ensuring that the management of leisure facilities and open space takes account of the need to adapt to climate change. The type of recreational provision the Council provides in the future will also be influenced by climate change. The Council is also responsible for the protection of species under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. On sites it owns or operates the Council has a duty to monitor and protect biodiversity.

Actions	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Carry out a review of Council owned/controlled local sites and their management with information from UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) on specific adaptation measures. When contracts are being renewed (or via improvement plan) the procurement of plants and landscape services should take account of adaptation measures identified in the review. Outcomes of the review will need to ensure biodiversity and ecology are safeguarded under the NERC Act 2006.	<b>End 2008</b>	<p>There is no capacity to carry out this assessment in-house. This information is required to inform negotiations over new contracts.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity on actively managed sites will be monitored through indicator NI 197 of the National Performance Framework</b></p> <p>Any additional contract costs are unknown, but it is hoped that any climate change requirements can be cost neutral within new contracts.</p>	£3,000	Contract and Procurement (Parks)
The Council's Green Space, Sport and Recreational Provision Strategy to ensure climate impacts are considered and appropriate targets set.	2008 and ongoing	As identified by this work.	Unknown	Contracts and Procurement

## Building Management

Abbey House is the main office building used by the Council although the Council is responsible for various sports, civic centres and depots some of which are managed under contract. It is important that these buildings are able to perform within acceptable limits under predicted adverse conditions. Energy management plans will also need to take account of climate change and visa versa, i.e. installing air conditioning to cope with increased building temperatures will have a negative effect on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Actions	Timescale Priority.	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Using information from UKCIP, review how well buildings within the Council estate will cope with climate change and in particular adverse conditions. Costs associated with adaptation measures will be identified by the review.	2010	Use previous thermal comfort surveys for summer and winter building use by Oxford Brookes University as a first step in identifying problems.  Part of carbon management role.	Unknown until end 2009	Property and Estates / Housing and Community Safety



## What the Council Plans to Do

**Objective 3 To use the Council's powers to influence residents and organisations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.**

### Planning and Building Control

The planning and building control systems are the most important ways in which the Council can influence development in the Vale so that it minimises emissions of greenhouse gases and is also resilient to the effect of climate change. A key aspect of the development of future Council planning policy and the climate change strategy is the concept of sustainable development. The Council will promote sustainability as an integral part of its emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). Whilst this is in development a specific Planning Advice Note (PAN) will be produced to give developers some guidance in the interim period.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibly
Produce guidance and Council policy on sustainable construction and resources conservation via a PAN initially and then an Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.</li> <li>An escalating scale of on-site renewable energy deployed to offset operational CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for all developments over 10 houses – The Merton Rule</li> <li>An escalating scale of compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.</li> </ul>	Approved by early 2008	PAN prepared by Vale Energy Team is in draft from due for completion in early 2008  This will subsequently be incorporated into the 'Vale Design Guide' a Supplementary Planning Document programmed for completion 2008/09. The Design Guide will be produced as part of the LDF process.	£2,000 2 weeks officer time	Planning Services / Housing and Community Safety
Put in place a system whereby significant planning applications can be assessed for their compliance with requirements of the above Planning Advice Note and subsequent 'Design	In place once PAN has approved.	Operational once PAN is approved.  <b>There is currently no</b>	£20,000.	Planning Services / Housing and Community

Guide'. This will involve a closer working relationship between the Building Control and Planning departments as way of ensuring proper compliance with the PAN.		<b>capacity to cover this work once the PAN is in force.</b>  Initially a ½ FTE post will be required to promote and check compliance with new policy.		Safety / Building Control
Ensure relevant staff and committee members receive proper training on the content of the PAN and specifically mitigation and adaptation measures via specialist seminars.	Early 2008	In house training provided by Vale Energy Team and external partners.	£1,000	Planning Services / Building Control /Housing and Community Safety
Promote the PAN to house builders, building control officers and developers via Planning Agents Forum,	To launch PAN in early 2008	Produce appropriate literature.	No additional cost	Planning Services and Communications
All planning and building control applicants will be provided with information on climate change resilience/sustainable energy advice or signposting to such advice via partner agencies.	By end 2008.	In conjunction with the PAN launch and associated training. Partner services already provided via Service Level Agreements (SLAs)	No additional costs	Planning / Building Control Services / Housing and Community Safety
Strengthen the Affordable Housing SPD to include consideration of affordability in use through low energy and water consumption design features consistent with the Code for Sustainable Homes. Also ensure developers meet the requirements of the Sustainable Resource Use Planning Advice Note and or Housing Corporation Standards.	As and when this SPD is reviewed.	.	No additional costs	Planning Services / Housing and Community Safety
Review planning policies that set out the Council's requirements for local distributed generation of renewable energy and related supply chains to ensure they are consistent with latest Government guidance.	In conjunction with LDF	Costs associated with researching best opportunities for distributed generation. Engage services of TV Energy	No additional cost	Planning Services

## Housing

The Council currently has in place well established energy efficiency and affordable warmth programme for the owner occupied and private rented sectors under the Home Energy Conservation Act. These schemes will be further developed and targeted so as to maximise CO<sub>2</sub> reductions and provide affordable warmth. Housing Services also provide discretionary funding to support and encourage the take up of energy efficiency measures as well as provide access to discount schemes for insulation and energy saving products. CO<sub>2</sub> reduction will now be the primary focus of the Vale Energy Team; this will be progressed directly by the Council and through future work with the Vale Partnership to develop the community and business aspect to this strategy. The Council will now be required to report on per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the local area as part of the New Performance Framework for Local Authorities. The development of a strong commitment to tackle district wide emissions through the Vale Partnership will be critical in successfully reducing local CO<sub>2</sub>emissions.

The Vale Energy Team within Housing Services will be the main hub for the co-ordination of all of the Council's CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and adaptation activity.

Actions	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Analyse district-wide residential CO <sub>2</sub> emissions and set a target to reduce per capita CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from domestic energy consumption as part of a performance indicator.	Early 2008	Baseline assessment can be determined as part of Home Energy Conservation (HECA) work. This will be via a standard nationally applied method still to be supplied by the Department for Communities and Local Government.  <b>Monitored via new performance framework indicator NI 186 – PSA 27</b>	No additional cost	Housing and Community Safety (Vale Energy Team)

Review the work of the Vale Energy Team to ensure its work properly reflects the Council's climate change priority, maximises the effectiveness of levered funds and grants, addresses adaptation measures in the housing stock and is consistent with the Home Energy Conservation Act including fuel poverty.	End 2008	Grants Policy Review may result in additional discretionary grant to fund CO <sub>2</sub> reduction measures and house specific climate change adaptation measures.	Potential impact on capital grants budget for 2009. e£50,000	Housing and Community Safety (Vale Energy Team)
Work with partners to identify opportunities to develop targeted CO <sub>2</sub> saving projects such as those for solid wall properties, park homes and homes not on the gas network.	Scheme in place by 2009	Scheme will rely on levered funds through CERT programme. The Council discretionary grant funding may be required to provide match funding.	Potential impact on capital grants budget for 2009	Housing and Community Safety (Vale Energy Team)
Work with private sector landlords to introduce a scheme for insulation in properties used by the Council in its homelessness prevention work.	End 2008	Utilise housing discretionary grants.	Within existing grants budgets	Housing and Community Safety
Investigate the feasibility of the Council operating an Energy Services Company (via a joint venture) as an investment opportunity.  Energy Services Companies (ESCOs) should be promoted as a management solution to securing distributed generation schemes in the Vale.	2010	A development opportunity may present itself for this to be addressed earlier than indicated. The Council may wish to acquaint itself with the ESCO concept next year.	No additional cost to research position.	Housing and Community Safety (Vale Energy Team) in conjunction with Financial Services

## Environmental Health

The Council has responsibility to monitor air quality in the air quality management zones in the district. Many of the gases and small particles that affect air quality are greenhouse gases and are often produced when burning fossil fuels. Climate change will also have an impact on local air quality for example high temperatures and low winds produce a marked increase in low level ozone concentrations. Measures to improve air quality through reducing emissions of primary air pollutants therefore have direct links with other measures to control greenhouse gas emissions. Road transport emissions are the major cause of poor air quality. The Council therefore works with the County Council and other partners to put in place measures to improve air quality. Improving air quality is an

objective of the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy. As major employer based in Abingdon the Council is a significant traffic generator. Air quality therefore has links with the Council's Green Travel Plan.

Climate change may affect processes related to food preparation, hygiene and pest control. Many of these changes will be gradual but will still need to be monitored and Council inspection / control regimes changed accordingly.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Cost	Responsibility
Air quality to be considered in any future review of the Green Travel Plan.	By early 2008		No additional cost	Planning and Community Strategy / Environmental Health
Evaluate and put in place plans to reduce NOx and PM10 emissions resulting from Council operations including contracted out services. In line with the performance indicator on air quality.	2008	Addressed via Air Quality Management Plan Review  <b>This will be monitored via new performance framework NI 194</b>	Already budgeted.	Environmental Health
Utilise information from the UKCIP to inform decisions relating to climate change impacts of food safety and pest control procedures.	2010	Initial meetings in 2008 with procedural changes identified.	Unknown at this point, but probably no cost.	Environmental Health

## Waste

Waste is a growing problem, both in terms of its collection and disposal. The Council has a duty to collect waste but is also an active partner in the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership. The Council has a strong emphasis on waste minimisation. The Waste Strategy of the Council is an important step in reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with waste. Social market research has however discovered that many people consider recycling to be one of the best things they can do on a personal level to tackle climate change. This creates a barrier to people doing other things that are more effective. The Council will want to ensure that recycling continues at its high rate but that it does not become a block to other more effective climate change actions.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Cost	Responsibility
Work with the Waste Team and Communications Team to ensure the waste hierarchy message is seen as part of a larger picture of resource conservation and climate change action.	2008	To be pursued in conjunction with the Communications Team environment campaign in 2008.	£5,000 as mentioned above.	Organisational Development (Communications Team)
Ensure that any future review of the Waste Strategy takes account of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions associated with waste and recycling collections.	2010	This may involve a switch to low CO <sub>2</sub> vehicles. Capital investment may be required at point of new contract.	Possible additional costs in 2010	Contracts and Procurement (Waste Team)
Consider in future contracts adaptation measures required to waste collections to take account of predicted climatic changes.	By 2009	Run adaptation workshops with key staff – (UKCIP)	No additional cost.	Contracts and Procurement (Waste Team)

## Corporate Level Measures

The changing climate will affect people's daily lives and the functions and services provided by organisations like the Council. More work will be done to understand how climate change will impact on our local area. The UK Climate Impacts Programme will be providing information to the Council from their most recent climate modelling work. This will help the Council put a risk value on certain types of weather event and correspondingly help the Council prioritise how well prepared it can afford to be for different categories of event. This information will help the Council maximise potential benefits and costs savings.

The 2007 summer floods in the Vale demonstrated that more can be done to ensure that people and organisations living and based in flood risk areas are better prepared for the type of flooding that is predicted to become more frequent with future climate change. The Council along with the Environment Agency has an important role ensuring proper measures are in place to cope with future flooding.

The Council provides a range of services and licenses certain services for which it charges fees. There maybe some areas where fees could be set to encourage certain activities which support efforts to reduce emissions and discourage other activities which run counter to the Council's climate change efforts.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Carry out a climate change risk assessment (Local Climate Impacts Profile) in partnership with the UK Climate Impacts Programme. <b>This will identify and prioritise those operations and services most at risk from climate change.</b>	2008	10 – 20 days to complete assessment with assistance from UKCIP  <b>The process followed will be monitored as part of indicator NI 188 of the new performance framework.</b>	£3000 as mentioned above.	Climate Change Team.
Review fees and charges and where possible make changes to encourage lower CO <sub>2</sub> emissions.	2009 review or earlier if possible		5 days officer time £1,000	Environmental Services / Climate Change Team
Following the 2007 floods establish a task group including key partners to consider: How to encourage / help residents in flood risk zones to make their properties more resilient to flooding. Looking into the impact of future development on potential flood risk and advocating ways this impact can be reduced (through the planning system). The current comprehensive flood risk assessment system. Increasing awareness of flood risk and improving warning systems. Improving coordination and management of water courses and flood defence measures. Ensuring responsible organisations have robust plans in place to ensure service continuity in the event of severe weather, such as wide spread local flooding.	2008	Some of these areas are being addressed by the 2007 Flood Review  Others will be covered via the Local Climate Impacts Profile.		Various officers / Directors to take the lead on specific areas.

## Biodiversity and Open Space Management

The local environment is an important amenity in its own right notwithstanding the important services it provides to local residents. Biodiversity is already under enormous pressure as the district continues to face increasing development pressures. The effects of climate change will place additional burdens on species and habitats. The Council is responsible for the protection of species as set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It carries out much of its biodiversity work through partnerships such as the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum.

Open space management at the Council is carried out under contract. The Council is already revising how this space is managed in light of the need to adapt to climate change.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Continue to support the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and related local projects.	Ongoing	Now monitored as part of the New Performance framework. Indicator NI 197.	Already budgeted	Contracts and Procurement (Landscapes)
Investigate feasibility of setting up a Vale BAP.	End 2009	Initial officer time to investigate.	£1000	Contracts and Procurement (Landscapes)
Promote the Community Grant as the way the Council can support community biodiversity projects.  Ensure outcomes of community nature conservation projects supported by the Council are consistent with Council adaptation plans for its own sites.	Beginning 2009	The grant may need to be increased to take account of additional areas it is expected to fund.	No additional cost initially	Contracts and Procurement (Landscapes) / Community Strategy.



<p>Use the planning system to protect local BAP sites including recognising the importance of adjoining land and connectivity of sites. Threats to and opportunities for biodiversity and habitat protection should be regularly assessed via monitoring of planning applications.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity on actively managed sites will be monitored through indicator NI 197 of the National Performance Framework.</b></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ecology expertise although not central to the implementation of climate change actions would provide a resource that would be useful for adaptation work and enable the Council to discharge its responsibilities under the NERC Act 2006. The strategy therefore supports the appointment of an Ecologist.</p> <p>Some training for planning officers will be required.</p>		<p>Planning / Contracts and Procurement (Landscapes)</p>
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## Community

Within the community many opportunities to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be taken by individuals, businesses, schools, groups and public sector organisations. The Council has a central leadership role in the local community and is a key member of the Local Strategic Partnership. As the Council has very limited influence on any outcomes in this area, it will be more effective if the Council and other key organisation in the Vale act together to encourage local people to take action to reduce green house gas emissions. It is therefore proposed that the community aspect of climate change work in the Vale is advance through the Vale Partnership's Community Strategy.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
<p>The Council will encourage the Vale Partnership to ensure the revised Vale Community Strategy properly addresses climate change through the inclusion of relevant climate change policies and actions. This will need to have due regard to Local Area Agreement targets for the Climate Change priority of the Oxfordshire Partnership</p>	<p>Beginning in 2008</p>	<p>To be discussed with a view to making this a Partnership priority by 2009. The Council will in the first instance need to provide the partnership with information and sponsor the proposal.</p>	<p>No additional cost</p>	<p>Planning and Community Strategy.</p>

and with the emerging Local Development Framework.				
The Council will be alert to opportunities to support the local economy especially when making its own procurement decisions and helping local business (via the Oxfordshire Sustainable Business Partnership) to tackle climate change.	2008	Council already works with the Oxfordshire Sustainable Business Partnership on projects which align with our objectives.	No additional cost	Contracts and Procurement / Planning and Community Strategy
Promote the Community Grants Scheme as a way for local groups to get funds for climate change / renewable energy projects or feasibility studies.	2008	Already in place, but will need to be amended to make applicability to climate change clearer.	No additional cost	Planning and Community Strategy
Ensure the Youth Forum is properly involved in any Council decisions on climate change, the results of which are relevant to young people i.e. communicating climate change.	ongoing	Links with Youth Strategy already in place.	No additional cost	Planning and Community Strategy

## Finance

The Council has a range of investments, the return on which it uses to fund services. Some of these investments have a larger CO<sub>2</sub> impact than the Council itself. The Council therefore feels it would be prudent to ensure that the Council gives due consideration to the CO<sub>2</sub> implications of investments in the future.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Future investment decisions made by the Council could be subject to an assessment of their climate change impact. The Council will need to put in place an assessment method to do this.	2010	Some research would be required	3 days staff time £750	Finance Team and Vale Energy team

## What the Council Plans to Do

### Objective 4 To deliver, monitor and review the Climate Change Strategy

The successful implementation of this strategy is dependent upon it being embedded into normal Council decision making processes. The most effective way to do this is to ensure relevant parts of the Action Plan appear in development plans for the different service areas of the Council and are monitored accordingly. Some actions identified in the strategy will be best dealt with using a team of people to draw on collective experience. The Council will establish a small team of people to take forward these aspects of the strategy.

Action	Timescale Priority	Comments	Costs	Responsibility
Progress on implementing key aspects of the Climate Change Action Plan will be monitored via the Council's performance management framework. Key actions will be part of the Council's Corporate Governance Report.	2008	Ensure Service Area Development Plans include key actions outlined in this strategy.	No additional cost	Organisational Development
Allocate responsibility for co-ordination of the delivery of this strategy.	April 2008	New duties allocated to Principal Energy Officer.	£8000	Housing and Community Safety
Appoint an officer to manage enforcement of climate change related planning policy.	April 2008	½ FTE post	£20,000 as mentioned above	Housing and Community Safety / Planning
Appoint an officer to run the Councils Carbon Management Programme, provide expert services to development control.	April 2008	This post will be essential to delivering the key elements of the strategy	£40,000 as mentioned above	Housing and Community Safety/ Property and Estates
A Climate Change Project Team will be set up with representatives from across the organisation. The team will be responsible for ensuring the Climate Change Action Plan is implemented.	April 2008	1 person per service area maximum 6 – 8	24 days officer time per year	

			£4,800	
Establish a Climate Change Project Board to ensure the strategy delivers its stated objectives.	2008		18 days officer time per years £3,600	
Post first year implementation review to be carried out by Climate Change Project Board.	End 2008		5 days officer time £1,000	Climate Change Project Board
Agree a communication plan to ensure the impact of the strategy is clearly communicated to staff and the community.	Late 2007		£400 to cover time to produce plan	Organisational Development (Communications Team)
Identify training needs that will arise as a result of this strategy and feed into the organisational development programme.	2008 and ongoing	Identify generic training that can be offered to staff and specific training needs through appraisal/PDP process or proactive competency based training.	£5,000	Organisational Development (HR Team)

## Financing the Strategy

Actions identified in this Strategy have been costed and shown in the Action Plan. The table below summarises all the actions and associated costs.

### Climate Change Strategy Projected Costs 2008 - 2010

Action	Y1 revenue	Y1 capital	Y2 revenue	Y2 capital	Y3 revenue	Y3 capital	Notes
<b>Procurement</b>							
1 Adopt procurement policy							Already budgeted
2 Provide procurement policy training							Already budgeted
3 Implement programme to review major purchases			1,000		1,000		Staff time to review - 5 days per year
4 Utilise Contracts and Procurement Forum							No additional cost
<b>Travel</b>							
5 Monitor business travel (staff and contracted services)	1,600						Some additional staff time - 8 days unconfirmed
6 Review Green Travel Plan and implement	1,000						Already budgeted
7 Review car parking policies	600						Additional staff time - 3 days unconfirmed
<b>Energy, Waste and Water Management</b>							
8 Monitor Council energy water and waste figures	1,600						Additional staff time - 8 days
9 Produce and implement carbon management	48,000		40,000		40,000		Additional 1 fte carbon management post (scale 8) consultant fees
10 Establish revolving energy saving fund				100,000		150,000	Potentially £450,000 over 4 years with savings put back into fund
11 Staff awareness and energy saving programme	5,000						Additional PR budget to cover specific events.
12 Purchase green electricity							No additional cost if limited to OGC maximum of 30% renewables
13 Where Council is developer it builds to high stds							Dependant on the Code for Sustainable Homes threshold set
<b>Emergency Planning / Adaptation</b>							
14 Carry out a Local Climate Impacts Assessment	4,000						15 days staff time + allowance for fees £1000
15 Review emergency planning procedures			4,000				15 days staff time + allowance for fees
16 Amend Business Continuity Plan at next review							No additional cost

<b>Action</b>	<b>Y1 revenue</b>	<b>Y1 capital</b>	<b>Y2 revenue</b>	<b>Y2 capital</b>	<b>Y3 revenue</b>	<b>Y3 capital</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Biodiversity / Adaptation</b>							
17							Provisional fees
18							Unknown
<b>Building Management / Adaptation</b>							
19							Part of carbon management role
<b>Planning / Building Control</b>							
20							Already budgeted
21	20,000		20,000		20,000		Additional 1/2 fte post (Scale 8) 2 days staff time for internal training + training costs covered in 55
22			500		500		See additional PR budget covered in 11
23							No additional cost
24							See additional PR budget covered in 11
25							No additional cost
26							No additional cost
27							No additional cost
<b>Housing / HECA</b>							
28							No additional cost - part of HECA role
29	600						3 days staff time
30					50,000	50,000	No additional staff costs, provisional discretionary grant in 2009
31		5,000		5,000		5,000	No additional staff costs, within existing discretionary grant budget
32							No additional cost
<b>Environmental Services</b>							
33							As part of AQM work
34							As part of AQM work
35							No additional cost at this point
<b>Waste</b>							
36							No additional cost - links with Environmental PR campaign
37							As part of new waste contract preparation
38							As part of new waste contract preparation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Y1 revenue</b>	<b>Y1 capital</b>	<b>Y2 revenue</b>	<b>Y2 capital</b>	<b>Y3 revenue</b>	<b>Y3 capital</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Corporate Level Measures</b>							
see 14							
39							
40							Already budgeted
<b>Biodiversity</b>							
41	2,000		2,000		2,000		Already budgeted £2,000 py
42			1,000				Additional staff time in 2009
43							Unknown
44							See training action number 55
<b>Community</b>							
45							No additional cost
46							Ongoing - no additional cost at this point
47							No additional cost
48							No additional cost
<b>Finance</b>							
49					600		Initial research costs
<b>Organisational Development</b>							
51							No additional cost
52	8,000		8,000		8,000		Additional 1 day per week
see 21							see action 21
see 9							see action 9
53	4,800		4,800		4,800		24 days staff time a year
54	3,600		3,600		3,600		18 days staff time
55	1,000		1,000		1,000		5 days staff time
56	400						2 day staff time
57	5,000						Additional training as identified through PDPs and HR
<b>Totals</b>	<b>109,200</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>85,900</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>81,500</b>	<b>205,000</b>	

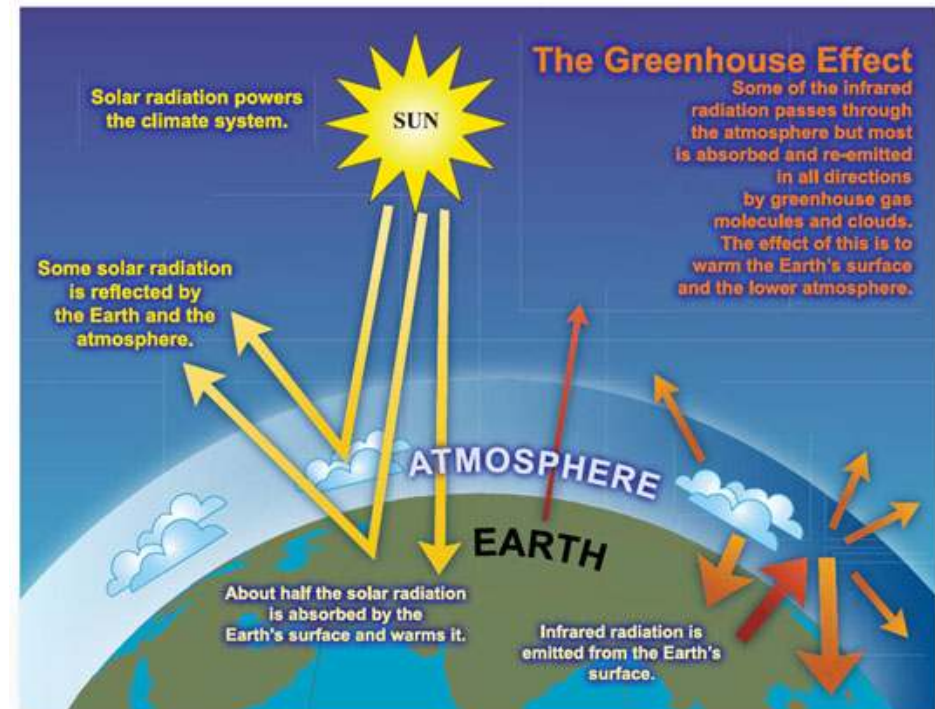
# APPENDIX

## 1. What Is Climate Change And What Causes It?

The Sun's energy reaches the Earth and warms the planet's surface. The heat generated is radiated back to space. Some of this heat is trapped by the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This creates a habitable environment on the planet's surface. There are natural processes which create and absorb these gases, these processes have for millions of years been broadly in balance, giving the planet an environment capable of supporting the range of life we see around us. Past fluctuations in the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have resulted in the changes to the earth's climate which in turn have had impacts on the earth's ecosystems, some severe such as ice ages.

The burning of fossil fuels via human activity is increasing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, trapping more heat at the planet's surface and the atmosphere. This process has been termed global warming. More heat at Earth's surface means more energy in the planet's weather systems resulting in changes in climate – climate change. 'Greenhouse gases' is the term given to those gases in the atmosphere that trap long wave radiation in the form of heat. Many of these gases are naturally occurring such as carbon dioxide CO<sub>2</sub> and methane CH<sub>4</sub> others are man made such as fluorocarbons. CO<sub>2</sub> dioxide accounts for over of 60% of warming effect of all greenhouse gases. The main source of CO<sub>2</sub> is the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal.

Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from Council operations are significant at a local level. Local action to tackle climate change therefore depends on leadership from the Council as well as effective use of Council powers and incentives to reduce emissions in the community.





## 2. The Effects of Climate Change for the Vale of White Horse

Predicting the effects of climate change is the subject of intense research efforts. There is consensus amongst the world's climate scientists that climate change is already occurring and will escalate as the level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere increases.

The South East of the United Kingdom is likely to be affected by climate change more than other UK regions. Recent flooding in the Vale shows just how vulnerable the district is to severe weather which is predicted to be more prevalent in the future. In general the effects are likely to include:

- higher temperatures all year: more heat waves in summer; and milder winters;
- more extreme weather events including storms, flash floods, droughts and heat waves;
- less rain overall and in summer;
- more severe and frequent river and flash floods, caused by more violent and concentrated rainfall;
- more frequent disruption to transport and other infrastructure; increased risk of failure of infrastructure operating beyond the conditions it was

designed for (e.g. roads melting, rails buckling in extreme high temperatures; drains overwhelmed by the rate of rainfall);

- fewer winter deaths and illnesses as a result of cold, but more heat-related summer deaths and stresses;
- spread of diseases currently prevented by cold weather;
- and loss of wildlife, especially species near the southern end of their ranges.

If action is not taken and substantial progress made in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within the next thirty years, there could be an irreversible effect on the global climate. This will have major local impacts which will affect the district and the operations of the Council.

The Council maybe subject to significant un-budgeted costs associated with responding to future severe weather events related to climate change. The proximity of the Thames and the low lying nature of much of the Vale make it especially vulnerable to repeated major flood events.

### **3. Policy Context**

The Council's response to climate change is part of a larger national and international effort. The Kyoto Protocol places legally binding targets on emissions reduction for the UK. The UK Climate Change Programme is the mechanism by which the Government plans to reduce emissions and adapt to future climate change. This programme places a central role on the efforts of local authorities to both reduce emissions and lead by example.

The Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 requires the Secretary of State to produce an energy measures report on the measures that would help local authorities tackle climate change and fuel poverty. The report must contain information on measures that local authorities can use to: improve energy efficiency; increase the levels of micro-generation or low carbon technologies; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and reduce the number of people living in fuel poverty. Local authorities must have regard to the report when exercising their functions.

The Climate Change Bill currently before Parliament proposes legally binding targets for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions and will provide the legal framework for a carbon trading scheme which will include local authorities. The Bill also paves the way for local authorities to use financial incentives to encourage waste reduction and recycling measures.

The new performance framework for local government includes a range of new climate change indicators by which the performance of local government in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and adapting to climate change will be assessed.

National, regional and local planning policy is heavily predicated upon climate change impacts and the need to take action. Future planned changes to the Building Regulations aim to move towards all homes built by 2016 to be zero carbon with similar targets for commercial buildings. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive now requires the Council to display in a public place an energy certificate for Abbey House.

In summary there are many factors that together are contributing to and acceleration in the pace of change in this area. It is widely acknowledged that there is a limited window of opportunity within which to get CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within acceptable limits thereby avoiding the worst case effects of climate change.

## **4. Links to Other Council Strategies**

Climate change is a corporate priority for the Council. The nature of climate change, and the actions outlined in this strategy make it consistent with the Council's vision and objectives. The Council's Climate Change Strategy will impact upon almost every part of the Council's operations, but in particular it will affect the following Council strategies:

- Procurement Strategy
- Waste Strategy
- Youth Development Strategy
- Green Space, Sport and Recreational Provision Strategy
- Housing Strategy – HECA Strategy and Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Local Development Framework and Planning Policy
- Community Strategy and Oxfordshire Partnership Local Area Agreements.
- Air Quality Management Plan
- Green Travel Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Asset Management Plan
- Equalities and Diversity
- Enforcement Policy

## **5. Acknowledgements**

The Council would like to thank the Thames Valley Energy Centre for the work carried out by Jan Deacon in reviewing the Council's position and providing guidance on how the Council should progress its climate change work.

The Council would also like to acknowledge the guidance provided by the Beacon Council Programme's Sustainable Energy Toolkit and Benchmark for Local Authorities which were used in the preparation of this strategy.