

## **ACTION PLANS and Strategies - Case Study**

<b>Beacon Theme</b>	Sustainable energy
<b>Authority name</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Case Study title</b>	Action plans and strategies

### **Overview**

Nottinghamshire County Council has developed a clear strategic framework to deliver sustainable energy objectives. The authority has a strong corporate commitment to carbon management, which is integrated into policy at the highest level. These objectives have also been incorporated into a wide range of local strategies formulated in partnership.

### **A – A strong corporate commitment to sustainable energy reflected in strategies and action plans led by Nottinghamshire County Council**

#### **Regional Planning Guidance / Regional Energy Strategy**

Nottinghamshire County Council has engaged actively in developing policy at regional level in a wide range of areas. Two senior cabinet members including the Leader are engaged in the Planning Board of the Regional Assembly. A number of officers took part in the development of Regional Planning Guidance, and gave evidence at the RPG examination in public in November 2003, in particular on the energy and transport policies. There has been a similarly high level of involvement in the development of the Regional Energy Strategy through the Regional Energy Group. Officers from the County Council are also involved in regional groups leading work on sustainable development, climate change, transport, the Regional Waste Strategy, sustainable procurement and environment.

#### **Strategic Plan**

Building a Future, the County Council's 2001-2005 Strategic Plan, had a very specific target to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from County Council buildings by 25 per cent from a 1998 baseline by 2003. This has been achieved and Nottinghamshire County Council has now a Public Service Agreement (PSA) to stretch this to 27 per cent. There is also a commitment to purchase greener energy, and to reduce the use of cars for journeys to school.

#### **Joint Structure Plan**

The revised JSP was put on deposit in November 2003, and was subject to examination in public in summer 2004. The energy policies in the plan adopt the regional targets set out in RPG for renewable energy generation, and also set out the need for local plans/local development documents to contain design policies that promote energy efficient construction. The transport policies supply support for development that minimises the need to travel.

#### **Carbon Management Plan**

The Carbon Management Plan provides a comprehensive process for the management of emission of greenhouse gases from Nottinghamshire County Council. It has been developed through extensive working with the Carbon Trust and deals with those emissions under the direct influence of the council namely, energy use in our council buildings, street lighting, transport (including vehicle fleet and business travel) and waste management,

#### **PSA partnership and delivery plan**

This unique CO<sub>2</sub> reduction Public Sector Agreement (PSA) was made with Government by a Partnership of bodies from within Nottinghamshire namely; Nottinghamshire County Council, all of the seven district/ borough councils (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Broxtowe, Gedling, Mansfield and Rushcliffe Borough Councils and Newark & Sherwood District Council) and Nottinghamshire Police. In return for reducing their annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions arising from energy use in buildings, a grant will be shared between the partners. To receive the reward grant the Partnership must achieve an annual reduction of 5,000 tonnes through the installation of more energy efficient technology, switching to lower carbon fuels or investing in renewable technology.

#### **Energy in Buildings Strategy**

The Energy Strategy for buildings was prepared in late 2001 primarily in response to the increase emphasis upon reducing greenhouse gas emissions in order to combat climate change. Allied to this, the clear economic reasons for continuing to improve the Council's annual fuel consumption, given the size, age and diversity of its building portfolio, were also paramount. It is based upon a re-assessment of the energy performance of these buildings and of past investment programmes in relation to cleaner fuel options and

green electricity purchase. The report examined future opportunities that may occur, notably through the use of wood heat, emissions trading, carbon offsetting and through seeking out new funding streams.

The Strategy was adopted by the Council's Cabinet in March 2002 and featured a framework for action based on the Local Government Association's energy hierarchy, with emphasis upon a dedicated investment package of £11m, an annual budget of £30k for energy awareness raising and a new monitoring and reporting system. The proposals were tied to UK targets for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions established in 2000 and to the Council's own Strategic Plan (2001–2005). A target of a 25% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (on a 1998 baseline) was adopted (and achieved) for 2003, which has helped launch the Council towards its long-term vision of becoming a carbon-neutral Authority. This will only be reached if future opportunities, particularly for the generation of both electricity and heat from renewables, can be exploited.

**B – Sustainable energy objectives incorporated into a wide range of local strategies formulated in partnership.**

**The Local Authority Energy Partnership (LAEP)**

The Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities Energy Partnership (LAEP) represents all 19 local authorities in the region. Its vision of 'sustainable development' is linked to three key objectives:

- quality of life
- economic regeneration
- countering social exclusion

The partnership works with central government and gave formal evidence to the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee in 1999 in Nottingham – the resulting report has influenced government policy. All participating authorities operate free and impartial energy advice services to the domestic market.

**The Nottinghamshire Agenda 21 (NA21) Strategy**

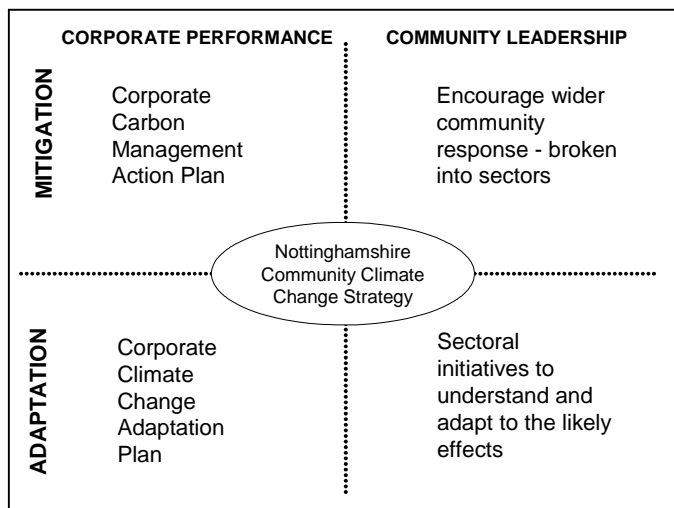
Nottinghamshire County Council set up NA21 in 1999 in response to its work with the district Agenda 21 groups. NA21 aimed to bring together the issues that could not be tackled at a more local level and which needed a more strategic approach. The Action Plan "A Better Quality of Life" launched in 2000 was the result of mapping the existing work in the county, identifying the issues and developing a vision for the future. The progress report, printed in 2004 identifies a number of positive actions on sustainable energy in the area and indicated that the Steering Group had highlighted Climate Change as one of the key priorities for the partnership.

**Community Strategy**

NA21 is now a key partner in the Nottinghamshire Partnership forum, Nottinghamshire's Local Strategic Partnership. The Framework Community Strategy for Nottinghamshire sets out delivery of the Public Service Agreement and climate change as areas of activity. As the delivery partner for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, NA21 commissioned work to research the effects of climate change on the Nottinghamshire area and in October held a conference with Michael Fish, Broadcast Meteorologist, as the keynote speaker. This has helped to kick-start the local response to the issue.

**Climate Change Strategy**

The County Council is working closely with the Nottinghamshire Agenda 21 partnership to produce a Community Climate Change Strategy for the County. This will tackle both mitigation (reducing CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation. As part of this strategy the County Council will set out its own response, and in particular is developing a corporate Carbon Management Plan.



The development of the Climate Change Strategy was launched at a major conference held in October 2004, hosted by the NA21 partnership, and addressed by Michael Fish.

### **Sustainable Developer Guide for Nottinghamshire**

The Sustainable Developer Guide (SDG) for Nottinghamshire is a project that has been managed by Nottinghamshire County Council's Sustainability Team on behalf of a partnership of District Councils, the City Council, the Environment Agency (Lower-Trent Area) and the Newark & Sherwood Energy Agency. Its main role is to inform and inspire developers and their agents in order to raise standards of development coming forward for planning approval. The aim is to signpost the best available advice about exploring and delivering more sustainable solutions for most types of schemes.

### **Newark & Sherwood Energy Agency**

Nottinghamshire County Council is a partner of the Newark and Sherwood Energy Agency, which aims to maximise local sustainable energy investments while generating jobs, creating social inclusion and reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The Agency has encouraged action at the local level and contributed to government consultations. They provide advice and energy efficiency investment, promote low energy housing and support ESCo activity. Links to European partners have been made through the collective of European Energy Agencies, Energy Cites and the Save II Contract.

### **Objectives**

- carbon emission reductions from Nottinghamshire County Council's buildings, with a long-term target of becoming carbon neutral. Specific targets have also been agreed with Districts through the Nottinghamshire PSA agreement
- meet specific targets for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction for transport set out in our Local Transport Plans
- meet specific targets for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from energy recovery from waste set out in our Waste Strategy

### **Methodology**

- get genuine commitment with key external partners and decision makers
- engage with local business and the wider community
- set specific and measurable local objectives together with action plans to achieve these
- integrate sustainable energy objectives into a wide range of local strategies and functions
- reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy consumption using both traditional and innovative technologies:
  - building energy management systems
  - boiler conversions
  - woodheat boilers
  - establishment of a not-for-profit company, ReNU Ltd, to develop the supply chain for wood chips and pellets
  - construction of new buildings with high energy standards
  - switching Nottinghamshire's street lighting to 100% "green electricity"

### **Outcomes**

- successful delivery of projects to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy consumption using both traditional and innovative technologies

## Positive learning points

- strong corporate commitment, partnership working and a “culture of carbon management” is fundamental for the development and implementation of successful action plans and strategies
- authorities should adopt holistic carbon management strategies. These will tackle emissions from buildings, transport, and other sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions such as street lighting and procurement. Carbon management and sustainable energy objectives should also be built into other strategies, plans and activities, including transport, land use as well as waste
- local authorities need to develop strategies for reducing the carbon impact of the goods and services they procure

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