

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

ENERGY STRATEGY FOR COUNTY OFFICES

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the energy strategy for the County Offices as set out in Appendix 1.

Information

2. At its meeting last month, Policy Committee approved the development of a corporate environment strategy and environmental policy for the County Council. As mentioned in that report, an energy strategy has also been developed with an annual energy consumption reduction target of 5% for the County Offices portfolio, which provides a foundation for considering more ambitious plans to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the Council's buildings.
3. The Council's latest annual report submitted under the UK Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme shows carbon dioxide emissions from energy use in the Council's buildings and street lighting have reduced by a further 21% from 2017-18 to 2018-19. Whilst the Council is already a strong performer in terms of managing energy and reducing its carbon emissions, this strategy is designed to provide a more focused and complementary effort in support of its broader energy management and investment activity.
4. The 14 key "County Offices" covered by this strategy represent about 40% of the Council's £2m direct spend on heating and powering its buildings.
5. The three broad areas of action to reduce energy consumption set out in the strategy are:
 - a. making changes to site operation and management;
 - b. raising staff awareness and engagement in energy saving behaviours; and
 - c. infrastructure investment in energy saving measures.
6. Site and portfolio level action plans embracing these areas are being developed following detailed energy audits. This approach could be extended to further sites in due course.
7. The strategy is a collaboration between catering and facilities management, who have budget and building management responsibilities for the 14 sites, and energy and carbon management, who manage the energy contracts and investments. To be fully effective the

strategy will require cross-service collaboration between building users, building managers and energy consuming services, such as ICT and catering.

8. Development of the strategy has also considered the merits of centralisation of wider energy and water budgets, which are currently devolved to service areas across Council departments. Work continues with those departments to identify the advantages and implications of any changes, although agreement in principle has now been reached with the relevant service areas.

Other Options Considered

9. Given the increasing costs of energy and environmental costs of carbon emissions, developing a more strategic and performance driven approach to managing energy in Council buildings is considered well worth doing. Not having such a strategy would risk a lack of focus and underperformance. It is considered that a strategy focusing on reducing energy use by 5% p.a. for the suite of 14 County Offices representing 40% of an approximate annual energy spend of £2m is a practical, achievable and worthwhile endeavour, which, if successful, could be expanded in its scope and level of ambition in due course.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The strategy contributes to the Council's objective to make efficient use of available resources and further enhances efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's operations.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. The strategy is expected to make a positive contribution to mitigating the impact of rising energy prices. Investments in energy saving measures are expected to be fundable from existing budgets, but where this is not possible investments would be subject to consideration of business cases.

Smarter Working Implications

13. The strategy supports the Investing in Nottinghamshire programme principle that seeks to improve the Council's environmental impact through reducing the carbon footprint of the Council's estate. Infrastructure investment in energy saving measures will be considered in parallel with the Investing in Nottinghamshire programme so as to maximise complementarity.

Implications for Service Users

14. Through reducing energy consumption, financial resources can be freed up to support front line services.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

15. The strategy makes a positive contribution to addressing environmental and sustainability concerns.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Committee approves the energy strategy for County Offices as set out in Appendix 1.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE
Leader of the County Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mick Allen, Group Manager, Place Commissioning Tel: 0115 9774684

Constitutional Comments (SLB – 12/09/2019)

16. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (RWK – 12/09/2019)

17. The report presents an energy saving strategy for County Offices which aims to reduce to reduce energy consumption by 5%. Current spending on energy at County Offices is estimated at £2 million. A budget reduction target of £100,000 per annum from 2019/20 has been included in the Council's MTFS.

18. It is expected that any investments required in energy saving measures will be funded from within existing budget allocations. Where additional funding is required business cases will be presented to committee seeking approval for additional funding.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Policy Committee - Development of an Environment Strategy and Environmental Policy, 18 September 2019

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All