

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

**Agenda Item 68**  
Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Monitoring Outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of Climate Change Adaptation</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>31 January 2012</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director of Place</b>		
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report enables the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to monitor and track progress on the scrutiny recommendations on Climate Change Adaptation. The recommendations and progress update appears as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.2 The report will help the Commission to assess the impact and consequences of the scrutiny recommendations.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the Commission considers the action taken against the scrutiny recommendations on Climate Change Adaptation, and provides feedback to the Executive.
- (2) That the Commission determines whether a further tracking report relating to this scrutiny review is required.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 3.1 The Scrutiny Review

The Scrutiny Review of Climate Change Adaptation was established in March 2010 by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to investigate 'what work needs to be done to make good progress in planning for a changing local climate.'

- 3.2 The panel comprised University of Sussex Professor Gordon MacKerron (Chairman) and Councillors Tony Janio, Gill Mitchell and former councillor Vicky Wakefield-Jarrett.
  - 3.3 The Panel's completed report was endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 20 July 2010 and referred to the Council's Executive.
  - 3.4 The 23 September 2010 Cabinet considered and agreed the actions in reply to the scrutiny report. The Scrutiny report and cabinet response were reported to full Council for information on 16 December 2010.
  - 3.5 The work of scrutiny members and officers on this panel won 'Good Scrutiny Award 2011 Winners for Innovation'- judges were particularly impressed by joint working with the University of Sussex and cross-public service approach.
- 3.6 Progress update**

Appendix 1 provides an update on progress made against the Scrutiny Recommendations. The key points are:

- Climate change impacts are now established in the corporate risk register.
- A Local Climate Impacts profile has been completed.
- Phase 1 of The Surface Water Management Plan, including a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, was completed to deadline as is now published on the Environment Agency website.
- Phase 2 (Detailed risk assessment) is underway and is due to be completed in 2013.
- The city Climate Change Strategy has been adopted by Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership (Dec 2011), following Cabinet and the Public Service Board, informed by Scrutiny recommendations, so "A city adapting well to climate change" is one of its five priority outcomes. The chair of BHSP and Leader of the council are championing the strategy, with agreed support from identified members, officers and city partners to deliver the strategy's implementation plan.
- A 'task & finish' group is being convened, comprising officers with a remit to draw together and complete the outstanding adaptation actions, together with the next steps identified in the Climate Change Strategy and other relevant areas of work (including the Biosphere Reserve bid to UNESCO).
- The group will consider tracking and reporting progress against the National Indicator NI188 within the City Performance Plan. Future monitoring and reporting of adaptation strand of the Climate Change Strategy will be agreed at this group.

#### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

- 4.1 Our climate is changing. Across the country the trend for winter rainfall has increased in recent years & summer rainfall has decreased. There has been an upward trend in average temperatures and mean sea level has risen. Climate projections are telling us that we will experience hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, disruption in usual weather

patterns and more frequent or intense weather events (e.g. heat waves, droughts, and flooding) and continued rising sea level. This is likely to have an adverse impact on water quality & availability, biodiversity, human health, buildings & infrastructure, soils & the economy.

4.2 It is important to make the distinction between emergency planning and adaptation planning. Emergency planning relates to a reactive response to situations, whereas adaptation planning is about developing a proactive approach and looks to save money in the long term through building resilience. The goal of adapting to climate change is to minimise impacts and therefore reduce the requirements for an emergency response in the first place.

4.3 The council's Corporate Plan has established three key priorities for the council, one of which is "working towards a more sustainable city". It states:

"As well as preparing economically for the future, the city must also adapt to the impacts of climate change. For example, the severe winters that we have experienced in recent years affect critical services, such as delivering food, medicine and personal care to the most vulnerable people. The city's Climate Change Strategy will provide the strategic framework to promote significant reduction in carbon emissions and help us to prepare for the effects of climate change. Our position on the coast and the potential for flooding and coastal erosion means that homes, buildings, and infrastructure require protection."

4.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability has agreed to be the lead member for climate change adaptation and will approach this from a citywide perspective.

4.5 Working within existing resources, adaptation work will be progressed by the task and finish group, and will support the implementation of this element of the Climate Change Strategy.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 The scrutiny panel met six times and heard evidence in public from a wide range of contributors, including: the Environment Agency, Southern Water, Sussex Wildlife Trust, ESFRS, Kent County Council, the PCT and internal officers from BHCC.

## **6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

6.1 Adaptation planning has been incorporated as an outcome in the City Performance Plan. Progressing adaptation work with partners requires

resources to be identified which will need to be considered in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the availability of external funding. The 2012/13 budget proposals (subject to agreement at Budget Council on 23 February) include additional investment of £150,000 in sustainability initiatives in support of the One Planet living approach, and a proposal to deliver investment in private sector stock to improve energy efficiency. Funding of £275,000 from DEFRA supports the development of the Surface Water Management Plan for Brighton and Hove City Council.

Finance Officer consulted: Anne Silley

Date 23/01/12

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 Monitoring and reviewing the outcomes of its recommendations is a legitimate function of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.

The options available to the Commission on reviewing the outcomes are set out at paragraph 3.6(d) above.

Lawyer consulted: Oliver Dixon

Date: 18/01/12

Equalities Implications:

- 6.3 Severe weather events increase the vulnerability of residents within the community, including the elderly, those living alone, having a pre-existing disease, being immobile or suffering from mental illness and being economically disadvantaged. An Equalities Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken on any programme of adaptation work going forward.

Sustainability Implications:

- 6.4 Planning for climate change adaptation will include consideration to environmental, social and economic risks and opportunities.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 6.5 There is much debate about the association between hot weather and crime. However, many reports of the association between crime and hot weather are more speculative than definitive. Hot weather is linked with higher levels of street violence and attacks as well as unrest (Rotton and Cohn, 2000a, 2000b). There is also the likelihood that road rage increases during periods of anomalous warmth (Kenrick and MacFarlane, 1984), as does domestic violence (Auliciems and DiBartolo, 1995) and the number of police call outs (LeBeau and Corcoran, 1990). In contrast, warm weather may reduce crime as people chose to go elsewhere during hot weather, thus diverting incidences (Bailey K, Exeter News, August 3, 2004).

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 6.6 It is advised that risk and opportunity assessments should be performed for each service delivery area looking at future climate projection scenarios. A Strategic Risk for severe weather and climate change adaptation has been included with the overall sustainability risk in the Corporate Risk Register.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 6.7 These are significant given the nature of severe weather events and the increased probability of greater frequency, so work with Strategic Partnership will be essential. Climate Change is likely to have an impact on water quality & availability, biodiversity, human health, buildings & infrastructure, soils & the economy, agriculture and tourism. .

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Monitoring outcomes of the Climate Change Adaptation Scrutiny Review – January 2012 update

### **Documents in Members' Rooms/ Background Documents**

1. Brighton and Hove City Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment:  
<http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/PDF/FLHO1211BVMV-E-E.pdf>

