



SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 15th MARCH 2021

STRATEGIC PROPERTY ENERGY STRATEGY 2020 - 2030

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the revised Strategic Property Energy Strategy (appended to this report) for 2020 – 2030 and accompanying action plan for comment.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The previous Property Energy Strategy was considered by the Scrutiny Commission on 11 July 2014 and was subsequently approved by the Cabinet on 15 July 2014.
3. In 2018 the Council signed up to the UK100 pledge; a commitment to switch to 100% Clean Energy¹ by 2050.
4. In May 2019 the Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and set a 'Net Zero Carbon' target for Council operations to be achieved by 2030.
5. The Strategic Property Energy Strategy is a sub strategy of the Council's Environment Strategy which was updated and approved by Full Council in July 2020.
6. The Strategy will be looked at by the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4th March. Its comments will be reported to the Commission at its meeting on 15th March.

Background

7. In 2012/13 the County Council's gas and electricity costs amounted to £1.64m. With utility prices forecasted to significantly increase the first Property Energy Strategy was adopted to proactively take steps to reduce the organisation's related energy consumption.
8. By October 2016 all targets in the original Property Energy Strategy had been exceeded. This included 25% reduction in annual energy consumption (24% target), £420,000 annual energy cost savings

¹ Energy purchased from renewable, zero-emission sources.

(£395,000 target) and generating 4.5% of energy from renewable sources (target 3%). Had energy consumption not been reduced, the annual bill would have increased by £680,000 due to energy price rises.

9. Key projects which helped to achieve these targets included the installation of a 1MW biomass boiler at County Hall, installing solar panels at 11 key Council sites and many small-scale energy upgrades such as LED lighting, boiler replacements and heating control enhancements across the corporate estate.
10. In addition to financial and energy savings there have been significant carbon savings made too. Since the Council's first carbon targets were set in 2008, the Council's carbon emissions (this includes greenhouse gases as outlined in the Kyoto Protocol²) - due to energy use in buildings - have reduced by 64.5%. This is a combination of reducing energy consumption from buildings, decarbonisation of buildings energy consumption and national grid decarbonisation.
11. To build on this achievement further targets were then set in the 2017 Energy and Water Strategy.

Performance/achievements to date

12. The Council has a strong history of reducing carbon emissions across all its operations. The 2019-20 Environmental Performance Report states that:
 - a. The Council's total net carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions in 2019-20 were 11,633 tonnes. This was 67.4% below the baseline year of 2008-09 and 5.7% less than 2018-19.
 - b. Since 2008-2009 there has been a 64.5% reduction in emissions (GHG) from Council buildings.
13. Performance against the targets in the 2017 Energy and Water Strategy is as follows:
 - (i) The amount of renewable energy generated from Council properties as a percentage of total energy consumed by Council properties was 15.6% at the end of 2019-20, above the 14% target.
 - (ii) Avoided energy costs of £402,000 during the financial year 2019/20, against a target of £320,000. During this period electricity and gas consumption reduced by 10% and 9% respectively whereas the price rose by 13% and 19% respectively in this time.

² Greenhouse gases: The Kyoto Protocol covers seven main gases; carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), nitrous oxide (N₂O), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) and Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF₃). Government emissions factors focus on carbon, methane and nitrous oxide – there are some LCC uses that involve others e.g. air conditioning

14. Key projects in respect of the Council's own property portfolio which have helped deliver these targets include:
- (i) 153kW of Solar PV installed at Beaumanor Hall, The Trees Respite Centre, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, Enderby Adult Learning Centre, Melton Short Breaks Centre, Loughborough Family and Wellbeing Centre.
 - (iii) LED lighting upgrades delivered at Beaumanor Hall, Enderby Adult Learning Centre, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre and more.
 - (iii) 25 Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers installed at County Hall, Croft Highways Depot, Mountsorrel Highways Depot, Coalville Business Centre and Loughborough Technology Centre.

Strategic Property Energy Strategy 2020 - 2030

15. The new Strategic Property Energy Strategy sets out how the Council will work towards achieving its Net Zero Carbon target by 2030 in respect of its own property portfolio. The Council's 2019 CO₂^e declaration for direct greenhouse gas emissions identified that 36% (4,596 tCo2e) originate from Council premises. The Council's target is to get to net zero carbon by 2030. The main sources of carbon emissions from properties is the emission associated with heating and cooling buildings.
16. Covid 19 has presented an unexpected opportunity to save energy. At County Hall alone there has been a 19% reduction in electricity (kwh) since April 2020. The revised Strategy will support a green Covid recovery. Through collaboration with the Ways of Working programme to prioritise buildings for retention or to vacate and tailoring energy upgrades with new digital ways of working in mind.
17. The Strategic Property Energy Strategy also supports the key principles of Invest to Save and Carbon Reduction outlined in the MTFS.
18. The three main aims of the Strategy are:
- (i) Saving energy and generating renewable energy to work towards the Council's 2030 Net Zero Carbon target.
 - (ii) Ensure energy conservation is embedded into property processes and construction projects to further support the Council's 2030 Net Zero Carbon target.
 - (iii) To foster a carbon conscious culture at the Council and support projects saving carbon across the County.
19. The key targets in the Strategy are:
- (i) 30%-50% Reduction in annual energy consumption from Council buildings compared to 2019/2020 usage. The higher target of 50%

is dependent upon increased investment by the Council or external funding.

- (ii) 50% increase in on-site renewable or zero-carbon energy generation on Corporate Council Buildings as percentage of annual consumption by Corporate Council buildings.
20. Ongoing performance against these targets will be presented quarterly in the Corporate Environmental Dashboards. As the Property Energy Strategy is a sub strategy of the Environment Strategy annual performance will be included in the Annual Environmental Performance Report. These dashboards and reports are produced by the Strategic Environment Team assisted by the Energy Team in Property Services.
21. Some of the key projects identified in the supporting action plan included within the Strategy are:
- Increase solar PV and LED lighting at County Hall by the end of 2021/22.
 - Solar PV and Electric vehicle chargers at Snibston Country Park; by the end of 2021/22.
 - Investigate low carbon heating solutions at Council properties including heat pumps and district heating.
 - Achieve ISO 50001 certification for Energy Management by end of 2021/22.
 - Increase electric vehicle charging provision across the Corporate Estate and County.
 - Influencing key stakeholders e.g. schools, academies, tenants, developers to implement low carbon solutions.
 - Deliver large scale energy generation schemes such as Solar Farms on Council-owned land. First installation expected onsite in 2022, subject to planning.

Resource Implications

22. The County Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2021/22 – 2024/25) was approved by full Council on 17 February 2021 and identifies savings requirements relating to improvements in the energy and water performance of the County Council's property estate of £350,000 by 2024/25.
23. In the current Strategic Property Services service structure, there is a vacant grade 10 Energy Officer post. Approval has recently been granted to recruit to this post to support the delivery of the Energy Strategy.
24. It is anticipated that in the future there will be the potential to draw in private investment and/or external grant funding to support the implementation of some of the actions in the Energy Strategy Action Plan and these will be explored as opportunities arise.

Timetable for Decisions

25. The Strategic Property Energy Strategy and supporting Action Plan are to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 23 March 2021. Comments from the Scrutiny Commission and the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported at the meeting. Subject to approval by the Cabinet, the Strategy will come into force immediately.

Background Papers

[Property Energy Strategy - 15 July 2014 - Cabinet](#)

[Revised Environment Strategy and Action Plan – 8 July 2020 – County Council](#)

[Environment Performance and Greenhouse Gas Report – 14 January 2021 Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

17. None.

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Appendix

Strategic Property Energy Strategy 2020-2030.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

18. An EHRIA scoping has been completed. There are no negative impacts or consequences arising from the recommended Property Energy Strategy and therefore a full EHRIA is not required.

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