

Notice of Meeting

Special Greener Select Committee

**Wednesday, 16th February, 2011 at 5.00
pm**

**in Committee Room 2 Council Offices
Market Street Newbury**

Date of despatch of Agenda: Monday, 8 February 2011

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact David Cook on (01635) 519475

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Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk



Agenda - Greener Select Committee to be held on Wednesday, 16 February 2011
(continued)

To: Councillors Peter Argyle, Howard Bairstow, Roger Hunneman,
Tim Metcalfe, Tony Vickers (Vice-Chairman) and Emma Webster
(Chairman)

Substitutes: Councillors Paul Bryant, Manohar Gopal, Owen Jeffery and Alan Macro

Agenda

Part I	Page No.
1. Apologies To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	
2. Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 14 th December 2010.	1 - 6
3. Declarations of Interest To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members.	
4. Information Item - Renewable Energy in West Berkshire <i>Purpose: This is an information item only.</i>	7 - 28

Andy Day
Head of Policy and Communication

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Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2010

Councillors Present: Roger Hunneman, Tim Metcalfe, Tony Vickers (Vice-Chairman) and Emma Webster (Chairman)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Peter Argyle

Councillor(s) Absent: Councillor Howard Bairstow

PART I

16. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2010 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

17. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Tony Vickers declared an interest in Agenda Item 5, but reported that, as his interest was not personal and prejudicial, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

18. Waste Management

The Committee considered a verbal update (Agenda Item 4) concerning actions arising from their previous discussion regarding flytipping and waste management.

Andrew Deacon, Waste Manager, attended the meeting to answer the questions raised by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission and any other questions Members had.

Members informed Andrew Deacon that representatives from Sovereign Housing had indicated that fly tipping had increased since the Council removed free of charge bulky waste collection. There had been incidents of furniture being left in tenants front gardens as they did not wish to or could not afford to have them removed.

Andrew Deacon replied that incidents of fly tipping were recorded and that since the new waste management contract had been introduced there had been no noticeable change in the level of fly tipping and last year saw a drop in incidents. Data for fly tipping of large bulky waste was reported by the Environment Agency, and this could be monitored and reported back to the Select Committee every six months if required.

With regards to Sovereign Housing's view that fly tipping was on the increase, Members were informed that this was due to the way Sovereign Housing recorded their figures. The Council recorded incidents of fly tipping whilst Sovereign Housing recorded the number of items that were dumped. The Council were working with Sovereign Housing and the wardens to get a better understanding of the situation and how best to record data.

GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2010 - MINUTES

It was noted that if a resident left bulky items on their own property this would not be classed as an incident of fly tipping by the Council.

Councillor Webster Joined the meeting.

Members asked how much fly tipping collection cost the Council and if there had been an increase in dumped waste that also saw an increase in vermin and how the Council helped deal with such problems. The Committee were informed that there was no separate cost code for the collection of waste fly tipped as this was covered under duties laid out as part of the new waste management contract. The Council had not recorded an increase in fly tipping and with regards to vermin the authority's environmental officers provided advice to the public on how best to deal with any vermin infestation.

With regards to recycling centres not accepting paint pots, Andrew Deacon informed the Committee that if the paint was solidified, for example by mixing it with sand, then the Newtown Road recycling centre would accept paint pots. The centre also had a containment unit for dangerous liquids. Members requested that this information be added to resident's newsletters.

Councillor Webster took the chair.

19. **Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

(Councillor Tony Vickers declared that he was a Member of the Local Access Forum. As his interest was neither personal nor prejudicial, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 5) regarding the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Elaine Cox, Senior Rights of Way Officer, and Dr Janice Bridger, Local Access Forum, attended the meeting to present the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and its associated action plan.

Elaine Cox informed the Committee that the Council had a statutory duty to produce a ROWIP, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The ROWIP was produced as a means of identifying changes, for both the management and improvement, to the Council's rights of way network.

The ROWIP formed part of the Local Transport Plan and was also being included in the Local Transport Plan Three that was currently out for consultation.

Whilst developing the ROWIP an extensive consultation exercise had been undertaken with the responses being divided between improvements to the management of the rights of way network and improvements to the network itself.

The action plan had been developed after consultation and was set at a strategic level rather than concentrating on individual improvement projects. Parts of the action plan were already being implemented and these included cost saving exercises such as improved enforcement work to get land owners to carry out their responsibilities rather than the Council having to act, by identifying other funding streams and by providing

GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2010 - MINUTES

support for other groups who wished to improve the network. Members were informed that each year there was about 1700 volunteers working on the rights of way network.

The Council also worked with Parish Councils on their development of Parish Plans if they wished to include elements of public access.

Janice Bridger informed Members that as well as being a member of the Local Access Forum she had also worked with Chieveley Parish Council on their Parish Plan. Members were informed that whilst undertaking consultation for the Chieveley Parish Plan 82% of respondents valued their access to footpaths, bridleways and byways. 68% of those who used the byways had concern regarding their safety when the byway used the local road network.

Members were informed that the Local Access Forum were working with parish councils to help improve access with joint working with other agencies. Improvements was not just a matter of increased funding but also better working relations with landowners.

Whilst considering the report the Committee raised the following points:

- A lot of users of the rights of way network undertook circular routes that more than often took them onto the public highway. As mentioned this raised concerns about road safety, especially on minor roads.
- Highway engineers needed to be mindful of all users of our road network rather than concentrating on motorised vehicles.
- It was important to bring together people representing different agencies and backgrounds to help maintain and improve peoples access to the rights of ay network.
- The report highlighted the size of the task required to maintain the current network and how this was a huge undertaking for the local authority. It was suggested that local parish and town councils might be better able to undertake this responsibility due to their local knowledge and ability to raise funds via the precept.
- Members noted the excellent work undertaken by the Council in this field considering the level of funding.
- Members were encouraged by the example of how in Cornwall the council worked with its parish councils to show them what legislative powers they had to help improve the local network. Members supported the idea of holding a similar workshop.
- It was important to remember the security risks associated with allowing people greater access under rights of way legislation. Members agreed that there was a difference between the improved security of having more people witnessing potential incidents in the countryside, than that of opening access to both rural and urban centres to those of ill repute.
- Although increased access to the countryside was important there were problems for farmers with some of the new swing gates that although allowed better access to the countryside also allowed livestock to escape.
- There needed to be better education or information made available to the type of access that was permitted under right of way legislation.

GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2010 - MINUTES

- It was noted that the majority of people who broke the speed limit on country roads was local traffic.
- As the Local Transport Plan encouraged joined up cycle routes it should also include joined up walking routes.
- It was suggested that the Council should consider joint service arrangements with other authorities to help maximise resources and help others learn from the good work undertaken in west Berkshire.
- Parish Councils should be encouraged to develop community circuits to improve access and highlight problem areas throughout the district.
- The Council should ask national Government to simplify legislation to make it easier for compromises between landowners and interest groups to be met. It was felt that current legislation was a hindrance when trying to find compromises when looking at rights of way access.

Resolved that: The report and evidence given be noted.

20. Renewable Energy in West Berkshire

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 6) regarding renewable energy in West Berkshire.

Adrian Slaughter, Building Energy Officer, attended the meeting to present a report responding to two motions of Council regarding renewable energy.

Members were informed that recently there had been a number of developments relating to sources of renewable energy, encouraging administrations to adopt a more proactive stance to national and local targets.

When the Government extended the benefits that could be gained under the 'Feed in Tariff' officers talked to suppliers to assess the best way of increasing the amount of renewable energy the authority could produce locally.

Three options were considered in helping the Council meet its obligations; they were leasing Council property roof space to private investors, the Council investing in new technology itself or a combination of the two options.

Members were informed that the Council and private investors only had until March 2012 to take advantage of the current level of tariffs.

So far the Council had not leased space on its properties to private companies due to the complex break clauses that would be detrimental to such arrangements. The Government were looking at introducing a policy framework to make it easier for such contracts to be established.

In consideration of the report the following points were raised:

- There were too many companies offering expert conflicting advice that confused those who wished to take advantage of Government incentives with regards to renewable energy.
- Members were pleased to see that the Government, under the Localism Bill, was encouraging the establishment of Community Land Trusts. Members agreed that

GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2010 - MINUTES

the initiatives highlighted under section 2.17 of the report should be incorporated into the committee's recommendations.

- It was recommended that schools should take advantage of 'leaseback' schemes as highlighted in section 2.20 of the report.
- The Council should encourage people to undertake renewable energy schemes and consider introducing loan schemes.
- It was agreed that although we could not force schools to take advantage of renewable energy projects, school buildings should be included in the Council's definition of its estates when introducing its policies.
- The Council had identified a potential site for a wind farm upon Council owned property, however concern had been raised about its validity by the Council's Property and Planning services.
- Members asked if the education centre proposed for Padworth could also include information regarding renewable energy. It was noted that the Thatcham Discovery Centre already provided such education facilities.
- Members accepted the recommendations proposed in the report and asked for an update on progress at the March 2011 meeting.

Resolved that:

- The Local Strategic Partnership were best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- That the Council's Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council's estate that included school buildings.
- That the Council examine ways in helping / facilitating others to take up projects under the Localism Bill.
- That the Council should investigate introducing a loan scheme to assist schools undertaking renewable energy projects.

21. Work Programme

Members suggested that the following items should be considered for inclusion on the Greener Select Committee's Work Programme:

- An update on the renewable energy be provided at the March 2011 meeting.
- That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Select Committee scope a potential review into planning policy and waste management.
- That an update on the Local Strategic Partnership's work on fuel poverty be presented at the March 2011 meeting.

(The meeting commenced at 6.35 pm and closed at 8.25 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

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Title of Report:	Council Motion - Renewable Energy In West Berkshire
Report to be considered by:	Special Council
Date of Meeting:	31 January 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	N/a

Purpose of Report: To report back the findings of the Greener Select Committee's deliberations into two separate but related Council motions concerning renewable energy.

Recommended Action: That the Council agrees that:

1. The Local Strategic Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
2. That the Council's Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council's estate that includes school buildings.
3. That the Council examine ways in helping / facilitating others to take up projects under the Localism Bill.
4. That the Council investigates introducing a loan scheme to assist schools undertaking renewable energy projects.

Reason for decision to be taken: To respond to a petition to Council regarding renewable energy.

Other options considered: None.

Key background documentation: Report to the Greener Select Committee – Appendix 1.

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Theme:

CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:
Setting the Council's position with regards to renewable energy.

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Hilary Cole
E-mail Address:	hcole@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	20/01/11

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	David Cook
Job Title:	Principal Policy Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519475
E-mail Address:	dcook@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	This report identifies a need for a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy in support of UK targets and also explains that an overarching Energy Strategy is currently being developed for West Berkshire Council. Production of these Strategies / Policies will be done in consultation with local stakeholders and Council Services to ensure that implications for Council policy are clearly understood.
Financial:	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will improve the targeting of the Carbon Management budget, making this more objective.
Personnel:	None identified at this stage
Legal/Procurement:	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will provide a more structured approach to the procurement of goods, services and specialist support.
Property:	The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy should ensure that energy efficiency and renewables are considered as part of the scoping and design stages for building refurbishment and new building works where it is more cost effective.
Risk Management:	N/A
Equalities Impact Assessment:	None identified at this stage

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Council meetings of March 2010 and September 2010 the Council received motions from Councillor Royce Longton with regards to renewable energy.
- 1.2 As there was considerable overlap between the two motions it was agreed that they would both be considered as a single report by the Greener Select Committee. This report highlights the deliberations of the Greener Select Committee and their recommendations to Council.
- 1.3 The motions to Council are as follows:
- 1.4 “This Council notes:
- (a) That generation of energy from renewable sources must be a significant factor in any realistic solution to the problems posed by climate change;
 - (b) That the South East Plan sets targets for renewable electricity generation in the Thames Valley and Surrey of 140 MW by 2010 and 209 MW by 2016;
 - (c) That indicative targets for West Berkshire, derived from these figures by Thames Valley Energy, are 12.5 MW by 2010 and 18.5 MW by 2016;
 - (d) That the renewable electricity generating capacity in West Berkshire at the end of 2009 was only 0.4 MW, or approximately 3.5% of the 2010 target, a lower percentage than achieved by any of the other Berkshire authorities.

This Council therefore resolves:

- (e) To take urgent and concerted action to stimulate renewable electricity generation within West Berkshire with the objective of achieving the 18.5 MW target by 2016;
- (f) To be equally vigorous in seeking to meet emerging targets for the generation of heat and other forms of energy using renewable technologies.”

and

- 1.5 “This Council:
- 1. Welcomes the recent statement from Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne that local authorities are to be allowed to sell surplus electricity generated by renewable technologies to the national grid;
 - 2. Notes that early estimates from the LGA suggest that across the country this could yield anything up to £100 million per year;
 - 3. Also notes that this will drastically reduce any disincentive to investing in photovoltaics and other renewables on Council buildings, currently imposed by the high capital cost, and indeed that it could provide a valuable source of income assisting the Council in maintaining its services in these difficult financial times;

4. And therefore resolves to move swiftly towards maximising the potential to generate environmentally sustainable green energy on its offices, schools, leisure centres and other property.”

2. Greener Select Committee

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Greener Select Committee on 14th December 2010 members considered a report from the Council’s Building Energy Officer in response to the two motions to Council.
- 2.2 The report is attached as Appendix 1 and should be used as a reference point to the discussions undertaken by the Greener Select Committee and the reasoning behind this reports recommendations.
- 2.3 Members were informed that recently there had been a number of developments relating to sources of renewable energy, encouraging administrations to adopt a more proactive stance to national and local targets.
- 2.4 The Select Committee were provided with background information setting out the legislative framework behind the Council’s current targets and the current position regarding powers and incentives to produce renewable energy.
- 2.5 As there was no overall local authority target within the South East Plan the Greener Select Committee endorsed officers recommendation that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) be best placed for taking on the responsibility for a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- 2.6 Even though overall responsibility for driving forward this strategy would be with the LSP the select committee also agreed with officers’ recommendation that the Council should have its own Energy Strategy in place. The Select Committee also requested the addition of school properties within the Council’s definition of its estates.
- 2.7 The Select Committee also requested that two additional recommendations be added:
- 2.8 Members requested that officers examine ways, under the Localism Bill, to help organisations and communities wishing to establish projects such as Community Land Trusts.
- 2.9 Members also requested that the Council investigate the possibility of introducing a loan scheme for schools wishing to introduce their own projects. This would enable schools to borrow money without having to get written permission from the Secretary of State.

Recommendations

- 2.10 The Local Strategic Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- 2.11 That the Council’s Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council’s estate that includes school buildings.

- 2.12 That the Council examine ways in helping / facilitating others to take up projects under the Localism Bill.
- 2.13 That the Council investigates introducing a loan scheme to assist schools undertaking renewable energy projects.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report to the Greener Select Committee 14th December 2010.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Councillor Hilary Cole

Officers Consulted: John Ashworth and Adrian Slaughter.

Trade Union: Not Applicable.

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Title of Report:	Renewable Energy in West Berkshire
Report to be considered by:	Greener Select Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 th December 2010
Forward Plan Ref:	N/A

Purpose of Report: This report is in response to two separate but related Council motions, dated March and September 2010, concerning renewable energy within West Berkshire and West Berkshire Council.

Recommended Action:

- 1) That the LSP Greener Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.
- 2) That the Council Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council.

Reason for decision to be taken: To set out the Council's current position regards renewable energy in West Berkshire

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: 'The Energy Act 2008', 'The Climate Change Act 2008', 'The UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009', 'Berkshire Renewable Energy - 2020, Evidence Base & Recommendations' 2010.

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Theme:

CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

Responding to motions presented to Council.

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Hilary Cole - Tel (01635) 248542
E-mail Address:	hcole@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	01 December 2010
Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Adrian Slaughter
Job Title:	Building Energy Officer
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E-mail Address:	aslaughter@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: This report identifies a need for a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy in support of UK targets and also explains that an overarching Energy Strategy is currently being developed for West Berkshire Council. Production of these Strategies / Policies will be done in consultation with local stakeholders and Council Services to ensure that implications for Council policy are clearly understood.

Financial: The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will improve the targeting of the Carbon Management budget, making this more objective.

Personnel: None identified at this stage

Legal/Procurement: The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy will provide a more structured approach to the procurement of goods, services and specialist support.

Property: The introduction of a Council Energy Strategy should ensure that energy efficiency and renewables are considered as part of the scoping and design stages for building refurbishment and new building works where it is more cost effective.

Risk Management: N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment: None identified at this stage

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is in direct response to two separate but related Council motions on renewable energy, dated March and September 2010, which were passed for consideration to the Greener Select Committee. The motions can be found in full in Appendix A and B respectively.
- 1.2 The aim of the report is to first put into context the national, regional and local policy and financial drivers for renewable energy. It will then provide a high level summary of the current level of renewable energy within West Berkshire Council and West Berkshire. Finally it will outline the potential next steps for consideration by the Greener Select Committee.

2. Background & Context

- 2.1 The last few years, and especially the last 6 months, have seen a number of developments relating to sources of renewable energy, encouraging administrations to adopt a more proactive stance at the national, regional and local level.
- 2.2 In 2007, the UK agreed with other EU Member States to an EU-wide target of 20% of the EU's *total energy consumption* to come from renewable sources by 2020. The UK share of this overall target is to achieve 15% of the UK's total energy consumption to come from renewable sources by 2020.
- 2.3 One of the drivers employed by the Government is greater financial support for renewable energy in the form of the 'Feed in Tariff' and the 'Renewable Heat Incentive'.
- 2.4 The situation with regards the South East Plan, referred to in Appendix A, is currently unclear. Revoked by the Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, this action has, however, been successfully challenged in the High Court. The case was specifically concerned with housing targets but it means that the South East Plan is legally still in force.
- 2.5 Since late August 2010, when the Government removed the restriction on Local Authorities being able to take full advantage of the Feed in Tariff (FITs) the Energy team have been liaising with other Berkshire Local Authorities, external organisations, key West Berkshire Council Service Areas and renewable energy suppliers.
- 2.6 In order to move forward, there first needs to be greater clarity of where, as a Council and as a District, we are currently positioned with regards to renewables
- 2.7 Drawn from SEE-STATS and Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) figures, Table 1 in Appendix D shows the latest available information for Berkshire with regards the level of energy from renewable sources as a percentage of total energy consumption (3.1%). It also uses available planning information, and the assumption that all projects will be implemented, to predict a 'Business as Usual' scenario of 5.3% of total energy consumption in Berkshire coming from renewable sources by 2020.

- 2.8 As part of a larger piece of work across Berkshire started by the Berkshire Economic Strategy Board, the LSP Greener sub-partnership is currently undertaking a feasibility study for district energy schemes in West Berkshire.
- 2.9 Appendix D, Table 2, highlights that within West Berkshire Council there are a number of current sites with renewable energy generating technologies installed. The total peak capacity of all these technologies is 746 kW or 0.7 MW.
- 2.10 The Council is also working with 'Partnership for Renewables', an arm of the Carbon Trust, to review the potential for large wind turbine development on its own land. This study has now identified a preferred site and further consultation work is required to ensure that this is feasible and does not impact on any other Council strategy.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 3.1 With West Berkshire being part of the area covered by the overall target for the Thames Valley and Surrey region there is an absence of specific Local Authority targets within the South East Plan. There is therefore a requirement for a more detailed bottom-up study for renewable energy within West Berkshire. Encompassing the results of high level Berkshire studies already undertaken by Thames Valley Energy and potentially looking in more detail at those sites identified in Appendix C, it is recommended that responsibility for undertaking such a study best sits with the LSP Greener sub-partnership.
- 3.2 The Cleaner Greener group responsible for delivering the Council's Cleaner Greener agenda have made a request of the Energy Team for a generic high level Council Policy on renewable energy. To include policy and procedure for large and small scale implementation of renewable energy, this will be taken on as part of a more expansive piece of work to design and implement an Energy Strategy for West Berkshire Council

Recommendations

- 3.3 **That the LSP Greener Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.**
- 3.4 **That the Council Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council.**

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is in direct response to two separate but related Council motions on renewable energy, dated March and September 2010, which were passed for consideration to the Greener Select Committee. The motions can be found in full in Appendix A and B respectively.
- 1.2 As there is considerable overlap between the two individual motions it was agreed with the chairman of the Greener Select Committee that they could be dealt with in one report.
- 1.3 The aim of the report is to first put into context the national, regional and local policy and financial drivers for renewable energy. It will then provide a high level summary of the current level of renewable energy within West Berkshire Council and West Berkshire. Finally it will outline the potential next steps for consideration by the Greener Select Committee.

2. Background and Context

- 2.1 The last few years have seen a number of developments relating to sources of renewable energy, encouraging administrations to adopt a more proactive stance at the national, regional and local level. This section reviews the key policies and drivers that will impinge on West Berkshire and sets the context within which any renewable energy strategy will have to be delivered.

National

- 2.2 In 2007, the UK agreed with other EU Member States to an EU-wide target of 20% of the EU's *total energy consumption* to come from renewable sources by 2020. The UK share of this overall target is to achieve 15% of the UK's total energy consumption to come from renewable sources by 2020.
- 2.3 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy, 2009, outlines the path to achieving this target by 2020 and the size of the challenge.
- 2.4 One of the drivers employed by the Government is greater financial support for renewable energy in the form of the 'Feed in Tariff' and the 'Renewable Heat Incentive'.
- 2.5 Introduced in April 2010, the 'Feed in Tariff' scheme (FITs) guarantees a minimum payment for all electricity generated by certain types of microgeneration technology up to 5 MW, as well as a separate payment for the electricity exported to grid. The tariff levels vary depending on the microgeneration technology installed and any payments are in addition to the bill savings made by using the electricity generated on-site.
- 2.6 The technologies covered by FITs are:
 - (a) Solar Photovoltaics,

- (b) Wind,
- (c) Hydro,
- (d) Anaerobic Digestion, and
- (e) MicroCHP (limited to a pilot at this time).

2.7 Within the recent Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), it was confirmed that in the next formal review of FITs, due in 2012, the scheme will be refocused on the most cost effective technologies. The Government have also reserved the right to undertake an earlier review if take up is greater than expected. At this moment in time it is unclear what impact this may have but it could involve changing the tariff levels for each technology.

2.8 The CSR also confirmed that the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) will go ahead in June 2011. This scheme is similar to FITs in that it guarantees payment for heat generated by certain types of renewable heat technologies. Unlike FITs, there is no export tariff as there is no 'national grid' for heat. However, there is no upper limit on the size of the technologies that can be employed and therefore the scheme is open to large community type projects such as combined heat and power (CHP).

2.9 The technologies covered by RHI are:

- (a) Air source heat pumps,
- (b) Ground source heat pumps,
- (c) Solar thermal heat and hot water,
- (d) Biomass heat generation and CHP
- (e) Anaerobic digestion to produce biogas for heat generation, and
- (f) Liquid biofuels (but only when replacing oil fired heating systems).

2.10 More detailed information on FITs and RHI can be found on the Department for Energy and Climate Change website.
(http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/uk_supply/energy_mix/renewable/renewable.aspx)

Regional

2.11 The situation with regards the South East Plan, referred to in Appendix A, is currently unclear. Revoked by the Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, this action has, however, been successfully challenged in the High Court. The case was specifically concerned with housing targets but it means that the South East Plan is legally still in force.

Berkshire

2.12 One of the key Strategic organisational groups in Berkshire is called Climate Berkshire. This is a partnership of Local Authorities and other key organisations from across Berkshire. Working to address the challenges and opportunities

associated with climate change at a strategic level across the County, the partnership reports to the Berkshire Economic Strategy Board. Its mission is to provide leadership through encouraging organisational commitment, providing and informing strategic direction and assisting in the delivery of projects. It will pave the way to the development of a market in low carbon technology in Berkshire.

- 2.13 Working very closely with a local renewable energy consultancy, Thames Valley Energy, Climate Berkshire has produced two reports on renewable energy in Berkshire. The second of these reports, titled 'Berkshire Renewable Energy – 2020 Evidence Base & Recommendations', identifies a number of renewable energy opportunities across Berkshire representing an initial high-level scan rather than a bottom-up scoping. The list representing those opportunities in West Berkshire is reproduced in Appendix C.

West Berkshire

- 2.14 Within the district of West Berkshire, as part of the development of a Local Development Framework for West Berkshire, the West Berkshire Planning Service has proposed a Core Strategy for 'Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency' (CS16). This strategy outlines new development target values for carbon dioxide emissions associated with renewable energy in all major residential and non-residential development. This is based on the estimated carbon dioxide emissions of the development after the installation of energy efficiency measures related to either the Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM or equivalent has been applied.
- 2.15 The Local Development Framework, and CS 16, referred to in paragraph 2.14 has very recently undergone an independent review by the Planning Inspector. The review has been suspended and results will not be known until the report is published later in 2011.
- 2.16 The Town and Country Planning Association have recently published two guides regarding community energy 'Urban Planning for a Low Carbon Future' & 'Planning, Development and Delivery'. These guides provide some of the information needed for West Berkshire to recognise and understand the opportunities for decentralised energy in the District.
- 2.17 The Government's White Paper introducing the Localism Bill, entitled "Local Growth: realising every place's potential", was published this month. When the Localism Bill becomes law, local communities may start bringing forward proposals themselves, possibly in the form of Community Land Trusts, which are mechanisms for public bodies to hold land on behalf of a community. The Council may wish to investigate the most appropriate financial vehicle that would assist the development of renewable energy technologies in the District, such as an Energy Services Company (ESCO). This information/research could be used to help develop and build on the existing Core Strategy policy CS16, which could be included in the Council's forthcoming Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document.
- 2.18 Although FITs were introduced in April 2010, see paragraph 2.5, it wasn't until late August 2010 that the Government removed the restriction on Local Authorities taking full advantage of the scheme by being able to sell electricity back to the national grid. Since August the Energy team have been liaising with other Berkshire Local Authorities and some of the potential scheme suppliers who have appeared since the introduction of FITs.

- 2.19 Research led by Reading Borough Council, and supported by Climate Berkshire and Thames Valley Energy, has looked at different Solar Photovoltaic investment options currently available on the market for implementation within a Local Authority. The three options considered were 'private investment', 'Council investment' and a combination of the two.
- 2.20 One of the issues arising out of this research is that there are a number of 'leaseback' or financial loan schemes on the market targeted specifically at Schools. Under current Department for Education guidance, with the exception of loan schemes run by the Local Authority, it appears that governing bodies may only borrow money with the written permission of the Secretary of State.

3. Where are we now?

- 3.1 In order to move forward, there first needs to be greater clarity of where, as a Council and as a District, we are currently positioned with regards to renewables. Given the timescales it is not possible within this report to provide a detailed study of current and planned renewable energy installations. Instead it will use historical studies undertaken by Thames Valley Energy, available planning information, and local knowledge to provide a high level indication of current levels of renewable energy in West Berkshire Council and West Berkshire.

Berkshire

- 3.2 Drawn from SEE-STATS and Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) figures, Table 1 in Appendix D shows the latest available information for Berkshire with regards the level of energy from renewable sources as a percentage of total energy consumption (3.1%). It also uses available planning information, and the assumption that all projects will be implemented, to predict a 'Business as Usual' scenario of 5.3% of total energy consumption in Berkshire coming from renewable sources by 2020.

West Berkshire Partnership

- 3.3 As part of a larger piece of work across Berkshire started by the Berkshire Economic Strategy Board, the LSP Greener sub-partnership is currently undertaking a feasibility study for district energy schemes in West Berkshire. The initial desk top study has now been focused on one potential village where further detailed investigation is being undertaken.

West Berkshire Council

- 3.4 Appendix D, Table 2, highlights that within West Berkshire Council there are a number of current sites with renewable energy generating technologies installed. The total peak capacity of all these technologies is 746 kW or 0.7 MW.
- 3.5 The Council is also working with 'Partnership for Renewables', an arm of the Carbon Trust, to review the potential for large wind turbine development on its own land. This study has now identified a preferred site and further consultation work is required to ensure that this is feasible and does not impact on any other Council strategy.
- 3.6 A very recent development is that the Energy Team have been contacted by a number of developers enquiring about the potential for Solar Parks on Council

owned land. A number of other Local Authorities have been investigating the potential for Solar Parks and notably Cornwall County Council have reached the stage where they have identified land and a preferred partner organisation with whom they will work with to develop the sites.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

- 4.1 The full impact of the financial incentives introduced by the Government, FITs and RHI, are yet to be seen as they have either only just been introduced or will not come into play until 2011. There is also the added complication that not all renewable energy schemes require planning permission, raising concerns regards how the necessary detailed and accurate information could be sourced.
- 4.2 There is a degree of uncertainty surrounding the long term viability of the South East Plan, the current situation is that CALA Homes has won its latest legal wrangle with the Government and the court has placed a temporary block on the Government's claim that its plans to abolish Regional Strategies must be regarded as a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.3 With West Berkshire being part of the area covered by the overall target for the Thames Valley and Surrey region there is an absence of specific Local Authority targets within the South East Plan. There is therefore a requirement for a more detailed bottom-up study for renewable energy within West Berkshire. Encompassing the results of high level Berkshire studies already undertaken by Thames Valley Energy and potentially looking in more detail at those sites identified in Appendix C, it is recommended that responsibility for undertaking such a study best sits with the LSP Greener sub-partnership.
- 4.4 Coming out of this study, would be a Renewable Energy Strategy for West Berkshire and associated local targets that will be transparent, repeatable, meaningful and support the national target of 15% of the UK's total energy consumption to come from renewable sources by 2020.
- 4.5 As alluded to in paragraph's 2.18 to 2.20, the Council's Energy Team are currently proactively engaged with other Berkshire Local Authorities, external organisations / suppliers, and internal Service Areas in looking at the potential implementation of renewable energy in the Council's estate.
- 4.6 The Cleaner Greener group responsible for delivering the Council's Cleaner Greener agenda have made a request of the Energy Team for a generic high level Council Policy on renewable energy. To include policy and procedure for large and small scale implementation of renewable energy, this will be taken on as part of a more expansive piece of work to design and implement an Energy Strategy for West Berkshire Council.
- 4.7 Any specific renewable energy policy has to be in context of the current situation and where the Council wishes to position itself with regards renewable energy technologies in a developing and evolving market. The question that needs to be answered is 'does the Council wish to adopt a high risk strategy by being seen as a leader, implementing relatively new technologies in potentially untested situations?', or, 'does it prefer to adopt a low risk strategy by following the market, allowing others to take the risk?'

- 4.8 There also needs to be an understanding that renewables is not the only solution to energy concerns and that they need to be considered as part of a balanced strategic approach to energy reduction and efficiency.

Recommendations

- 4.9 **That the LSP Greener Partnership are best placed for taking on responsibility for, and producing, a West Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy.**
- 4.10 **That the Council Energy Team finalise an Energy Strategy, to include policy on renewable energy, for West Berkshire Council.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Council Motion dated March 2010

Appendix B – Council Motion dated September 2010

Appendix C – West Berkshire selected site opportunities

Appendix D – Renewable Energy Statistics

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Cllr Hilary Cole

Officers Consulted: John Ashworth, Gabrielle Esplin, Philip Newton, Alistair Buckley, Anthony Armitage, Andy Green, Andrew Deacon

Trade Union: N/A

Appendix A – Council Motion dated March 2010.

1.1 At the meeting of Council on 4 March 2010 the following motion was submitted in the name of Councillor Royce Longton:

1.2 “This Council notes:

(a) That generation of energy from renewable sources must be a significant factor in any realistic solution to the problems posed by climate change;

(b) That the South East Plan sets targets for renewable electricity generation in the Thames Valley and Surrey of 140 MW by 2010 and 209 MW by 2016;

(c) That indicative targets for West Berkshire, derived from these figures by Thames Valley Energy, are 12.5 MW by 2010 and 18.5 MW by 2016;

(d) That the renewable electricity generating capacity in West Berkshire at the end of 2009 was only 0.4 MW, or approximately 3.5% of the 2010 target, a lower percentage than achieved by any of the other Berkshire authorities.

This Council therefore resolves:

(a) To take urgent and concerted action to stimulate renewable electricity generation within West Berkshire with the objective of achieving the 18.5 MW target by 2016;

(b) To be equally vigorous in seeking to meet emerging targets for the generation of heat and other forms of energy using renewable technologies.”

1.3 The motion was put to the vote and passed and subsequently passed to the Greener Select Committee for consideration.

Appendix B: Council Motion dated September 2010.

This Council:

1. Welcomes the recent statement from Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne that local authorities are to be allowed to sell surplus electricity generated by renewable technologies to the national grid;
2. Notes that early estimates from the LGA suggest that across the country this could yield anything up to £100 million per year;
3. Also notes that this will drastically reduce any disincentive to investing in photovoltaics and other renewables on Council buildings, currently imposed by the high capital cost, and indeed that it could provide a valuable source of income assisting the Council in maintaining its services in these difficult financial times;
4. And therefore resolves to move swiftly towards maximising the potential to generate environmentally sustainable green energy on its offices, schools, leisure centres and other property.”

Appendix C: West Berkshire selected site opportunities

The following information has been reproduced from a high level study undertaken by Thames Valley Energy into renewable energy in West Berkshire and identifies sites with potential that may be worth further more detailed investigation.

- Biomass CHP (new mixed) –
 - AWE Aldermaston – 12 MWe, 46 MWth
 - AWE Burghfield – 4 MWe, 14 MWth
- Biomass CHP (existing high demand) –
 - Southern Refining, Membury – 1.1 MWe, 4 MWth
- Onshore wind (cluster large turbines) – *site to be advised* – 4 MWe
- Onshore wind (single on-site) – New Greenham Park – 2 MWe
- Landfill gas electricity – Beenham landfill – 0.1 MWe
- Bio/sewage gas electricity – *site to be advised* – 0.5 MWe
- Hydro electricity –
 - Streatley weir – 0.1 MWe
 - Aldermaston Wharf – 0.07 MWe
 - Old Mill Hotel – 0.03 MWe
 - Newbury centre sites 1 & 2 – 0.02 MWe
 - Thatcham & Colthrop – 0.02 MWe
 - Brimpton Mill – 0.02 MWe
- Solar PV (LA arrays) – Faraday Road & *other sites* – 0.04 MWe
- Solar PV (existing homes) – 879 existing homes – 0.9 MWe
- Landfill gas waste heat – Beenham landfill – 0.02 MWth
- Solar thermal (new/existing homes) – 1,046 homes – 2.9 MWth
- Biomass heat-only (large residential/district heating) –
 - Cold Ash 2,176 residents, hotel, 3 schools – 5 MWth
 - Aldermaston 927 residents, 2 hotels, 2 schools – 2 MWth
 - Lambourn 2,955 residents, 1 vets, 1 hotel, 1 school – 7 MWth
 - Kintbury 2,086 residents, 1 hotel, 1 school – 5 MWth
 - Mortimer 3,099 residents, 2 schools – 8 MWth
 - Hermitage 1,537 residents, 2 schools – 4 MWth
 - Compton 1,407 residents, 2 schools – 4 MWth
- Biomass heat-only (medium residential/hotels/schools) –
 - Padworth 228 residents, 1 hotel, 2 schools – 0.6 MWth
 - Bradfield 520 residents, 2 schools – 1.3 MWth
 - E. Ilsley - *tba* residents, 1 hotel, 1 school – *tba* MWth
 - Yattendon - 331 residents, 1 hotel, 1 school – 0.8 MWth
 - Woolhampton - 684 residents, 2 schools – 1.7 MWth
 - Streatley - 307 residents, 1 hotel, 1 school – 0.8 MWth
- Biomass heat-only (small residential/schools) –
 - Snelsmore Common - *tba* residents, 1 school – *tba* MWth
 - East Garston - 532 residents, 1 hotel – 1 MWth
 - Midgham - 371 residents, 1 hotel – 1 MWth
 - Great Shefford - 970 residents, 1 school – 2 MWth
 - U. Bucklebury - 914 residents, 1 school – 2 MWth
 - Beenham - 796 residents, 1 school – 2 MWth
 - Stockcross - 679 residents, 1 school – 2 MWth
 - Chieveley - 587 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
 - Hampstead Norreys - 541 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
 - Enborne - 492 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth

Chaddleworth - 482 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Beedon - 440 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Inkpen - 382 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Brimpton - 357 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Brightwalton - 350 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Aldermaston Wharf - 320 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Ufton Nervet - 317 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Englefield - 303 residents, 1 school – 1 MWth
Curridge - *tba* residents, 1 school (+existing boiler) – *tba* MWth
Wickham - *tba* residents, 1 school – *tba* MWth
Southend - 765 residents – 2 MWth
Upper Lambourn - 431 residents – 1 MWth
Beech Hill - 311 residents – 1 MWth
Aldworth - 308 residents – 1 MWth
Eastbury - 293 residents – 1 MWth

Appendix D: Renewable Energy Statistics

Table 1: Summary of current renewable energy in Berkshire, as a percentage of consumption. (taken from report by Thames Valley Energy, Feb 2010)

	End 2008	End 2009	2020, business as usual planned
Electricity	7.2%	7.3%	8.9%
Heat	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%
Transport	2.0%	3.2%	8.3%
All Energy	2.6%	3.1%	5.3%

Table 2: Summary of current renewable energy in West Berkshire

	Solar PV	Wind	Biomass	Solar Thermal	Ground Source Heat Pumps	CHP
West Berkshire Council	2 sites with another in pipeline	1 site under investigation for potential large scale wind turbines	3 sites	2 sites	2 sites	
West Berkshire Council Contractors						1 site (Northcroft Leisure Centre)
West Berkshire Partnership						1 site (Brightwalton Village)
District*	6 sites	13 sites	3 sites	2 sites		1 site

* data for the district is based on approved planning applications and current local knowledge.

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