



Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Jenny Moreton, Principal Health and Sustainability Officer
Date: Thursday, 4th November 2010
Open

Sustainability Policy

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks endorsement of a Sustainability Policy for Wyre Forest District Council.

2. Background

2.1 The Wyre Forest Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2010/11 were endorsed by this Committee on 8th April 2010. The Action Plan includes an action to develop a council policy on sustainability.

2.2 The strategy and action plan are based around three main topics:

- Raising awareness about climate change
- Reducing carbon emissions in Wyre Forest
- Adapting to the impacts of climate change in Wyre Forest

2.3 The Renewable Energy and Efficiency Review Panel reported to this Committee on 15th July 2010 and included various recommendations to further the council's work on sustainability.

2.4 Council signed up to the West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge in 2008, committing to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district, including within our own estate.

2.5 Council passed a resolution to support Fairtrade in 2004, and has since served Fairtrade refreshments at Council meetings.

3. Key Issues

3.1 Sustainability can be defined as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainable development aims to tackle environmental, social and economic issues in an integrated way.

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- 3.2 In practice, sustainability covers various topics, such as climate change, energy efficiency, sustainable transport, Fairtrade and biodiversity.
- 3.3 Adopting a sustainability policy further demonstrates the council's commitment to leading by example in tackling these issues. It would provide a useful tool when encouraging our residents, partners and suppliers to become more sustainable, for example through our partnership working and procurement processes. In addition, grants funds often ask applicants to provide details of their sustainability policy.
- 3.4 Whilst the Council already has various commitments in place to tackle these issues, it does not have a single overarching sustainability policy. This policy aims to address this gap. It incorporates actions from pre-existing commitments, rather than creating additional work.

4. Options

4.1 The Committee may wish to:

4.2

- Recommend to Cabinet that it endorses the Wyre Forest District Council Sustainability Policy, or
- Put forward alternative or additional proposals to Cabinet.

5. Consultation

5.1 This policy has been developed through the Council's internal Environmental Working Group.

6. Related Decisions

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

7.1 Wyre Forest Climate change Strategy and Action Plan

8. Implications

8.1 Implications have already been identified through the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the Climate change Strategy and Action Plan in January 2010

10. Wards affected

10.1 Relevant to all Wards

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1: Wyre Forest District Council's Sustainability Policy.

12. Background Papers

12.1 None

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