

GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2011

Schools' Carbon Reduction Strategy and Support Matrix - for information only

Background

1. Oxfordshire schools constitute 70% of Oxfordshire County Council's energy tax liability, which was introduced through the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme in April 2010.
2. Due to the introduction of the energy tax and current forecasts of a 40% rise in energy prices over the next 10 years, the Council has developed a Schools' Carbon Reduction Strategy to ensure schools are incentivised and supported to reduce their energy bills through energy efficiency.
3. The Schools' Carbon Reduction Strategy was developed after two rounds of consultations with schools during the summer and autumn of 2010 and has since been approved by the Schools Forum and the Climate Change Board. The strategy underpins part of the Environment & Economy directorate's approach to energy management captured in its Business Strategy 2012/13.

The Strategy

4. The Schools' Carbon Reduction Strategy looks to ensure schools are able to '*measure, understand and take action to reduce their overall carbon footprint*', through improved energy management. This in turn will reduce the Council's tax liability and subsequently reduce energy costs for schools.
5. To incentivise the delivery of this overarching objective an Energy Management System Support Matrix (figure 1) provides an outline of the steps schools should take to improve their energy management. This includes the support mechanisms that are currently available to schools that will enable them to maximise the cost saving opportunities available to them and achieve the intended outcomes within the strategy.

The Support Matrix

6. A delivery plan outlining the support services and their anticipated outcomes is to be approved by the Climate Change Board in March 2011. Work currently underway, detailed below, will underpin the delivery plan ensuring it is effective in both complying with the energy tax and supporting schools to reduce their energy bills through energy efficiency.

Automatic Meter Readers (AMR):

- a. The installation of AMRs on 85% of the Council's sites is underway. The meters will provide schools with actual meter reads automatically on a 24 hour basis.
- b. A web based tool is under development that will enable each school to access their energy data quickly and easily to help them with budgeting, forecasting and monitoring the success of their energy management action plans. In the coming year it is anticipated that this tool will be linked to the Schools' online learning platform so the information can be used within lessons.

Building/Occupant Audit

- c. By March 2011 over 60% of schools would have received an energy survey within the last 2 years. The surveys identify energy saving opportunities for schools and advises on the low cost not cost options, through to larger investments. Larger projects are signposted to funding streams if applicable.

Financial Support

- d. Salix (interest free) and Prudential loans continue to be made available to schools to invest in energy efficiency measures. In 2010/11 over 60 (20%) schools expressed an interest in taking up these loans and work is underway to ensure this interest is translated into the installation of energy efficiency measures.

Curriculum Support and Communication

- e. The Energy Busters (primary schools) and Schools Energy Efficiency Programme (secondary schools) continue to provide additional bespoke support to schools, helping them to focus on the appropriate steps they need to take within the matrix.
- f. Additionally a stakeholder analysis is leading to focused communications and support materials being made available to all schools regardless of any other support they may have received to ensure schools will be informed to a minimal level required to implement the stage of the matrix. Parts of this will be trialled with some volunteer school stakeholders in the coming weeks.

- g. **The Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the report and make comments to the Cabinet member.**

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Figure 1: Energy Management System Support Matrix

