

Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 17 January 2013

Website: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk> www.oxfordshirewaste.gov.uk

A MEETING OF THE

Oxfordshire Environment Partnership

WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY 25 JANUARY 2013 AT 10.00 AM

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
CROWMARSH GIFFORD

If you would like a copy of these papers in large print, Braille or audio cassette or have any other special requirements (such as access facilities) please contact the officer named on this agenda. Please give as much notice as possible before the meeting

Membership

Membership is a loose group comprising the elected members of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, officers and representatives from governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Councillors

David Dodds (Chairman of the OWP)
(deputy: any Cabinet member)

Reg Waite (Vice-Chairman of the OWP)
(deputy: any Cabinet member)

Nigel Morris
(deputy: any Cabinet member)

John Tanner
(deputy: any other Executive Board member)

Hilary Hibbert-Biles
(deputy:)

David Harvey
(deputy: Barry Norton or Mark Booty)

Representing:

South Oxfordshire District Council

Vale of White Horse District Council

Cherwell District Council

Oxford City Council

Oxfordshire County Council

West Oxfordshire District Council

Partner organisations

Oxfordshire Environment partnership – Currently represented by: current member organisations

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership	Wayne Lewis
Cherwell District Council	Ian Davies
Oxford City Council	John Copley
	Tim Sadler
Oxfordshire County Council	Andrew Pau
	Rachel Burns
	Susie Ohlenschlager
	Nick King
	Tom Flanagan
	Matt Prosser
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council	
West Oxfordshire District Council	
Environment Agency	Jo Wines
	Glen Browne
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Linda Watson
BBOWT	Neil Clennell

Agenda Items

- 1 Apologies for absence and notification of deputy members attending**
- 2 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest**
- 3 Addresses and questions to the partnership**

Members of the public wishing to speak to the partnership for up to five minutes must register with the committee clerk named above by noon on Thursday (the day before the meeting).

- 4 Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 8)

Purpose: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership meeting held on 26 October 2012 (attached) and to receive information arising from them.

- 5 TOE2 Woodfuel programme funding** (Pages 9 - 14)

Report attached

10:05am

Purpose: At the last meeting a paper from TOE2 was tabled which requested funding for its Wood Fuel Programme. A recommendation was made to refer the proposal to the Waste Partnership's New Initiatives (NIF) fund. However, subsequent evaluation of the proposal confirmed that the TOE2 Programme would not be eligible for NIF funding as it would not use waste wood, and does not meet the specific waste criteria which the NIF fund requires. TOE2 was therefore invited to submit a funding proposal to the Environment Partnership, to give members an opportunity to consider the proposal.

Oxfordshire Environment Partnership is recommended to:

- (a) consider the TOE2 funding request;
- (b) request officers to organise a joint meeting between TVEnergy, TOE2, and local authority officers, and to recommend next steps to the next meeting;
- (c) consider whether to invite officers to develop a funding strategy for the Environment Partnership for review at a future meeting.

6 Sharing good practice - Oxfordshire County Council

10:15am

Gordon Hunt of Oxfordshire County Council will give a presentation about the Flood and Water Management Act and current work to implement sustainable drainage systems.

7 Climate Local commitment and work programme (Pages 15 - 22)

Report attached.

10:30am

Purpose: This report provides additional information about current local authority activities, and confirms that signing Climate Local does not require any additional resources.

It recommends that, in recognising that there are no additional resource requirements, the Environment and Waste Partnership agree:

- a) to sign Climate Local, as "Climate Local Oxfordshire";
- b) as stage two of the process, to agree within six months the commitments to be included and reported on.

8 Collective switching project (Pages 23 - 32)

Report attached

10:40am

Purpose: To update on a collective energy switching project led by Cherwell District Council that seeks to save residents money on their energy bills.

It is recommended that:

- I. Partner Councils participate in the collective switching scheme and provide officer support of approximately 5 days each.
- II. That a core project team of Cherwell and OWP officers leads on project delivery operating within a budget of £12,500.
- III. That Cherwell District Council recovers project revenue expenditure for goods

and services up to £12,500 from the rebate received from the successful energy provider.

- IV. That participating Partner Councils (including Cherwell District Council) agree to underwrite any short fall of income through an equal contributory payment by each, if required.

9 Oxfordshire Total Retrofit

Nick King of Oxfordshire County Council will give a presentation. 10:50am

10 Chairman's announcements

There will be a break for refreshments before the start of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership meeting

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE



Listening Learning Leading

Oxfordshire Environment Partnership

HELD AT 10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2012

AT THE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
CROWMARSH GIFFORD

Present:

Voting members

Councillor D Dodds (Chairman)
Councillor D Harvey
Councillor H Hibbert-Biles
Councillor N Morris
Councillor J Tanner
Councillor R Waite

South Oxfordshire District Council
West Oxfordshire District Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Cherwell District Council
Oxford City Council
Vale of White Horse District Council

Officers attending for the whole of the meeting

Mr W Lewis
Mr P Mocroft
Mr Ed Potter
Mr J Copley
Ms R Burns
Mr N King
Mr A Pau
Ms S Ohlenschlager
Mr M Prosser

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership
Oxfordshire Waste Partnership
Cherwell District Council
Oxford City Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
South Oxfordshire and
Vale of White Horse district councils
South Oxfordshire and
Vale of White Horse district councils
West Oxfordshire District Council
West Oxfordshire District Council
Environment Agency

Mrs J Thompson

Mr R Young
Mr T Askew
Ms J Wines

Officers attending for part of the meeting

Wendy Twist
Richard Pollock

Low Carbon Hub
Groundworks Trust

Apologies

Ms L Watson, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, gave her apologies.

7 Declaration of interest

Councillor David Harvey declared a personal interest in the Green Deal (Minute 5) as he was appointed to represent West Oxfordshire District Council as a director on the board of the United Sustainable Energy Agency. He remained in the room and took part in the debate but took no part in decisions relating to that item.

8 Addresses and questions to the partnership

There were no addresses or questions from members of the public.

9 Minutes, 22 June 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership meeting held on 22 June 2012 were approved.

The partnership noted that further to minute 6, the Local Nature Partnership has gained formal partnership status from DEFRA, formed a board, and has funding for a co-ordinator until December 2012. The partnership is looking for projects to demonstrate its work. There is now a website, a community guide, and a proposal to develop a wood fuel depot.

10 Low Carbon Hub

Wendy Twist of the Low Carbon Hub gave a presentation.

She explained the work of the Low Carbon Hub and some of the projects supported. There were over 60 local community low carbon groups in the county. The hub was funded from grants and income from revenue-generating projects. The hub encouraged community groups to replicate successful work elsewhere, start projects, and engage their local communities. There was a long-term target to reduce demand create renewable energy equivalent to saving the output of Didcot A power station – a tough but realisable goal.

The partnership noted the presentation and the work of the Hub and thanked Ms Twist for her presentation.

11 Green Deal update

The partnership considered a report from Oxfordshire County Council's carbon programme manager summarising the current position with the Green Deal and the options offered by United Sustainable Energy Agency.

Companies can register and households can sign up from 1 October 2012 and work can start at the end of January 2013.

DECC have launched a bidding round for grants to be spent by March 2013 and councils were invited to bid.

The partnership notes that Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, and West Oxfordshire District Council

have signed or have agreed to sign a deal with United Sustainable Energy Agency and that Oxford City Council have separate arrangements for the Green Deal.

12 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The partnership considered the annual report to the partnership summarising the reports from all six local authorities in Oxfordshire to show progress against the agreed target of a 3% reduction in carbon emissions year on year. The reductions had been achieved in a variety of ways including reducing assets, reducing business mileage, encouraging reductions in contractors' energy use, and energy reduction schemes in council buildings.

The partnership:

- noted good progress in achieving the target reductions;
- asked that officers provide the Low Carbon Hub with a summary of the report for their website;
- agreed that the partnership and the Waste Partnership publicise the reductions.

13 Chairman's announcements

There were no announcements.

MATTERS CONSIDERED JOINTLY WITH THE OXFORDSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP

14 Local Government Association's Climate Local Commitment

The Environment Partnership and the Waste Partnership considered a report summarising the Climate Local initiative launched by the Local Government Association.

The partnerships agreed there was a positive presumption among partner authorities to sign Climate Local as a partnership and to draw the commitments from the Oxfordshire 2030 priorities, but that each authority should establish their ability to commit the resources required before signing.

The Environment Partnership and the Waste Partnership agreed to invite the Local Authority Working Group to present options for further development to the next meeting of the Partnership in January 2013, along with an assessment of resource requirements, with a view to signing Climate Local as "Climate Local Oxfordshire", subject to availability of resources.

15 Oxfordshire Green Schools end of year report: Groundwork Trust

Richard Pollard gave a presentation on the work of the Groundwork Trust in schools during 2011/12. The Oxfordshire Green Schools programme had delivered 330 activities over 170 visits, and 18 schools were either established or being recruited as green hub schools. The Trust had run a very successful green entrepreneur competition. There were good opportunities to share good practice across schools and through community and school events. Schools were audited to measure

reductions in energy use and visits, workshops and projects were evaluated and feedback from schools was very positive.

The Environment Partnership and the Waste Partnership noted the report of the Groundwork Trust and the work it was undertaking in schools.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

Chairman

Date

Oxfordshire Environment and Waste Partnership 25 January 2013

TOE2 Woodfuel Programme

Introduction

- 1 At the last meeting a paper from TOE2 was tabled which requested funding for its Wood Fuel Programme. A recommendation was made to refer the proposal to the Waste Partnership's New Initiatives (NIF) fund. However, subsequent evaluation of the proposal confirmed that the TOE2 Programme would not be eligible for NIF funding as it would not use waste wood, and does not meet the specific waste criteria which the NIF fund requires. TOE2 was therefore invited to submit a funding proposal to the Environment Partnership, to give members an opportunity to consider the proposal. The proposal is attached at Annex 1.

Background

- 2 Maximising the use of biomass as a fuel source is identified as a priority in the list of potential projects in the Climate Local report to this meeting from the local authority officer group; this includes local authority arisings from parks and woodlands. The group is aware of the TOE2 project and supports its objectives.
- 3 Many local authorities already provide financial support to Thames Valley Energy (TVEnergy), the renewable energy agency which has operated in the county for many years. Thames Valley Energy has a well-established commercial wood-chip subsidiary with 19 wood chip-contracts, some of which are in the county. In addition there are commercial suppliers offering wood chip relatively locally. TOE2 were therefore asked to clarify in their funding proposal how they will work with TVEnergy and other local partners and organisations.
- 4 The proposal below does not refer to TVEnergy. The local authority officer group has recommended that:
 - more information is needed about TV Energy's plans for using local woodfuel, and establishment of a fuel station, and how they might be able to work together with TOE2;
 - a joint meeting is held between TV Energy, TOE2 and local authority energy officers to clarify their respective roles and identify the potential for future collaboration in Oxfordshire.

Resource implications

- 5 The Environment Partnership currently has no expenditure budget, or grant funding process, though it has played a co-ordinating role in helping organisations to generate funding through joint bids. With no funds, it is therefore not possible at this stage to recommend financial support for this project.

Recommendations

- 6 That the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership is recommended to:
- (a) consider the TOE2 funding request;
 - (b) request officers to organise a joint meeting between TVEnergy, TOE2, and local authority officers, and to recommend next steps to the next meeting;
 - (c) consider whether to invite officers to develop a funding strategy for the Environment Partnership for review at a future meeting.

Contact Officer

8 Author Susie Ohlenschlager Tel: 07880 042660

Email: susie.ohlenschlager@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Annex 1 TOE2 Funding Application**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Project Name	The Oxfordshire Community Woodfuels Programme	Total Funding Requested	£25,000
Where Will the Project Be Delivered? Throughout Oxfordshire			
Name of Proposing Organisation: The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment – TOE2			
<p>Details about the Organisation:- 'Putting people and places together', TOE2 is an Oxfordshire environmental charity providing support and funding for communities wishing to deliver a positive, lasting change to their environment. TOE2 works in partnership with key organisations within the County, whilst encouraging and supporting a better use of natural resources and improvements to local wildlife habitats. TOE2 provides a catalyst for collaboration, and a conduit for funding throughout Oxfordshire, to our three areas of support: Biodiversity; Access to Green Spaces; the use of Renewable Resources and Energy Efficiency.</p> <p>The charity focuses on sourcing donations and other funding to give back to the community via a grants scheme. The woodfuel programme is a specific demonstration project which is being run by TOE2 due to the close fit with the charity's aims and objectives.</p>			

Project Manager	Mrs Fiona Danks	Scheduled Start Date	Current
Contact Name (if different)	As above	Scheduled End Date	Ongoing
Contact Address	Jericho Farm Worton Witney Oxfordshire OX29 4SZ		
Contact Phone No.	01865 883488	Contact e-mail address	toe@oxonrcc.org.uk
Date of completion of this form		9 January 2013	

2. PROJECT STATEMENT

Please provide a brief, clear statement of your project and key project objectives.

The TOE2 Community Woodfuel Programme is a collaborative initiative, which has brought together a number of key environmental charities and Public Sector partners currently working in Oxfordshire. Although Oxfordshire is the least wooded County in the South of England, our 18,235ha of woodlands reflect a typical pattern across England where at least half the woodland area is not managed. There are currently 47 woodlands across the County that are benefitting from some community involvement. However, Oxfordshire has over 400 Parishes, suggesting a major disconnect between local communities and woodland management. It is estimated that, if **only half** of the annual growth of Oxfordshire's woodlands were sustainably cut and used for woodfuel, it could be worth between £2-3 million (depending on market values) to local woodchip supply businesses and could save an estimated 9,000 tonnes of carbon per annum (compared to oil fired central heating). The Forestry Commission's document, **'Woodfuel Potential and Progress in South East England. February 2012'** allocated a target for Oxfordshire to be producing 35,000 tonnes of woodfuel per annum by 2020.

Much of the woodfuel currently used for Oxfordshire's growing woodfuel boiler market is brought in from outside the County, some of it from overseas. Increasing the use of locally sourced timber will therefore also have an impact on reducing current fuel miles for transportation.

Finally, fuel poverty is a significant issue in Oxfordshire, as many parts of the County are not on mains gas, and oil fired heating is an increasingly expensive alternative as well as being an environmental pollutant. Key objectives of this programme are as follows:

- Build an evidence base for decision makers to encourage uptake, helping to ensure the merits of woodfuel are understood, and the practicalities of ownership including cost and wood supply. Build awareness of woodfuel within communities
- Build awareness of woodfuel and its links to woodland management
- Increase areas of woodland managed in Oxfordshire
- Build demand for locally sourced woodfuel
- Build a strong local supply chain
- Broadly communicate case studies of good practice via comprehensive website
- Provide community and Parish Council talks on benefits of woodfuel and woodland management
- Produce monthly informative newsletter and disseminate widely via networks
- Initiate and enable a Biomass Trade Centre as a flagship demonstration project

3. PROJECT OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Briefly describe the project activities that will meet the project objectives outlined above, and list any measurable outputs.

The programme will build awareness of woodfuel as a sustainable and renewable fuel, and its close links to woodland management and biodiversity. It will build an evidence base for decision makers to convince them of the merits of woodfuel heating as a viable

alternative to fossil fuels, and help to build demand for woodfuel in Oxfordshire generally. It will also help to address the growing issue of fuel poverty in the County.

The TOE2 programme will also help bring Oxfordshire's woodlands back into active management, improving biodiversity and providing opportunities for local land-based forestry and farming businesses to diversify. The project will therefore deliver ecologically enriched and sustainably managed woodlands which will help to strengthen the local rural economy. It will help increase Oxfordshire's woodland cover by creating new woodlands and replanting harvested sites, leading to an overall increase in woodlands and woodfuel usage.

NB: Improving income opportunities from woodlands helps owners to actively manage their assets, helping ensure that they are as robust as possible to the effects of pests and diseases such as ash tree dieback. Income for woodland owners and managers means that more money is available to invest back into the woodland for replanting or woodland management works. Regular management helps to ensure that issues are picked up early and dealt with effectively.

4. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Outline how you propose to work with key partners in order to deliver your objectives.

TOE2 develops its programmes in close partnership with a number of organisations. The post of Woodfuels Programme Manager has been funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, with an additional small grant from the Forestry Commission. The post holder is employed through TOE2, guided and supported by a Steering Group, with representatives from some of the main woodlands/woodfuel organisations in Oxfordshire. The key partners for this programme are:

1. The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2) www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk
2. Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum (ONCF) www.oncf.org.uk
3. The Sylva Foundation – *Reviving Britain's wood culture* www.sylva.org.uk
4. The Oxfordshire Woodland Project www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/woodland-project
5. The Forestry Commission www.forestry.gov.uk
6. Oxfordshire County Council

5. FUNDING

Please state the amount of funding that you are requesting, and provide a breakdown of your funding request, including any match funding being provided.

A grant of £25,000 is requested.

This would be used by TOE2 to ensure continued support of the existing programme, and enable the successful delivery of the key project objectives as laid out in the Project Statement 2.

A grant of £25,000 has been received from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, and a grant of £5,000 from the Forestry Commission. These have enabled the employment of a part-time project officer for 1 year only. Additional funding is critical to enable delivery of a programme of works to meet the objectives. These include investigating and putting in place models of funding or community investment that would self-finance the project in the future.

6. LOCAL FIT - supporting the aims & objectives of the Environment Partnership

Please state briefly how your project supports Oxfordshire 2030 priorities (summary of revised 2030 priorities attached) www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk.

TOE2's Community Woodfuel Programme delivers against the OEP Priorities 3 & 4. The major outcomes will be reduced energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, a reduction in fuel poverty from the use of locally sourced, sustainable woodfuel. The programme will also make a significant contribution towards improving the biodiversity of Oxfordshire's woodlands, by bringing existing woodlands back into active management and encouraging the creation of new areas of woodland. The programme will also help engage local people with issues surrounding energy efficiency, and provide a much needed boost to the local economy by increasing the local woodfuel supply chain.

7. EVALUATION

Describe how you will you measure the success of your project against your initial objectives.

A full evaluation of Year 1 of this programme will be submitted to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the Forestry Commission in October 2013. Early indications show that there are likely to be some unexpected but positive outcomes from the programme, and measurements of 'success' may be adapted to reflect this. However, the broad goals that are being worked towards are as follows:

- A greater understanding within communities of the strong links between woodfuel and woodland management and their subsequent improvement and increase in biodiversity
- An increase in the amount of locally sourced woodfuel used in the supply chain
- More Oxfordshire woodlands actively managed, with timber being used locally
- An increase in demand for local woodfuel, with an improved local supply
- A well used and informative Biomass Trade Centre

Completed by: Chairman, TOE2

Date: 09/01/2013

Name: Karen Woolley

Organisation: TOE2

Oxfordshire Environment and Waste Partnership 25 January 2013

Climate Local Commitment

Introduction

- 1 The last meeting considered a report recommending that the Environment and Waste Partnership consider signing Climate Local. The Local Authority Working Group was invited to present options for further development to the next meeting of the Partnership in January 2013, along with an assessment of resource requirements, with a view to signing Climate Local as “Climate Local Oxfordshire”. subject to availability of resources.
- 2 This report provides additional information about current local authority activities, and confirms that signing Climate Local does not require any additional resources. It therefore recommends that the Environment and Waste Partnership sign the Climate Local commitment.

The potential benefits to the Partnership of signing Climate Local

- 3 As reported to the last meeting, signing Climate Local is an opportunity to raise the profile of our work in Oxfordshire by sharing practice with other local authorities and partners at a national level, and to benefit from additional resources and support – new web-based resources, a new online Community, and opportunities for peer learning.

Resource implications

- 4 Participation in Climate Local would not require new targets to be developed. The Climate Local process, summarised in Annex 1, reflects closely the work of the Environment and Waste Partnership, in which good practice is shared and published, and regular progress reports are submitted to the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 5 The next step after signing Climate Local is to set out our commitments within 6 months. It is proposed that these are drawn from the Oxfordshire 2030 priorities, which have already been agreed by the Partnership, and are largely local authority work and/or partnership programmes and projects which are being implemented within existing resources or have received external funding. Any new projects proposed as potential Climate Local Commitments would indicate resources required and potential sources of funding.
- 6 Annex 3 provides a summary of current work which is resourced by local authorities. It also includes a number of projects which have recently received external funding. The summary does not include waste or biodiversity projects; these are also within the remit of Climate Local, and it is proposed to add these at a later date. The waste commitment can be met by the existing OWP joint waste strategy and annual action plan.

Recommendations

- 7 That, in recognising that there are no additional resource requirements, the Environment and Waste Partnership agree:
- a) to sign Climate Local, as “Climate Local Oxfordshire”;
 - b) as stage two of the process, to agree within six months the commitments to be included and reported on.

Contact Officer

Author Susie Ohlenschlager Tel: 07880 042660

Email: Susie.ohlenschlager@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Annex 1 Climate Local Process

1. Climate Local replaces the Nottingham Declaration, which was launched in 2000 and signed by most UK local authorities including those in Oxfordshire. The aim of Climate Local is to help drive and support council action to reduce carbon emissions and develop resilience to the effects of a changing climate and extreme weather. Climate Local has strong central government backing and is a key part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the LGA and government.
2. Signing up to Climate Local involves a four-stage process:
 - i. **Sign up/refresh:** the first stage is to sign the commitment (shown in Annex 1) as a local authority or group of authorities, who will then be added to the list of signatories on the website.
 - ii. **Declare targets and action:** the next step is to set out – within 6 months, the commitments the partnership intends to make.
 - iii. **Share learning and experiences:** once signed up, the partnership will be expected to share practice with other organisations, communities and stakeholders.
 - iv. **Report on progress:** the partnership will be asked to share progress on commitments once a year.
3. Climate Local can be signed by individual authorities or groups of authorities.

Annex 2: Climate Local Commitment

Climate Local Oxfordshire:



Our commitment to taking action in a changing climate

We recognise that our councils have an important role to help our residents and businesses to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting our natural environment.

We will progressively address the risks and pursue the opportunities presented by a changing climate, in line with local priorities, through our role as:

- Community leader – helping local people and businesses to be smarter about their energy use and to prepare for climate impacts;
- Service provider – delivering services that are resource efficient, less carbon intensive, resilient and that protect those who are most vulnerable to climate impacts;
- Estate manager – ensuring that our own buildings and operations are resource efficient, use clean energy, and are well prepared for the impacts of a changing climate.

In signing this commitment, **we will:**

- **Set locally-owned and determined commitments** and actions to reduce carbon emissions and to manage climate impacts. These will be specific, measurable and challenging;
- **Publish our commitments, actions and progress**, enabling local communities to hold us to account;
- **Share the learning from our experiences and achievements** with other councils; and
- **Regularly refresh our commitments and actions** to ensure they are current and continue to reflect local priorities.

[Date]
[Name of council or group of councils] Oxfordshire Environment and Waste Partnership
[Signature of Chair of Partnership]
[Signatures of Members of Partnership]

Annex 3: Environment Partnership – key work programme and projects

1. Current programmes

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Project description	Reduce energy/carbon emissions from local authority estate.
Target/outcome	Average 3% annual reduction in CO2 emissions per local authority against 2010/2011 baseline – to 2014, in line with Oxfordshire 2030 2011 refresh.
Current work	All local authorities are implementing energy/carbon management programmes and share good practice regularly at Partnership meetings.
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire.
Resources	Funded within local authority – revenue and capital programmes

Promoting weather/climate resilience

Project description	Embed resilience to weather across local authorities, partner organisations and business.
Target/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide advice to business, and share good practice through the Partnership. Ensure resilience to weather is considered in the programmes of other thematic partnerships and county wide partnerships.
Current work	Emergency responses to severe weather events – co-ordinated through Emergency Planning and the County Severe Weather Plan, have improved significantly, as demonstrated during recent flood and snow events. Ongoing work is to embed resilience into longer term planning and programmes. Following abolition of NI 188 Indicator “climate change adaptation planning”, this work is not being followed through in some local authorities. Normally there is more emphasis on mitigating flood risk.
Partners/ Stakeholders	Local authorities and other public sector organisations, Environment Agency (Climate Ready programme), business, low carbon/community groups, local flood groups, Local Resilience Forum
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 2: Ensure Oxfordshire organisations and communities are preparing for the longer term impacts of climate change.
Resources	Funded within local authority – revenue and capital programmes.

2. New projects which have recently bid for or received funding.

Collective switching A collective energy purchasing and switching scheme for domestic energy consumers

Lead authority(s)	Cherwell District Council
Project objectives	<p>Develop an energy switching scheme (gas, electric and green tariff) for Oxfordshire residents in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce fuel poverty and provide energy advice • Increase the affordability of green energy • To get a better deal on energy prices for Oxfordshire residents.
Partners/ Stakeholders	Local authorities in Oxfordshire
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire
Resources	The funding bid to DECC was unsuccessful. However the Cherwell scheme will go ahead within existing resources, and it is hoped that other local authorities will also participate, as reported in a separate paper to this meeting.

OxFutures fund: To accelerate the pace of investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy measures in the public estate across Oxfordshire

Lead authority(s)	Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council
Project objectives	<p>Set up the OxFutures Fund to aggregate projects to levels attractive to private sector funding and to support community energy efficiency projects across the county. The overall project - Oxfordshire Total Retrofit - is led by Oxford City Council, partnered by Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>At least £5.5m private sector funds committed or invested in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects across the public estate within three years with ambitions for greater levels of investment over time aspiring to:</p> <p>Enable investment in 2.9MW of renewable energy projects and 19,600MWh of energy demand reduction on the public estate across the City and County within three years (13.6m euro investment).</p>
Partners/ Stakeholders	Low Carbon Hub, District Councils, Oxfordshire County Council
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire
Resources	Funded by grant from the Intelligent Energy Europe fund total value €1.3m

Green Deal : enable and promote uptake of the Green Deal

Lead authority/agency	USEA, and West Oxfordshire District Council, with Low Carbon Hub
Project objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulate sustainable demand for Green Deal through existing consortium of Local Authorities forming a Community Interest Company (CIC) to be a local Green Deal Provider. • Build a local, sustainable and economically active supply chain engaging local business, training installers, <p>Promoting community involvement through Low Carbon Hub</p>
Partners/stakeholders	USEA, Low Carbon Hub; all Oxfordshire local authorities - in co-ordinating role; other local authorities across USEA area: 18 areas covered in total.
Link to 2030 objectives	Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire
Resources	<p>The following funding bids submitted to the DECC Green Deal Pioneer Places competition were successful;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USEA/ WODC (as described above): £600,000 • Eco Bicester project: £282,000 • Oxford City Council/ Energy Saving Co-op bid: £310,000 <p>Work needs to be completed by the end of March.</p>

Affordable warmth - Warm Homes Healthy People Project

Lead authority	Oxfordshire County Council and NHS Oxfordshire
Project objective	To provide practical and financial help to households vulnerable to fuel poverty to stay warm and keep this winter.
Partners/stakeholders	Cherwell DC, WODC, Vale and South District Councils, USEA, Age UK, Citizens Advice Bureau and Oxfordshire Community Foundation
Link to 2030 objectives	Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire
Resources	A successful funding bid was made to the Department of Health for approximately £150,000.

3. Projects we are exploring and propose to do in the future if resources are available

Water: Water demand is predicted to become unsustainable in South East England by 2020. Oxfordshire councils aim to address this by implementing water saving initiatives throughout their own operations.

Lead authority(s)	South Oxfordshire District Council
Project objectives/outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased priority to be given to water conservation work in partnership to accelerate and implement water AMR implement retrofit and behavioural water conservation measures in council estates
Project Partners/Stakeholders	All local authorities in Oxfordshire; Thames Water; Environment Agency; local community groups/low carbon groups
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 2: Ensure Oxfordshire organisations and communities are preparing for the longer term impacts of climate change. Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire
Resources	Proposals for external funding will be developed if appropriate
Next steps/further action	Meeting with South Oxfordshire Sustainability and Thames Water

Biomass: Combine biomass arisings eg from parks and woodland, including arisings from local authorities, and use as fuel source

Lead authority(s)	South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council
Project objectives/outcomes	Support establishment of a local supply chain which enables a higher proportion of timber/biomass arisings from Oxfordshire woodlands and parks (including local authority arisings) to be used as a local fuel source.
Project Partners/Stakeholders	All local authorities in Oxfordshire; local community groups/low carbon groups; TOE2 woodfuel programme and partners eg Woodland Group; TVEnergy and TVbioenergy.
Link to Oxfordshire 2030	Priority 2: Ensure Oxfordshire organisations and communities are preparing for the longer term impacts of climate change. Priority 3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Oxfordshire Priority 4: Protect and enhance the biodiversity of the county
Resources	None currently available. A funding proposals needs to be developed and potential sources identified.
Next steps/Action	Meet with local organisations including TVEnergy and TOE2 to assess current activities with view to identifying potential project.

OXFORDSHIRE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP MEETING

25 January 2013

Collective Switching

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update on a collective energy switching project led by Cherwell District Council that seeks to save residents money on their energy bills.

2 Background

- 2.1 Collective energy switching offers residents the opportunity to sign up to a scheme where an intermediary company negotiates with energy suppliers on their behalf in order to secure a lower price for their gas and electricity. This is achieved by the intermediary company grouping residents together into a single customer base and then conducting a reverse auction with energy suppliers.
- 2.2 Collective switching takes the “hassle” out of changing energy providers for residents by doing the hard work of sourcing a good value tariff for them. The price obtained may also be more competitive by grouping together and buying in bulk.
- 2.3 The role of the local authority is to appoint an intermediary company to negotiate with energy suppliers and to promote the collective switching opportunity to local residents. The Council leads on the marketing of the switching scheme and acts as a trusted partner.
- 2.4 Collective switching is a fairly new concept and has so far largely been conducted over the internet. Residents express an interest in the scheme by registering their details on a website. A benefit of local authority involvement in collective switching is that the scheme is more likely to reach vulnerable consumers: those that are less likely to switch energy providers themselves, more likely to be on expensive tariffs and more likely to be in fuel poverty. The local authority can provide an “off-line” registration service (either by phone or in person) alongside the on-line versions and offer wider promotion of the scheme. The local authority provides a recognised and trusted brand.
- 2.5 In November 2012, Cherwell District Council agreed to develop a collective switching project. This subsequently developed in to a countywide project, with each of the Oxfordshire local authorities partnering on a funding bid to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in December 2012. Most of the funding requested was to fund communications activity and also to offer energy audits and advice to a proportion of residents and businesses that expressed an interest in the switching scheme.
- 2.6 Unfortunately the funding bid was unsuccessful, but Cherwell District Council still plans to proceed with the collective switching project and invites the other Oxfordshire local authorities to remain onboard with a countywide scheme that we intend to be branded as “Better Together Oxfordshire”. Visuals for a countywide scheme have been developed and an example is given in appendix 2. A smaller communications spend will however be necessary and energy audits can no longer be offered.
- 2.7 Cherwell District Council is in the process of recruiting an intermediary company that has considerable experience in this new field, having run similar auctions in Europe as well as some of the early UK schemes. The intermediary will conduct a reverse auction with energy suppliers on behalf of the schemes registrants through Cherwell District Council and its partners. There is no fee to be paid to the intermediary, which receives a commission from

the winning energy company. A proportion of the commission will be passed to Cherwell District Council and its partners, which may be used to recover promotional costs or used to fund future energy or fuel poverty related projects.

- 2.8 The intermediary company provides a website for residents to sign up to the scheme and following the reverse auction corresponds with registrants to inform them of the result. It also sets out how residents can take up the new tariff. There is no obligation to switch; residents are free to decide whether they sign on to the new tariff or not.
- 2.9 The intermediary company suggests that the Cherwell District Council reverse auction is undertaken in early April, when it can be grouped with a number of others around the country in order to obtain the best price. The April auction is likely to be the biggest UK grouping so far. Registration will open in mid February, meaning that the project needs to be mobilised quickly. An outline project plan is attached at appendix 1. Residents will be offered a price for electricity, a dual-fuel (electricity & gas) option and a green tariff depending upon their registration choices.

3 Financial, Risk and Staff Implications

- 3.1 Cherwell District Council will receive a rebate of £5 per fuel for each resident that switches to the winning provider (£10 for a dual fuel).
- 3.2 Given the limited precedence so far, it is difficult to accurately predict the number residents that will register with the scheme. A figure of 5,000 for a countywide project (around 1,000 registrations per district) is considered achievable with a good communications plan. Advice from the intermediary company suggests that around 50% of registrants will switch to the new provider. This will result in an income of £12,500 to £25,000 (depending on the proportion taking up a single fuel or dual fuel tariff).
- 3.3 Based on the estimates set out above, it is recommended that a communications plan budget of £12,500 is set. Cherwell District Council (supported by OWP Officers) is happy to lead on the communications plan and associated purchasing, with costs recovered from the rebate income. To ensure that Cherwell District Council does not operate the project at a loss, any shortfall in income could be made up by each participating Partner Council making an equal contributory payment.
- 3.4 A core project team of Cherwell District Council, County Council and OWP officers will lead on project delivery, but some officer time will also be required from each participating Partner Council. This will include commenting on project plans and deliverables, as well as implementing aspects of the communications plan (such as distributing promotional materials around each district and attending promotional roadshow events). An officer time requirement of up to 5 days for each participating authority is estimated.
- 3.5 If Partner Councils choose to accept registrations in person at Council Offices, then there will also be a resource requirement for Customer Services staff. Based on advice from the intermediary company it is estimated that 3 registrations per district per day may typically be received in this way over the 6 week registration period.
- 3.6 In order to improve access to the collective switching scheme, a system for accepting registrations by telephone (as well as on-line) will be set up. Discussions are ongoing with

the ¹Affordable Warmth Network/Warm Homes Healthy People project to use their existing customer helpline for this purpose, with any costs being met from the communications plan budget set out in paragraph 3.3. Councils may also choose to accept registrations in person at council offices. The intermediary provider offers training for council reception staff and helpline staff.

- 3.7 The collective switching scheme offers the potential to save many residents money on their energy bills. However, not everyone will save money: those that regularly switch tariffs may already be on a better rate, whereas others may be tied into contracts with their current supplier. The switching scheme is not currently available to those on pre-paid meters (although details may be kept on file for a future auction). Discussions are on-going with the intermediary provider on whether local businesses can be included. There is no obligation for those residents that express an interest to switch and clear information and advice will be given to registrants at each stage.
- 3.8 The offer provided by the winning energy supplier typically runs for one year. At the end of this period, customers may be changed on to another tariff. Neither the council nor the intermediary company will be able to target these customers directly, but may choose to offer a further collective switching offer and provide advice through general promotion. There is potential to repeat the auction at a future date or to run a regular auction (perhaps annually).

4 Areas Affected

- 4.1 Each Partner Council is invited to participate in the collective switching scheme. Residents from outside Oxfordshire will also be able to take part by registering on the website.

5 Effect on Strategic Policies

- 5.1 The collective switching scheme contributes to the Oxfordshire 2030 pledge to create healthy and thriving communities. It will help to reduce fuel poverty and also help reduce carbon emissions through the inclusion of a green tariff.

6 Options or Alternatives

- 6.1 Partner Councils may choose whether to participate in the collective switching scheme.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 That:
- I. Partner Councils participate in the collective switching scheme and provide officer support of approximately 5 days each.
 - II. That a core project team of Cherwell and OWP officers leads on project delivery operating within a budget of £12,500.
 - III. That Cherwell District Council recovers project revenue expenditure for goods and services up to £12,500 from the rebate received from the successful energy provider.
 - IV. That participating Partner Councils (including Cherwell District Council) agree to underwrite any short fall of income through an equal contributory payment by each, if required.

¹ The Affordable Warmth Network/Warm Homes Healthy People project both use this telephone number. It is funded by all Oxfordshire local authorities and is operated by the United Sustainable Energy Agency. It provides help and advice to residents in order to reduce fuel poverty.

8 Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 To help reduce fuel poverty, save residents money and to promote green energy.

9 Contact Officer

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Background Papers:

Appendix 1 Collective Switching Project plan

<u>Work area</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>By when</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Appoint an intermediary provider				
	Initial meeting with provider	Core team	6.12.12	Completed
	Develop a list of questions and issues to discuss with provider	Core team	4.12.12	Completed
	Sign non-disclosure agreement	Head of Service, CDC	done	Completed
	Explore/approach any other potential providers.	OCC	7.12.12	Completed
	Sign contract with provider.	CDC		Involve CDC legal services.
	Approach other local authorities that have worked with the provider.	Core team	end of Dec	Completed
Delivery of the switching scheme				
	Decide on phone number for residents that want to register interest over the phone	Core team	mid to end of Jan	Talk to AWN / WHHP to use their central phone number and call centre for offline registration.
	Decide on locations for direct one to one registration of interest for switching	Each district council partner.		Estimated 20% of residents register off line (phone or in person) - admin work.
	Contact intermediary provider to further discuss rebate, details on offline payment and business registration.	Core team	mid to end of Jan	Discussions ongoing
	Train council staff that will deliver phone registration and direct one to one registration	Intermediary provider	mid Feb	To be organised
	Timeline for Big community Switch - registration	Residents	mid Feb	
Partner & stakeholder engagement				
	Discuss "plan B" with partners if DECC funding refused.	Core Team	30.11.12	Discuss at OEP meeting.
	Draft paper to the OEP	Core Team	10.01.13	OEP meeting on 25 Jan.

<u>Work area</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>By when</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	Meet with Community Action Group project to discuss their involvement.	Core Team		Attend CAG energy meeting at County Hall Jan 15th
	Obtain contact for Job Clubs & Job Centres	Each district council partner.	30.11.12	done for CDC
	Forward info to Childrens Centres contact	Core Team	30.11.12	
	Make initial contact with Registered Social landlords and Housing Associations	Each district council partner.		
	Inform Fuel Poverty working group of funding bid and plans	Core Team	6.12.12	Email sent. Has not been possible to arrange a suitable meeting date.
	Contact ORCC.	Core Team	mid-Dec	Completed
	Make contact with Economic development officers across Oxfordshire to assist promotion of the scheme (business side)	Core Team	end of Dec	Completed
Development of Communications plan				
	Commission designer to design brand identity.	Core Team	4.12.12	Completed
	Discuss resourcing with project partners (Project team meeting)	Core Team	(following funding announcement)	meeting scheduled for Jan 8th
	Draft leaflet	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Draft council webpage	Core Team	end of Jan	include webbanner
	Draft poster	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Draft promo articles	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Draft press releases	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Draft web design and content	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Draft banners	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Produce small business cards with registration details on to hand out	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Develop roadshow schedule / events schedule	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Produce comms plan / place orders for all materials	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Reserve space for articles in council newsletters	Core Team	end of Jan	

<u>Work area</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>By when</u>	<u>Comments</u>
	Place article in the Key & ONCF	Core Team	end of Jan	
	Place article in elected members bulletins	Each district council partner.	end of Jan	
	Draft letter for targeted mail drop.		January	to be used in blitz areas for CDC - 18 to 22 Mar Calthrope & Easington Banbury
	Develop social media campaign	Core Team	Feb	
	Distribute banners and leaflets to:	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	Libraries	OCC	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	Doctors Surgeries	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	CABs	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	Charity shops	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	Village post offices and stores	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
	Carers organisations	Each district council partner.	mid Feb	start of big community switch is mid Feb
Fuel poverty mapping	Obtain EPC data	CDC Housing	mid -Dec	Received and being processed.

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**Switch to save on
your energy bill**

Join in community gas and electricity purchase



**Better
Together**
Local Initiative

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