

ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL: PROGRESS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on progress in delivering the “Home of Environment Capital” initiative. The report should be read in conjunction with the “*Environment Capital; Introduction, Overview and Work Programme*” report elsewhere on the agenda.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To discuss and comment on progress in delivering the “Home of Environment Capital” initiative.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Adopting this approach will ensure that subsequent Scrutiny meetings will directly contribute to the objectives and outcomes contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

This committee in particular most directly contributes to the ‘Creating the UK’s Environment Capital’ priority in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Peterborough’s Sustainable Communities Strategy contains four priorities: Creating Strong and Supportive Communities; Creating the UK’s Environment Capital; Creating Opportunities, Tackling Inequalities; Substantial and Truly Sustainable Growth. Each of these priorities has four specific outcomes, beneath which sit a diverse range of actions and interventions to deliver lasting positive change for Peterborough.

By adopting the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the council has committed itself to becoming the UK’s Environment Capital, building on the longstanding experience as one of four Environment Cities in the UK. The “journey” from Environment City to Environment Capital is considered appropriate given the shift towards global environmental challenges such as climate change as well as the city’s ambition to grow substantially and sustainably.

Environment Capital now has widespread support as a key focus and unique selling point for Peterborough which has been achieved through clear political direction and the efforts of a committed, cross-sector Environment Capital Partnership.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 **Performance Management:** At its meeting in July, the Committee resolved that before the City Council launched its Environment Capital approach, agreed criteria should be met and an independent assessment should be undertaken. The most cost effective basis for this comparative work is the Forum for The Future Sustainable Cities Index. The organization assessed Peterborough as part of the Jonathan Porritt Master Class in Nov 2009. Forum for the

Future has recently assessed the city against 2010 Index It should be noted that the Index compares Peterborough with a number of much larger UK cities but it is one of only a few, reliable local authority comparators. Peterborough is the only city which voluntarily submits itself to this additional scrutiny with regard to its sustainability performance.

The latest report is still in draft form and will reported, in full, to the next meeting of this committee. Early indications are Peterborough leads the way on Air Quality, Bio-diversity, recycling and local food production whilst total waste produced per household and the city's "ecological footprint" are still causes for concern. Overall, the city's environmental performance has significantly improved since the 2009 assessment.

- 5.2 **Major Policy:** The "Home of Environment Capital" Major Policy was approved by Council in 2010 and now forms a key part of the Councils policy portfolio. The success of the Major Policy is being assessed to ensure that it is a key consideration in the development of all Council plans, strategies and policies.

At the time of its adoption, it was recognized that a whole host of other council policies and strategies were required to deliver on the Environment Capital aspirations. Since the policy was adopted the Biodiversity Strategy has also been approved whilst the Trees and Woodland Strategy is currently out to consultation.

- 5.3 **Renewable Energy:** Significant progress is being made with regard to renewable energy production on council owned assets. Despite recent Government announcements relating to the significant reduction in the Feed In Tariff (FiT) for large scale solar energy generation, the viability of small scale, roof mounted photo-voltaic installations remain unaffected.

The Town Hall and Regional Pool have been identified as priority, high profile buildings. After a full procurement exercise a contract has now been awarded for the installation of photo-voltaic panels on both buildings over the next few months.

The Town Hall installation will produce an estimated 36kW Peak with the Council using 100% of the energy produced. The Regional Pool installation is scaled at 60kW Peak. Both installations will make a small annual profit, primarily from income from the Government FiT.

Opportunities relating to other Council buildings, including schools, are being actively investigated.

It is worth noting that the electricity generation projects are only part of the approach to drive down the Council's energy usage. A programme of low energy lighting refurbishments and the installation of voltage optimizers are also enabling significant savings to be made whilst, at the same time, reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

- 5.4 **"The Peterborough Model":**

Over the past 18 months a range of organisations have been assisting in a ground breaking partnership project. Data managers, technical staff and directors of a wide range of organisations have been working as partners to provide input, ideas and data to form the basis of "The Peterborough Model".

The Peterborough Model visualises the environmental performance of the city and is a platform for improved collaboration and partnership working between the many public and private sector organisations operating assets within the city. The model and collaboration platform have been specifically designed to accelerate the pace of change towards a more sustainable city.

The first 'Leaders Summit' was held in November 2010 in the Eco Innovation Centre in Peterborough, when various local leaders used the Peterborough Model to explore new ways of collaborating to meet future challenges. The senior team from Peterborough City Council were joined by counterparts at Anglian Water, UK Power Networks, Centrica and the Environment Agency to identify how they might identify common priorities and joint projects to improve the

sustainability of the city.

A second Summit was held in June 2011 and focussed on creating a better understanding of the natural resource implications of the City's growth plans and to identify opportunities where collaboration between all stakeholders on the core strategy can drive innovation and multiple benefits and, in the process, jointly create a more sustainable future for the city and its communities.

Work is underway to forge links between the model and the Neighbourhood Window project in order that both initiatives can benefit from the same, single database.

Apart from facilitating collaboration around key, future challenges the Peterborough Model is also raising the profile of the city nationally and internationally. This pioneering project has caught the attention of UK Government, the European Commission and the World Bank, and has been written about widely in the press - even reaching the New York Times. It has recently been featured at "Sustainability Live" and the EU Sustainable Energy Week and will shortly form part of an IBM "Smarter Cities" feature on the Bloomberg Channel.

5.5 **"Live Healthy, Live Green"**: Health, quality of life and sustainability share many of the same roots. As a consequence a significant portion of Peterborough's health and environmental agendas have been targeted at helping people to change behaviours in ways that will deliver long term benefits to both individuals and the environment.

As well as sharing the need to support changes in behaviour, there are clear synergies between crucial parts of the health and environmental agendas. The strongest of these are;

- the links between the drive to promote exercise for health with the outdoor enjoyment of nature and sustainable transport (cycling and walking),*
- the link between healthy eating and growing / selecting local, seasonal food,*
- the link between fuel poverty ,people's health and wellbeing and the environment (energy efficiency)*

The above have been identified and agreed as Priority Partnership Programme areas. A joint Single Delivery Programme (SDP), replacing the Local Area Agreement, will deliver combined behaviour change campaigns in these three areas, pooling resources whilst managing and coordinating activities within a single programme. This approach will draw support and advice from the wider health and environment partnerships and will weave public, private, voluntary sector activities together.

The SDP also features work strands on Renewable Energy. A wide range of performance indicators are currently being developed

5.6 **Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)**: The Government announced, as part of the Local Transport White Paper, the creation of a LSTF to help build strong local economies and address the urgent challenges of climate change. It reflects the Government's core objectives of supporting economic growth by improving the links that move goods and people and meeting its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The aim is to facilitate best practice in the delivery of a wide range of sustainable transport packages and presents local authorities with the opportunity to introduce a package of sustainable travel solutions that will support economic growth while reducing carbon.

Peterborough City Council (PCC) completed and submitted its bid, totalling £4,999,990 to the Department for Transport on 18 April 2011. The bid includes sustainable transport improvements, both soft measures and infrastructure, and aims at increasingly integrating sustainable travel into our mainstream travel planning. The bid is grouped as four key packages:

1. Working with individuals, communities and neighbourhoods
2. Workplace travel planning
3. Healthier travel
4. Young people's travel

Each package contains a number of measures; for instance Package 1 *Working with individuals, communities and neighbourhoods* includes infrastructure and soft measures to integrate travel modes at the bus and rail station and improve accessibility in and to the city centre as well as a mini park and ride facility. Package 4 *Young people's travel* includes provision for a bike it officer to work in schools and independent travel training amongst other initiatives.

Key partners contributing match funding include the NHS Peterborough Primary Care Trust, East Coast and Peterborough Environment City Trust.

An announcement on the success of the bid is due early July and an update will be provided verbally at the meeting.

5.7 **European Region Development Fund (ERDF):** A concept project bid was submitted to EEDA in January which contained two key work packages:

- *Development of a Smartphone Application providing innovative and interactive sustainable travel information; aimed predominantly at local SMEs. The Smartphone Application will provide information on all modes of sustainable travel.*
- *Design and development of a trial of iBike rental system, based at business locations across Peterborough.*

The total value of the bid was circa £500k with match funding of 60% required.

Whilst this bid was not successful in its own right, PCC is now working with other local authorities (Essex, Colchester, Hertfordshire and Luton) on a joint bid. This is on the advice of EEDA who considered that bids from this group of local authorities had similarities and recommended a joint application be submitted. Peterborough is therefore working with these local authorities to submit a joint application by the end of July.

Given the revised timescales match funding can be demonstrated through LSTF as well as staff in-kind resources and Local Transport Plan capital and revenue funding.

5.8 **ConAge:** Working with colleagues across Europe and Greater Manchester this project aims to increase the use of sustainable travel in the over 50s, particularly focusing on the last mile of the journey. Peterborough's projects include:

- Smart phone application to include all modes of sustainable travel
- Working with the voluntary and third sector to deliver community transport
- Expand the Shopmobility scheme to local centres and provide charging points for scooters
- Car share hub for the elderly on the Peterborough car share website

The funding application was submitted at the end of March with a budget of approximately £350k. A funding announcement is expected in July 2011.

5.9 **Application for Better Cities for Children (ABC):** If successful, this three year European Commission funded projects will work with partners from Belgium, Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Portugal and Bulgaria. Providing funding of approximately 145,000 Euros this project aims to promote and increase the use of sustainable travel to families travelling to Peterborough and in and around Peterborough focussing on tourism locations. The project will also provide information on how much carbon the family have saved by travelling using sustainable travel as well as calories they have burnt by cycling and walking and financial savings. This therefore raising the profile of the health, environment and financial benefits of sustainable travel.

5.10 **TOGETHER energy efficient travel training for immigrants:** The TOGETHER project consortium consists of partners from Austria, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and the UK. JMP Consultants Ltd is leading the UK's involvement in this project and has requested PCC to be

the demonstration area where the training materials will be delivered and tested.

This is a three year European Commission funded project that seeks to develop and implement energy efficient travel training for new immigrants. The 'TOGETHER' project aims to work in partnership with this specific target group and key local stakeholders to deliver tailor made training and learning material to encourage people to travel using sustainable modes of transport.

This project has recently been successful and approved through the exemption process and the first stakeholder workshop was held on 20 April at the City College.

- 5.11 **Plugged in Places:** The plugged in places electric vehicle project progresses with the installation of the first three charging posts being installed in the Autumn following a slight delay within the consortium. The first charging points will be located in the city centre. A Travelchoice webpage will shortly be released giving details on the project, Government's electric vehicle incentive scheme and other useful information and weblinks.
- 5.12 **Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC):** A full report on progress in respect of the CRC will be presented at the March 2012 meeting of this Committee however progress is on target through the implementation of the Council's Carbon Management Action Plan approved by Council in April 2010.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Home of Environment Capital initiative ensures that sustainability is embedded throughout Council services and across a range of key city stakeholders. It is also key in raising the profile and reputation of the city regionally, nationally and internationally.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Environment Capital initiatives and projects outlined in this report are subject to individual and specific

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Following the committee meeting, the Environment Capital Scrutiny committee work programme will be finalised, lead officers identified and timescales set to ensure maximum effectiveness of the scrutiny process.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 9.1 The following documents have been used to prepare this report:

Sustainable Community Strategy
Single Delivery Plan
Home of Environment Capital Major Policy

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 None

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