

ED2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS BY A CABINET MEMBER OR AN OFFICER

A. Report Title: Climate Change Mitigation through the European Regional Development Fund	
B. Report Author(s): Clare Lambert Liz Beadle	Tel: 01375 652962 E-mail: clambert@thurrock.gov.uk lbeadle@thurrock.gov.uk
C. Decision Maker: Cllr G Hague	
D. Position held: Leader	
E. Key decision: YES	F. Delegation ref:
G. Is the decision urgent? YES	
H. If yes, state why. Original report was deferred by Director's Board and approval is required to enable the submission of an EEDA funding bid	
I. DECISION (strike out whichever does not apply) : 1. I agree the recommendations in the attached report for the reasons given in the report Signed: by Cllr Hague, Leader Date: 28.5.09	
Democratic Services will arrange for the completion of the following: J. I confirm that in my opinion a decision on this matter is urgent and cannot reasonably be delayed: Signed: Cllr P Tolson, Date: 28.5.09	
Date decision received by Dem. Services: 27.5.09	Date decision published: 28.5.09
Implementation date:	29 May 2009
Relevant O & S Committee: Chair of Environment O&S consented to waive call in on 28.5.09	

Decision taken by the Leader under Special Urgency - 28 May 2009	
CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION THROUGH THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND	
Portfolio Holder: Cllr G Hague, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Regeneration	
Report Author: Sustainability and Environmental Planning Manager	
Accountable Head of Service: Head of Strategic Planning and Delivery	
Accountable Director: Director of Sustainable Communities	
Purpose: To gain approval for Thurrock Council to lead an ERDF funding bid for Environmental Business Support in Thames Gateway South Essex. To support the Council in meeting its commitments under the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change	
Wards affected: All	Key decision: Yes
This report is Public	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 For Cabinet to approve the submission of a bid for European Regional Development Funding with Thurrock Council leading as the accountable body for Thames Gateway South Essex.**

2. INTRODUCTION:

- 2.1 On 19th of June 2007 the Leader and Chief Executive signed the Nottingham Declaration (“Declaration”) on Climate Change, as agreed by Cabinet. This committed the Council to seven actions:
- i Working towards the UK target of a 20% reduction in CO₂ on 1990 levels by 2010.
 - ii Participating in local and regional networks for support.
 - iii Developing plans with our partners and local communities to address the causes and the impacts of climate change.
 - iv Publicly declaring, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the authorities own operations.
 - v Assessing the risk associated with climate change and the implications for our services and our communities of climate change impacts and adapting accordingly.

- vi Encouraging all sectors in our local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- vii Monitoring the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the result.

3. BACKGROUND:

3.1 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Under action six of the declaration the Council is required to encourage all sectors of the community to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

3.2 Thurrock’s Carbon Footprint

Thurrock has a high carbon footprint by end user, the second highest in the Region. The borough also has the highest emissions from industrial and commercial sources in the Region. Emissions from this sector in Thurrock are generally around double those of the comparable unitary authorities.

In total, Thurrock accounts for 0.38% of all CO2 emissions in the UK, but only 0.24% of the population. Thames Gateway South Essex accounts for 13% of the regions industrial emissions.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions by Sector in thousand tonnes	Industry and Commercial	Domestic	Road Transport	Land use	Total	Population (mid-year estimate)	Per capita emissions(t)
Thurrock	1,157	333	401	1	1,892	147.5	12.83
TGSE Average	455	322	199	1	978	128.7	7.59
East of England Average	308	253	263	11	835	103	8.11
England average	540	348	322	8	1,219	142	8.57
UK average	553	348	316	-5	1,212	139	8.73

3.3 Low Carbon Economy Support

Engagement with businesses is a significant factor for Thurrock as commercial and industrial emissions are the largest source of the borough's carbon baseline. Developing a low carbon economy is one of the approved strands of the Economic Development Strategy, reducing emissions and increase resource efficiency helps support business competitiveness, business survival rates and safeguarding jobs. This is particularly important in the current economic climate and with Thurrock's high business failure rates. A programme of business engagement is proposed within the Council's Climate Change Mitigation action plan.

4.0 RESOURCES

- 4.1 There are no directly allocated staff resources for climate change mitigation work. A key element of the action plan is to develop external funding bids to support the Low Carbon Business sector.
- 4.2 Within the current allocation of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) funding £350,000 has been approved to fund Environmental Business Activities. It is proposed that this is used as match funding to enable the development of a comprehensive environmental business programme using external funding.
- 4.3 Since October 2008 the Sustainable Prosperity Team, within the Council, have been working with the TTGDC and local authorities within South Essex to develop a Concept bid for European Economic Regeneration Development Funding (ERDF).

In March 2009 EEDA approved the concept of a bid for approximately £2.5 million, to work with local businesses to reduce carbon emissions and increase resource efficiency. The bid is based on a three step approach to reducing emissions

- i. Business awareness and engagements
- ii. Diagnostics, audits and environmental assessments of businesses
- iii. Grants and specialist support

A full business case is now under development and approval is now sought for Thurrock to take the lead role in the programme. It is proposed that Thurrock Council be the accountable body for the Thames Gateway South Essex bid. Match funding for this bid will be sought from LABGI and EPP funding.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PRIORITIES:

- 5.1 Reducing carbon emissions directly supports the Council's top twenty priority for encouraging the use of energy efficient systems and the objective cleaner, greener and sustainable. It also supports the local LAA version of NI186 for reducing carbon emissions by sector.
- 5.2 Work on Climate Change supports the use of resources assessment of the CAA.

6. Overview and Scrutiny

- 6.1 A wide climate change report including the recommendation for the ERDF funding bids was presented to Environment Overview and Scrutiny on the 14th April 2009.

The committee noted the report and felt there was a strong case for investment to create savings, endorsed the use of LABGI funding for this field of work.

The committee expressed concern at the high level of emissions in the borough, that proposed resources should be adequate to meet the Council agenda and that the allocations from existing staff resources may not be adequate.

RELEVANT POLICIES

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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The report identifies some of the potential funding streams which may support this work. There is reference to the Area Based Grant being ring fenced. It should be noted that this is a general grant that is available for the Council to determine its use. A number of the respective funding streams will need further decisions as to the allocation of the funding streams if they are to support this service activity.

The funding in relation to LABGI was received in two parts for the financial year 2008/09. There was an initial allocation of £1.789 million (detailed within the Cabinet report of 9th July 2008), and a second award of £0.726 million. The estimated carry forward of LABGI funding equates to £1.765 million from the financial year 2008/09 into 2009/10.

The project details contained within this report are in line with the Councils economic strategy and implementation plan, which was reported to Cabinet on 12th November 2008.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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Since the signing of the Declaration the Council has continued to commit itself with the intention of positively tackling Climate Change throughout the borough.

There are no immediate implications associated with funding; however, any successful bid by the Council for external funding may be subject to monitoring and the Council entering into an agreement with the Funder. The Council will also have to ensure that any project associated with the delivery of climate change work is in line with both the EU and UK Public Procurement Regime. Therefore it is recommended that both procurement and legal be kept fully informed of any developments in this area.

The Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme (LABGI) is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government under section 31 of the Local

Government Act 2003. It enables the Minister of State for Local Government (the “Minister of State”) to make grant determinations to local authorities subject to grant conditions. The Council will have to ensure that they are able to fulfill its obligation for LABGI funding and conditions imposed by the Minister of State for the grant. The Council will have to ensure that the role of the Sustainable Development Assistant adequately includes the delivery of the Climate Change Adaptation.

DIVERSITY & EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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The Council has a statutory duty under the Race Relations Act 2000 (Amendment), the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment) to promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services and employment. The Service should ensure that the proposed Climate Change Strategy set out in section 3.3 is Equality Impact Assessed (EIA). An EIA will identify any negative or adverse impact on any equality strand. It is advisable to involve the Equality and Diversity team at an early stage of the strategy development so that implications can be fully understood.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Thurrock Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan

Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Thurrock NI186 Evidence Base and Analysis

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