

Cheltenham Borough Council
Cabinet – Tuesday 12 March 2013
Climate Local Initiative

Accountable member	Councillor Roger Whyborn
Accountable officer	Jane Griffiths, Director Commissioning
Ward(s) affected	None
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>Climate Local is a Local Government Association (LGA) initiative which aims to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change. It replaces the Nottingham Declaration, which Cheltenham Borough Council signed in 2002.</p> <p>Climate Local is about councils setting out their own commitments and identifying the actions that they will undertake to respond to climate change.</p> <p>The first step to becoming a Climate Local council is to sign the Climate Local Commitment (see appendix 2). The council then has to identify local commitments and actions it will take to reduce carbon emissions and respond to changes in the climate. Appendix 3 sets out the intended local commitments and actions; this is work that is already planned as the council has established strands of work for tackling climate change.</p> <p>Signing up to the Initiative is a means of reaffirming publicly the council's commitment to tackling climate change and ensuring continued support for the work that is planned. It will also provide a mechanism for sharing the council's work more widely and for learning from others' experiences and achievements.</p>
Recommendations	<p>Cabinet agrees that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Authority signs up to the Local Government Association's Climate Local Commitment set out in appendix 2 2. the Authority's commitments and actions to Climate Local are to be those set out in appendix 3
Financial implications	<p>There are no financial implications at this stage. However, there may be financial implications at a future stage if local initiatives require funding, but these will be assessed on an individual business case basis.</p> <p>Contact officer: Mark Sheldon, mark.sheldon@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264123</p>

Legal implications	As the Climate Local Commitment initiative is not a legally binding commitment there are no legal implications to the Authority's participation. Contact officer: Donna Ruck, Solicitor donna.ruck@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272696
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	No direct HR implications arising from this report. Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264355
Key risks	The main risk to signing up to Climate Local is one of reputation, as the Authority will be required to report publicly on progress against the commitments and actions.
Corporate and community plan Implications	Participating in Climate Local will not have a direct effect on the corporate and community plan, but it will reaffirm the council's commitment to tackling climate change and support the council's objective to reduce carbon emissions and enable Cheltenham to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
Environmental and climate change implications	Implementing the actions will have a positive effect on the environment, reducing the council's carbon emissions and increasing the council's resilience to the changing climate.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has been working to tackle climate change since signing the Nottingham Declaration in 2002 and that commitment continues through the corporate objective on climate change in the corporate strategy.
- 1.2 The Climate Local initiative, which replaces the Nottingham Declaration, aims to:
- Drive and inspire councils to act on the causes and effects of climate change
 - Enable councils to demonstrate their commitment, ambition and achievements
 - Enable councils to show collective leadership on climate change
 - Provide a framework through which councils can organise and plan their journey in addressing climate change
 - Provide a forum for peer-to-peer learning and support for councils
- 1.3 The Nottingham Declaration was very much a statement of intent with signatory councils committing to undertake a common set of actions. Climate Local is about councils setting their own local commitments and identifying the actions that they will undertake to fulfil them.
- 1.4 By participating, the Council will extend its public commitment to tackling climate change.
- 1.5 To date, around 50 councils have signed the Climate Local Commitment. This includes Gloucestershire County Council and they have stated their intention to seek countywide sign-up of public sector partners to the initiative.

2. What does signing up to Climate Local mean for the Council?

- 2.1 The first step to becoming a Climate Local Council is to sign the Climate Local Commitment (see appendix 2). By signing the Commitment the council will be asked to:

- set out what actions it intends to undertake locally to reduce carbon emissions and respond to changes in the climate within its own operations and services and with the local community;
- set out its level of ambition and how it is going to monitor and demonstrate its achievements;
- share with other councils and national partners:
 - what actions it is undertaking and its ambitions
 - its progress, and
 - the learning from its experiences and achievements

2.2 The council will be added to a list of signatories on the LGA website and the LGA will support participating councils with web-based resources, an online community and opportunities for peer learning.

2.3 The LGA allows councils six months to develop local actions, which must include as a minimum one action under mitigation and one under adaptation. However, as the council already has a number of established strands of work to tackle climate change, appendix 3 sets out the actions that are intended to form the authority's commitment to the initiative.

2.4 The council will be required to report on progress against the actions on an annual basis, so the actions have been chosen because they are easily defined and measurable. They do not form the entirety of the council's work on climate change.

2.5 The council will be expected to refresh the commitments and actions regularly to ensure they remain current and relevant to local priorities.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Signing up to Climate Local does not require any direct financial investment and it should not have a significant impact on current workloads as the identified actions relate to work that is already planned. The requirement to report on progress will mean some additional work, but the monitoring will be of benefit to the council. The council will also be able to share its own good practice more widely and will be able to learn from other authorities; this may lead to new actions being identified, which have not previously been considered.

4. Consultation and feedback

4.1 The climate change member working group was consulted by email prior to publication of this report. Officers with responsibility for delivering the individual actions have also been consulted.

5. Performance management – monitoring and review

5.1 Signing up to the initiative will commit the council to reporting annually on progress against the published commitments and actions.

Report author	Contact officer: Gill Morris, climate change & sustainability officer, gill.morris@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264229
Appendices	1. Risk Assessment 2. Climate Local Commitment 3. Table of commitments and actions
Background information	None

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	If the council signs up to the Climate Local initiative but does not deliver on its published actions this may have a negative impact on reputation	Gill Morris	12/03/13	1	2	2	Accept	None		Gill Morris	

Explanatory notes

Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical)

Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6

(1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability)

Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close