

RURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

26 MAY 2010

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE)

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN MELTON

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the implications of the Risk Assessment for local authority services prepared for Leicestershire and its districts as part of a public commitment to identify and manage climate related risk. Preparation and communication of the Risk Assessment is required to achieve the 2009/10 target for National Indicator 188 (Planning to Adapt to Climate Change) which is part of the Local Area Agreement.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee;

- a. notes the results of the Risk Assessment for the likely impact of climate change on delivering Local Authority Services in Melton;
- b. notes the arrangements being made, with Leicestershire County Council and partner District Councils, to prepare a future programme of work to reach Level 3 of NI 188 which will include the development of an Adaptation Action Plan

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In 2007 the Government announced a single set of 198 national indicators to replace the existing set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) to be reported by all local authorities from April 2008. NI188 'Adapting to Climate Change' forms part of the indicator set.
- 3.2 NI188 is used to assess the extent to which a Local Authority and its partners have mechanisms in place for proactively managing climate risks and taking appropriate action. The targets for Melton and the partnership authorities under the Leicestershire Together Partnership are set through the Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP). The targets are:
- i) Level 1 - To undertake a local risk-based assessment of significant vulnerabilities to and opportunities from weather and climate, and has communicated these to the organisation's senior managers: to be achieved in 2008-09;
 - ii) Level 2 - The Authority has undertaken a comprehensive risk based assessment and identified priority risks for its services. It has identified the most effective adaptive responses and started incorporating them in Council plans and strategies. It has started working with the Local Strategic Partnership on the issues: to be achieved in 2009-10; and

- iii) Level 3 - The Authority has embedded climate impacts and risks in its decision making and has developed a comprehensive adaptation action plan: to be achieved in 2010-11.

3.4 Rural, Environmental and Economic Affairs Committee noted a report on the implications of the LCLIP and the work undertaken to achieve Level 1 on the 1st April 2009.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

4.1 A comprehensive Risk Assessment of the impact of climate change on service delivery has been undertaken to achieve the NI188 target of Level 2 for 2009/10. The Risk Assessment considers the service risks from the impacts of climate change:-

- i) In Leicestershire County Council;
- ii) In the Leicestershire district and borough councils: and,
- iii) On Local Strategic Partnership Objectives in Leicestershire, including the district/borough strategies

4.2 The East Midlands wide approach to NI 188 has involved top tier authorities undertaking risk assessments for specific service areas. Heads of Service at the Borough Council have been given the opportunity to comment on the Risk Assessment during its development by Leicestershire County Council.

4.3 The Risk Assessment should be used to inform service areas of the relevant risks to service delivery. This provides an opportunity for climate change related risks to be embedded into plans and strategies as they are being prepared. The 'high' and 'very high' risks have been extracted from the detailed Risk Assessment and a summary is set out in Appendix A (the comprehensive Risk Assessments is available to Members on request).

4.4 **Climate Change impacts at the current time/in the short term future:**

Services are generally coping with the risks from climate change. Staffing issues related to disruption on the transport network (predominantly from snow/ice, and from storms/flooding) currently pose the most significant risk for services. Staff may be unable to get to work in times when demand for council services is high resulting in failure of effective service delivery. For services which are reactive and/or work to short term plans the risks identified in the detailed risk assessments need to be monitored and impacts of extreme weather events documented in order to monitor future vulnerability.

4.5 **Climate Change impacts in the medium/long term future:**

The main risks from a changing climate in the future are likely to fall under three broad categories: Buildings, Environment and Highways. The Risk Assessment indicates that high summer temperatures/heatwaves and increased precipitation leading to flooding poses the greatest risks in the future. Services which may be affected by these occupancies are generally those which are responsible for structures with long term life spans. For example building/road construction and landscape management are areas that need to consider how to withstand future pressures. Individual Service Areas need to consider the 'high' risks identified from climate change and begin to research and implement best practice adaptation measures / technologies now in order for services to more resilient in the future. The impact from a changing climate should be taken into account when developing planning guidance, strategies and frameworks as a priority. Where planned work programmes are operated over short timescales it is possible for the service to react quickly to the changing climate as necessary.

4.6 From the assessment of potential impacts it will be possible to identify priority areas for action. The regional project team are beginning to develop a work plan for the next phase, which will include the development of a Leicestershire Area Adaptation Action Plan. Completion of this work is needed in order to achieve the target of Level 3 for NI188 by 2011.

5.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The LCLIP (Level 1), Risk Assessment (Level 2) and action plan (Level 3) will allow Climate Change risks and adaption measures to be considered when producing strategies and plans and undertaking operations and partnership working.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The work carried out on NI188 is led by the County Council's Climate Adaptation Project Manager based in the Environmental Action Team at Leicestershire County Council. Provision has been made within the LAA funding stream to undertake further work to meet the targets set out in the LAA.

6.2 The Government has introduced the Performance Reward Grant (PRG) to encourage local authorities to provide an effective incentive for partnerships to deliver ambitious work under the Local Area Agreements. Failure by Melton and its LAA partners to meet the criteria based targets set out in NI188 will result in a reduction in the amount of overall PRG received.

6.3 Adapting to future climate change may have resource implications but planned expenditure is likely to be lower than the cost of responding in emergency or extreme situations.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

7.1 There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report, although considering the impacts of a changing climate is generally provided for by legislation which directs the work programmes of individual service areas.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

8.1 The Risk Assessment identifies the possible risks to community safety in the Melton Borough from weather events as a result of climate change.

9.0 EQUALITIES

9.1 The impacts of climate change are expected to impact disproportionately on the poor and the vulnerable.

10.0 RISKS

10.1

Probability



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D				
Very Low E			1, 2	
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

Impact →

Risk No.	Description
1	Failure to satisfactorily meet targets set out in the indicator will affect the award of the Performance Reward Grant.
2	Failure to adapt to the risks of climate change to the borough may affect local quality of life and reduce the contribution made by the authority towards mitigating the affects and reducing the causes of Climate Change.

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

11.1 The Risk Assessment identifies the potential risks to the Melton Borough from climate change and makes recommendations for the preparation of measure to adapt against the risks identified.

12.0 CONSULTATION

12.1 During production of the Risk Assessment lead officers from the LAA authorities where consulted as part of the data collection phase of the report.

13.0 WARDS AFFECTED

13.1 The Risk Assessment provides information for the whole Borough.

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Appendices : Appendix A: Melton Borough Council – Summary of high and very high risks from Risk Assessment of future climate change on service delivery

Background Papers: Melton Borough Council – Comprehensive Risk Assessment of Service Areas

Reference :