



Committee and date

Cabinet  
19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

12.30pm

Item No

**15**

Public

**NEW SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DOCUMENTS:  
Sustainability, Environment & Climate Change Policy  
Sustainable Construction Policy  
Climate Change Strategy  
Historic Communities Climate Change Strategy**

**Responsible  
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**Summary**

With the increased commitment by Shropshire Council both to the Carbon Management Programme and the priorities and commitments made in the Community Strategy, in particular, **Priority 2, Responding to climate change and enhancing our natural and built environment**, it is both timely and necessary that changes are made to existing sustainability related documents if Shropshire Council is to remain recognised as a leader in responding to climate change.

Due to continued requests for copies of our 'environmental policy', it was decided to take the opportunity to create an **over-arching Sustainability, Environment and Climate Change Policy**, written in consultation with other teams in the Council. This is supported by a new:

- Climate Change Strategy
- Sustainable Construction Policy
- Historic Community Climate Change Policy
- Sustainable Procurement Policy (already adopted and in use)

The Climate Change Strategy replaces the original SCC Corporate Climate Change Strategy from 2002. A Community Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will be developed through the work of the Environment Delivery Group of the Shropshire Partnership with the community groups themselves.

Initiated by work through an Intelligent Energy Europe funded project a Historic Community Climate Change Strategy focuses specifically on how

Shropshire Council should be helping to protect older buildings whilst preparing them for climate change.

Sustainable Construction is also part of Council commitment and for a number of years the Building Services Team has followed the guidance given in a draft Sustainable Construction Policy developed between SCC and the former South Shropshire District Council.

As part of a general review of documents, the Sustainability Team has worked with the Building Services Manager, Architects and Energy Officers to develop a policy in line with BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) (*see reference to Sustainable Design SPD point 4*)

### **Recommendation for Cabinet**

- A. Members are asked to approve the contents of each of the attached new Shropshire Council policy and strategy documents and recommend their adoption for use across Shropshire Council.

## **Report**

### **Background Sustainability, Environment & Climate Change Policy**

1. The day to day activities of Shropshire Council have an input upon the environment. This policy highlights the importance of managing our resources and activities in a way that reflects environmental pressures, including climate change, to minimise carbon and ensure continued service delivery.

### **Background Sustainable Construction Policy**

2. Targets set by government in the Climate Change Bill and the Carbon Reduction Commitment place emphasis on the fact that buildings are major users of energy and therefore significant generators of carbon emissions.
3. The Council's sustainable construction policy will be underpinned by BREEAM and the criteria will be set for achieving recognised high standards for all future construction-related projects undertaken by the Council.
4. This Policy ensures that the Council's own building stock mitigates against, and can adapt to future climate change, through the use of the BREEAM standards, whilst the Sustainable Design SPD Checklists developed as part of the LDF seek to ensure new developments are built to a similarly high quality and which also support the localism agenda by providing the opportunity for

local communities to influence the sustainable design standards that they feel new developments should meet in their area.

## **Background Climate Change Strategy**

5. Priority 2 of the Community Strategy is responding to climate change, and enhancing our natural and built environment. It says that Shropshire Council will be recognised as a leader in responding to climate change. To be able to meet this aspiration it needs to be clear how we are addressing climate change issues in all our operations.
6. This strategy brings together policies and specific actions to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and to ensure a sustainable future for the county. A key aim of the strategy is to help develop a collective Council response and harness all existing activity. This is essential to ensure all services know they have a vital role to play in addressing Climate Change issues, and communicating collective action is far more effective.
7. The strategy is intended to provide a concise focus for climate change in Shropshire and should be seen as central in guiding corporate, collective and individual actions to mitigate and adapt to the anticipated effects over time.

## **Background Historic Community Climate Change Strategy**

8. SECHURBA (Sustainable Energy Communities in Historic Urban Areas) is a European project run jointly with Marches Energy Agency to produce practical and sensitive solutions to reducing the energy demands of older and historic buildings.
9. Reducing the carbon footprint of old buildings is an integral part of Shropshire Council's wider Climate Change Strategy. Shropshire has a high number of historic assets, with nearly 7,000 listed buildings and over 120 conservation areas meaning many thousands of protected buildings, that makes Shropshire the special place it is today.
10. We have created this strategy to guide property owners and those working with communities with historic assets to help protect our heritage assets and reduce their energy demands. The strategy and its supporting guidance document is available on the Council website and these, with a database of suppliers and materials is available the SECHURBA website:  
<http://www.sechurba.org.uk/>

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

**Human Rights Act Appraisal**

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998

**Environmental Appraisal**

Climate Change is recognised as one of the most important national and international issues. This proposal is intended to help Shropshire Council deliver on the commitments on climate change it has made in the Corporate Plan, the Carbon Management Plan and the Community Strategy 2010-2020. Having policies and strategies in place will support the delivery of its commitments.

**Risk Management Appraisal**

Mitigating and adapting to climate change remains high on the government agenda, despite the current need to make financial cuts. The Council has made a commitment to deliver on both the Shropshire Council Carbon Management Plan and the Community Strategy 2010-2020 and not to do so would bring reputational risk as well as future financial loss.

**Community / Consultations Appraisal**

**Sustainability and Environment Policy** – Consultations with all appropriate Council Officers

**Climate Change Strategy** – Consultations with all appropriate Council Officers

**Historic Communities Climate Change Strategy** - SC Conservation Team, Development Management, English Heritage, Marches Energy Agency, Shropshire Low Carbon Community Groups (Stretton Climate Care, ReaVEN, Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth), Shrewsbury residents association, Shrewsbury Civic Society and Transition Shrewsbury.

**Sustainable Construction Policy** – Consultations with all appropriate Council Officers

**Cabinet Member**

Ann Hartley – Portfolio Holder for Energy and Carbon Reduction

**Local Member**

All

**Appendices**

Sustainability, Environment & Climate Change Policy

Sustainable Construction Policy

Climate Change Strategy

Historic Community Climate Change Strategy