

Environmental Sustainability & Action Plan towards a Climate Change Strategy for the city. Executive report 11th Sept. 2007

Briefing paper & response to Member queries.

QUESTION : How were the targets arrived at?

1.1 Para 3.5 proposes a target of 25% reduction in CO₂ emissions within the City of York Council on 2005/6 baseline by 2013.

Amendment: The baseline should state 2006/07. This was a typing error in the original report. The baseline will set the benchmark from which we will capture emission reductions AFTER April 07.

RESPONSE

1.2 *Origin of proposed 25% council target*

The proposed 25% CO₂ reduction target over the next five years is the target for the council within the measured and managed framework of the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme we are currently implementing. The target has been proposed as an **INTERIM** target, recommended by the Carbon Trust as a realistic and achievable saving to expect from the carbon management programme, in line with savings achieved from other local authorities that have implemented this programme over the last four years. This target is also in line with the Climate Change Bill proposing a national target of 20% reductions by 2010. *The results of the baseline will help us identify whether this figure of 25% emission savings is realistic, and whether it needs amending either up or down.*

Setting the baseline

1.3 In order to manage our emissions we first need to measure what we emit. A baseline of 2006/07 carbon emissions is currently being finalized that will set the benchmark from which we can measure and manage ongoing emission reductions. This baseline is underway and a benchmark set by end Sep 2007. Note, the improvement targets is a percent improvement rather than actual tonnage improvement, the emphasis is on achieving ongoing reductions. The scope of the emissions baseline include:

- All council buildings (14,334 tonnes)
- Council owned fleet (awaiting data)
- Street lighting (3,200 tonnes)
- Household waste collection (26,757 tonnes)

(See Figure 1. below, Working Draft Baseline – CO₂ emissions for the City of York Council)

Achieving the 25% target within City of York Council

1.4 The 25% reduction is considered a realistic target in line with projected savings within the council from current and planned developments. Work is currently underway within the Carbon Management Programme to quantify carbon savings from all major planned and proposed activities within the council. This approach builds on Carbon Statements already produced within Property Services for new developments. Examples include:

- Structural developments projected saving of 2776 tonnes by 2010 linked to programmes of work in schools and the new council office building.
- organizational efficiencies including system/process improvement (e.g. Eco Depot photo voltaic (PV) energy generation)
- awareness raising/behavior change campaigns (e.g. Switch Off campaign).

Outputs: Measuring planned and proposed carbon emission savings will result in a quantified and costed options appraisal, with a target date for completion 30 Nov. This will feed into the comprehensive Strategic Implementation Plan for Carbon Management within the City of York Council, with a target date for completion April 2008.

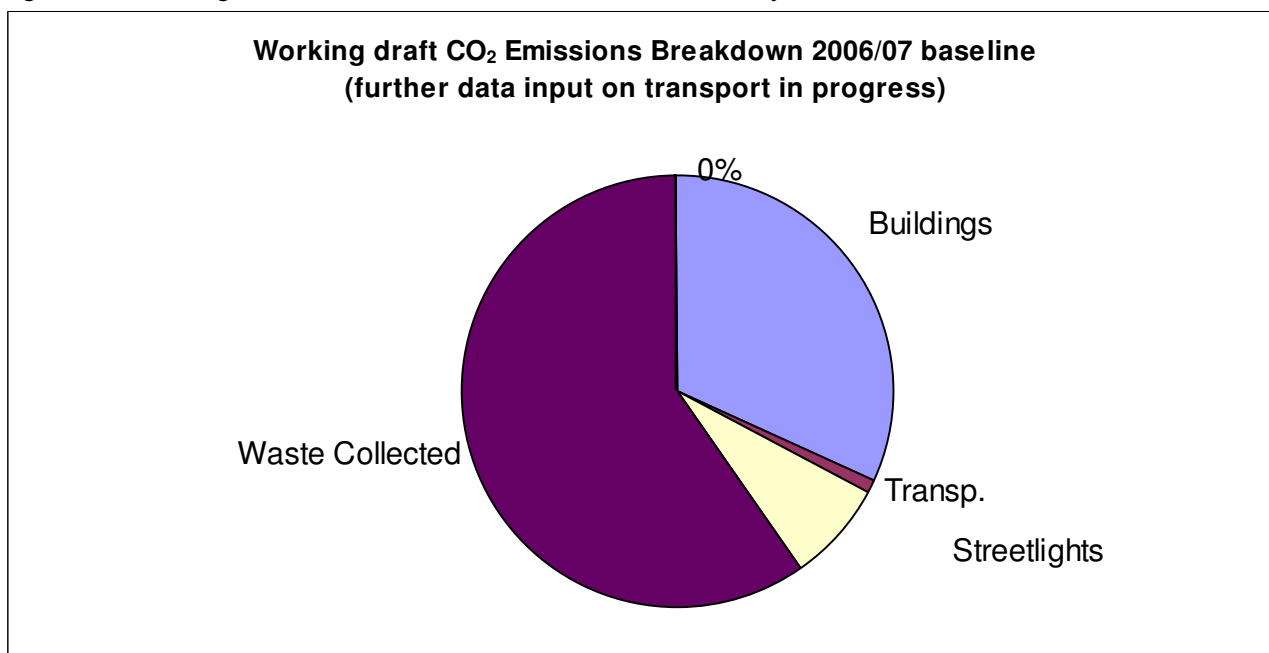
Setting the carbon targets for the City as a whole

1.5 The Ecological Footprint Target was agreed and set in the 2004 Community Strategy. The Ecological Footprint provides a figure for the Carbon footprint for the community, which is 11 tonnes of CO₂ per person per year. The proposed reduction targets follow the Governments Climate Change Bill targets of reducing carbon by 20% by 2010 and 60% by 2050. Translating this to the benchmark of 11 tonnes provides the proposed targets of:

- 20% reduction of 11 tonnes CO₂ by 2010 = 8.8 tonnes CO₂ per person per year
- 60% reduction of 11 tonnes CO₂ by 2050 = 4.4 tonnes CO₂ per person per year

This is a target for the LSP to consider as part of a wider Climate Change strategy for the city.

Figure 1. Working Draft Baseline – CO₂ emissions for the City of York Council



Question: What does carbon neutral mean and how does the proposed target fit with it?

There are a number of terms used concerning carbon: zero carbon, carbon neutral, low carbon. The terms above all mean subtly different things. Until a clear definition has been identified that is consistent with all local authorities it is worth avoiding these terms.

Zero carbon = actively reducing carbon emissions until the organisation/individual has no carbon emissions. In energy terms if an organisation does use fossil fuels, to be zero carbon it needs to generate more energy from renewable sources to balance carbon coming in and out of the organisation. This approach supports active reductions in carbon emissions, and is the approach we are taking within the Carbon Management Programme. All of the activities described in this action plan and strategy will take us closer to emitting less carbon and aiming towards a carbon zero council.

Carbon neutral = balancing the 'carbon' books by buying the same tonnage of an organisations carbon emissions from elsewhere e.g by buying from planting trees or investing in non carbon based (not fossil fuel) technologies in the developing world. There is no imperative to reduce carbon emissions. Carbon neutral as a term needs to be used with great caution. It can be a misleading term and care is needed to clearly identify what is being assessed – whether this is just energy use, transport, all an organisations activities and over what time period.

Offsetting = compensating for the carbon emissions that are produced (as described above in carbon neutral). Care needs to be taken with the use of offsetting emissions as the calculations to ensure it is correct are notoriously difficult.

Why this approach? Moving forward: Putting environmental sustainability and carbon management at the heart of everything we do.

1.6 Prior to the drafting of this strategy, work relating to environmental sustainability has tended to be adhoc and reactive. Staff resources have responded to opportunities as they arise rather than as part of a measured and managed response. For example work undertaken by Scrutiny in 2006 (Figure 1. below) identified a request to set up a working group to manage the councils energy and water use. This request was based on an interest in reducing energy and an intuitive understanding that this could also have financial savings. The working group is achieving good results setting an action plan and developing an energy policy for the council. However the justification of such a working group should be based on a coordinated review of council activities to prioritise limited resource in the areas with biggest environmental impact.

1.7 Additional staff resources are now in place for this important area of council work; in particular for the implementation of an Environmental Management System for the Council aiming to measure and manage all environmental impacts of the council, and the Carbon management Programme which, more specifically, aims to reduce our carbon emissions. (The energy and water group is currently the project team for the Carbon Management Programme, setting a baseline of our carbon emissions. This shows creative use of limited resource.) By embedding the principles of environmental sustainability and carbon management in this way, it should produce efficient activities with effective outcomes for the council. It will mean that policy development can be evaluated for its carbon impact as well as its strategic fit. This provides an example for the council’s partners, demonstrating its leadership role in climate change.

1.8 Good foundations.

Figure 1. - Example: Activities as a result of a Scrutiny report (extract from ‘Update on Implementation of Recommendations of Previous Scrutiny Reviews’ July 2007) .

| Actions from Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Reports Jan. 2006 and Dec. 2005 | Progress. |
|--|--|
| i. The identification of an Executive Member with overall responsibility for energy and water management. | Executive Member with overall responsibility for energy and water management established (Andrew Waller) supported by the Energy Champion (Cllr Vassie) |
| ii. The identification of the Corporate Landlord (Energy Manager) as the senior officer in the council for energy and water management issues. | Energy Manager established (Gary Christie) representing the Corporate Landlord |
| iii. The creation of an Energy and Water Management Group (EWMG) chaired by the Corporate Landlord (Energy Manager) and comprising appropriate representatives from all Directorates | EWMG chaired by Gary Christie with representatives from all directorates. Met three times in 2006 tasked with developing energy policy, funding issues, promotional activity, green tariffs etc. |
| iv. The identification of partners and agencies that can act as advisors to the Council (EWMG) and provide support to the process when required. | Links to the EWMG set up with Energy Advice Centre, Carbon Trust, CREATE, and Energy Efficiency Accreditation Scheme. |

| Actions from Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Reports Jan. 2006 and Dec. 2005 | Progress. |
|--|--|
| v. The adoption of performance indicators that enable the Council's performance to be measured and benchmarked against best practice, both internally and externally to CYC | Nominalised Performance Indicators utilised to identify best practice. Monthly league tables produced to target poorly performing buildings. Performance indicators calculated for the Asset Management Plan. |
| vi. The reporting of the Council's energy and water management performance to members on a regular basis (Appropriate EMAP or Executive) and to the Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG) | Draft report 'Energy Use in Council Buildings' compiled dated January 2007 with the intention to report to members on policy and strategy through the Executive. On financial investment matters report will be through CAPMOG. |
| vii The EWMG prepare an Energy Policy Statement for the City of York Council | Draft Energy Policy statement prepared through consultation with the EWMG and forms part of draft report 'Energy Use in Council Buildings' |
| viii The EWMG prepare an Energy and Water Management Plan in line with the following key principles: | Draft strategy forms part of the report 'Energy Use in Council Buildings' |
| ix. It is recognised that to deliver the Energy and Water Management Plan, it must be considered within the context of the council's finite financial and human resources. | Forms part of the Energy Policy detailed in the report 'Energy Use in Council Buildings' |
| x. The Plan is to be developed as a corporate document that recognises and encourages input from all services within the council and in leading by example promotes the City of York Council as the lead agency in the City. | Forms part of the report 'Energy Use in Council Buildings' |
| xi. Wherever possible the Council will work with partners and other agencies to investigate and adopt acknowledged best practice within the industry. | Work and consultation with the Energy Advice Centre, Carbon Trust, CREATE and Energy Efficiency Scheme. |
| xii Members approve expenditure totalling £7,950 to support the DISPLAY campaign (£7,200) and the annual subscription to Energie Cités (£750), to be funded from council contingencies. | Collection/verification of fuel monitoring data, Site specific improvements identified, printing and publication of Display Posters undertaken as approved expenditure. Membership fees to Energie Cités also maintained. Further buildings to be included in 2007/08. |