

<b>ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 7</b>
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## **Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council**

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### **PROGRESS ON THE DELIVERY OF THE ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL PORTFOLIO**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report is presented to the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee to update Members on progress with regard to the delivery of the Environment Capital portfolio.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee scrutinises the progress made on the Environment Capital Portfolio by providing challenge where necessary and to suggest ideas and initiatives to support improvements in performance.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

- 3.1 This report contains information extracted from the regular Local Area Agreement reporting pack and the 2009 Comprehensive Performance Assessment submission updated to reflect performance in the latter part of 2009.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 This report focuses on performance in the Environment Capital portfolio, which is measured via four specific outcomes: Overall Consumption of Natural Resources, Increasing the Use of Sustainable Transport, Growing our Environment Business Sector and Making Peterborough Cleaner and Greener.
- 4.2 Progress against this outcome forms part of the portfolio of the Deputy Leader of the Council. Whilst the Local Area Agreement monitoring report elsewhere on this agenda focuses on performance against a range of Performance Indicators this report will outline qualitative performance across the portfolio.

#### **5. KEY ISSUES**

- 5.1 Peterborough benefits from a shared vision set out in the adopted Environment Capital Manifesto. A number of key highlights are worthy of note. Peterborough currently boasts one of the highest recycling amongst unitary authorities in the UK and has recently been chosen by DEFRA as one of only six “Zero Waste Places”. As one of three DfT Sustainable Transport Demonstration Towns, branded locally as “TravelChoice”, Peterborough has achieved significant modal shift including one of the highest growths in bus passenger journeys in the East of England over recent years. The city council was awarded Beacon Status for accessibility in 2008. Peterborough hosts the largest environmental goods and services sector (the “Enviro-Cluster”) of any UK city, show-cased through the city centre based Eco-Innovation Centre”. Finally, the city council’s climate change awareness programme, “Your Footprint Counts”, has been showcased as best practice by the LGA.

- 5.2 Future challenges are focused primarily in maintaining momentum in this high performing priority in the context of a number of resource challenges whilst capitalising on the cross-cutting opportunities particularly in relation to the “Substantial and Sustainable Growth” and “Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities” priorities. In addition, further work is required to engage communities in the Environment Capital initiative as well as the development of measurement tools and evidence base to more accurately monitor progress against achieving the goals.

### Delivery Progress

- 5.3 Progress in delivering the Environment Capital Priority has been significantly positive since the production of the 2008/2011 Local Area Agreement as evidenced by its GREEN status since April 2008. This ongoing success can be attributed to the work of a committed and mature city wide partnership comprising representatives of a wide range of public sector environmental organisations, NGO’s, community groups and local businesses. The partnership, as well as launching its intent to “create the UK’s Environment Capital” in November 2008, has also committed itself to delivering the LAA outcomes and the adopted Environment Capital Manifesto that flows from them ([www.ukenvironmentcapital.com](http://www.ukenvironmentcapital.com)). In addition, the breadth and number of successes to date are building confidence that Peterborough will achieve its goal to create the UK’s Environment Capital. This confidence is evident beyond the city itself. Following a recent, second visit to Peterborough by Jonathon Porritt he has commented as follows; ***I’m really impressed at what’s going on in Peterborough – this is a serious effort to put the environment and resource efficiency at the heart of Peterborough’s economy.***

- 5.4 Key performance highlights:-

- Significant, dedicated resource has been committed to delivering the Environment Capital priority. In October 2008, the city council seconded a senior member of its workforce to fulfil the role of Director of Environment Capital with Opportunity Peterborough (OP). An Environment Capital Officer is also employed by the Greater Peterborough Partnership (GPP). Both roles are complementary and, together, are driving forward the Environment Capital Agenda. The role of Director has recently been retained by the Council for a further twelve months to maintain momentum on progress
- Following the change in political leadership in May 2009 the Deputy Leader of the Council now has the Environment Capital Portfolio supported by a Cabinet Advisor for Environment Capital. In addition, the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee was established to provide challenge and support in delivering the Environment Capital agenda. These important changes put Environment Capital the very heart of decision making within the local authority and across the city
- The work of the “TravelChoice” initiative has facilitated a significant modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes with a corresponding reduction in car usage. This includes an 81% increase in bus passengers between 2003/04 and 2007/08, alongside a 14% increase in walking and 12% increase in cycling journeys since 2004. There has also been a significant increase in the students using the bus to get to school. These modal shifts also have corresponding benefits in ensuring access to essential services, healthier lifestyles and road safety.
- The city continues to perform highly in waste recycling. Its 2007/08 performance of 48.06% placed it amongst the top unitary authority performers thanks to a wide range of accessible waste management services. Information and education has been tailored to meet the needs of Peterborough’s diverse population thus ensuring accessibility to the whole community.
- Peterborough was designated as one of six Zero Waste Places in the UK by DEFRA in 2008. Focussed on the city centre, this Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) led initiative is changing the way in which many businesses manage their waste and resulted in a major city

centre construction site (the Cathedral Square refurbishment) reducing the amount of waste produced and reusing or recycling the remainder. As a consequence, no waste arising from the site was sent to landfill. Similar principles were applied in the demolition of the Corn Exchange building with many local community groups and charities benefiting from the removal of fixtures and fittings.

- The modal shifts arising from the “TravelChoice” work described above is playing a crucial role in driving down individual carbon footprints. The resultant reduction in car usage, whilst difficult to quantify, will play an important role in reducing the city’s carbon footprint calculated by DEFRA. A survey of 4000 city households published in March 2009 calculated an overall car journey reduction of 30.9 million Kilometres equating to 6400 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. However, this represents only part of a very important picture. The “Your Footprint Counts” campaign ensures that carbon reduction activities are communicated to the city’s residents via road shows and related activities. This has recently been supplemented by two award winning games aimed at school children.
- The city’s strong environment goods and services sector (the “Enviro-Cluster”) currently comprises 380 businesses of varying sizes. Based in the centrally located Eco-Innovation Centre, now at 60% capacity after just one year of operation, there is emerging evidence that this sector is “bucking” the economic downturn trend and is continuing to expand. The cluster is playing an increasingly significant part in Peterborough’s economy and is now playing a leading role in a European wide project. The underlying research is also being refreshed.
- Whilst the Environment Capital priority necessarily focuses on global challenges, much of the resultant activity is focussed on the local communities. Targeted street cleansing activities, based on feedback from community consultation, are resulting in measurable improvements to cleansing standards although these are not yet reflected in significantly increased customer satisfaction.
- The majority of the cities extensive network of wildlife sites is under positive management regimes ensuring both quality and biodiversity in an accessible local environment.
- The Integrated Growth Study (IGS) published in 2008, provides a detailed benchmark describing the steps required for the city to grow substantially and sustainably alongside a wide range of parameters against which progress can be measured. This unique document is central to the Environment Capital priority.
- Outcomes from the IGS include current detailed studies of the energy and water requirements of Peterborough as it grows including recommendations as to how these requirements will be met sustainably. Again, the approach being adopted in each case is unique to Peterborough.
- A number of high profile community based projects continue to be actively supported, including the Eco-Arts Project, Green Backyard and Green Glington.
- The emerging Peterborough University will have a Sustainable Construction faculty as one of its initial academic offers.
- The Council has recently conducted a thermal imaging exercise of the urban areas of Peterborough to act as a basis for further work on energy efficiency in existing homes.
- The “Your Footprint Counts” campaign is raising awareness of individual responsibilities and behaviour change associated with climate change. Recent citizen’s panel results are evidence of the success of this campaign which was cited as best practice by the LGA in 2008.

- A clear partnership focus on our educational establishments is leading to more and more signing up to achieving Eco-Schools status. Recent extensions to the city's schools have incorporated a wide range of low carbon and sustainability features.
- Peterborough's Green Festival 2009 was the biggest and best yet with a range of accessible environmentally friendly events and activities taking place during the fortnight. This successful event is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year.
- The Green Festival 2009 incorporated a stage of the Tour Series Cycle Race on 4<sup>th</sup> June. Peterborough was chosen as one of ten city centre venues for this national event. It attracted an estimated 8,000 visitors to the city and was watched by an estimated 3m television viewers nationally on ITV4. The event showcased Peterborough's Environmental Capital focus and was supported by a host of cycling based community activities. It is intended that the city will host a stage of this series in 2010.
- Strong links continue to be built with EU Departments. Representatives of the city have now actively participated in a number of EU events focussed on sustainability and have recently presented papers on the draft Energy Study at an EU conference in Forli, Italy and on the Enviro Cluster at an international Conference in Poznan, Poland. A number of EU funding opportunities are actively being pursued to enable the city to secure additional resources for this portfolio.
- The city council has made significant efforts to reduce its own carbon footprint including the replacement of hundreds of individual printers, photocopiers and fax machines with a significantly smaller number of multi-function devices.
- The Council is also taking part in the shadow Carbon Trading Scheme administered by the Local Government Information Unit. Learning from this pilot will inform the statutory scheme which will be implemented nationally in 2010.
- A successful Masterclass involving, amongst others, Members of the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee, was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Hosted by Jonathon Porritt, the outcomes from this important event will be fed into the city's further work on sustainability.
- Work is currently underway on a unique digital platform to visually demonstrate Peterborough's environmental performance. This web based solution will facilitate collaboration between key stakeholders as well as enabling individuals and communities to make informed decisions about their lifestyles based on current sustainability data.
- A number of opportunities have been taken to showcase the city's environmental performance and ambition at key seminars and events. Most recently, an Environmental Capital exhibition was held in the Upper Waiting Hall of the House of Commons.
- Work on developing a set of parameters which identify when the city has achieved its ambition of becoming the UK's Environment Capital is nearing completion and will be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

## Conclusions

- 5.5 For Peterborough, becoming The Environment Capital will create a city which encourages and supports its people in making significant and real improvements to their quality of life. Through this we will deliver truly sustainable growth for the city, ensuring a cleaner, greener, healthier and more vibrant Peterborough for the future.

Success in Creating the UK's Environment Capital will be directly related to the support and actions of every citizen, business and organisation in the city. The greater the support the sooner we will reach our goal.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Failure to achieve positive outcomes in relation to the Environment Capital Portfolio may impact upon Peterborough's environmental performance and also its reputation as a leading environmental city.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Environment Capital Portfolio is discussed widely amongst Greater Peterborough Partnership members particularly the Environment Capital Partnership.

## **8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- 8.1 The key outcome following presentation of this report is that the Committee will have a clearer understanding of progress within the Environment Capital Portfolio, will feel better equipped to scrutinise and challenge performance, and will be able to offer new solutions to help improve progress and performance wherever necessary.

## **9. NEXT STEPS**

- 9.1 Any comments on Environment Capital Portfolio performance and ideas for action will be considered by the Deputy Leader in consultation with key Council officers and partners.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Local Area Agreement 2008-11.

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