

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member – Technical Services
Cabinet Member – Regeneration
Cabinet Member – Environmental
Cabinet

DATE: 4 August 2010
4th August 2010
4th August 2010
5th August 2010

SUBJECT: Developing the Low Carbon Economy

**WARDS
AFFECTED:** All

REPORT OF: Andy Wallis – Planning and Economic Development
Director
Alan Lunt – Neighbourhood & Investment Programmes
Director
Peter Moore – Environment & Technical Services Director

**CONTACT
OFFICER:** Mark Long – 3471
Ian Weller – 4221
David Packard – 4016

**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To update members on progress since November 2009 in developing a policy for tackling climate change, and the development of a Low Carbon Economy.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To reinforce momentum for a coordinated approach to the Low Carbon and Climate Change agendas.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Cabinet Member – Technical Services:

- (i) Request appropriate officers to prepare a brief for a Sefton Energy Study (para 4.4)

Cabinet Member – Regeneration:

- (i) Note this report

Cabinet Member – Environmental:

- (i) Note this report

Cabinet:

- (i) Note this report
- (ii) Endorse the Interim Framework for Action (para 4.1)
- (iii) Agree the commissioning of a Community Mapping Awareness Study (para 4.3)
- (iv) Agree to engage with community and voluntary sectors (paras 4.6/4.7)
- (v) Agree to sponsor a programme of Low Carbon Economy seminars for appropriate public sector agencies in Sefton (para 4.9)
- (vi) Endorse the establishment of a Climate Change Forum (para 5.3)
- (vii) Note the lead officer responsibilities and the supervisory role of the Strategic Director for Communities (para 5.7)
- (viii) Endorse the creation of a Climate Change Network (para 5.8)
- (ix) Agree to support a Sefton Climate Change Conference, and request appropriate officers to prepare and present a self-funding proposal

KEY DECISION: Yes

FORWARD PLAN: Yes

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: After the call-in period

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

To do nothing in certain areas is not an option as legislative and regulatory provision will require change. Delay in developing our responses is likely to cause us to fall behind in taking advantage of the opportunities presented.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: The proposals contained in this report can either be funded from existing consultancy budgets within PED or from unused scheme balances rolled forward from 2009/10 coupled with possible external sponsorship. Some schemes referred to in this report are the subject of applications for external funding which cover costs. Separate reports to members on these projects will identify total costs and any additional calls on Council resources not covered by grant.

Financial: This report touches on many areas relating to the development of a long term strategy for a Low Carbon Economy in Sefton, involving many streams of funding including external sources such as ERDF (REECH Programme), JESSICA, and the possibility of funding from Government sources (OLEV) for Plugged in Places. All of these projects have already been the subject of separate reports to Members recently.

A number of revenue initiatives however are proposed here, including a Sefton Business Survey; Community Awareness Study and a Sefton Energy Study and Climate Change Conference. Costings for many of these are, as yet, not known, however the Sefton Energy Study is believed to be in the region of £30k-£50k. Funding for these initiatives will be met from a combination of Consultancy budgets held by PED; balances of unused project resources brought forward from the Step Clever Programme; and external sponsorship. As these initiatives develop, further reports may be brought to members identifying the resources required to fund them. It is however believed, that these will be at no additional cost to the Council.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £	2012/ 2013 £	2013/ 2014 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: N/A

Risk Assessment: N/A

Asset Management: N/A

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

FD 461 -

Sefton Borough Partnership Operations Board (7th June 2010)

Low Carbon Economy Group (23rd June 2010)

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		/	
2	Creating Safe Communities		/	
3	Jobs and Prosperity	/		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	/		
5	Environmental Sustainability	/		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	/		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		/	
8	Children and Young People		/	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Development of a Low Carbon Economy in Response to Climate Change –
Cabinet Report, 25th November 2009
Liverpool City Region State of the Environment Report 2009-10 – June 2010

1. Background

- 1.1 On 25th November 2009, Cabinet approved a coordinated response to Climate Change, and appointed three members as Climate Change Champions:
- Cabinet Member Regeneration as the Low Carbon Economy Champion
 - Cabinet Member Environmental as the Climate Change (Adaptation) Champion
 - Cabinet Member Technical Services as the Corporate and Community Energy Champion
- 1.2 Members asked officers to make rapid progress in designing a comprehensive Climate Change Response Strategy and Action Plan. This Plan is to be overseen by the Cabinet Member Performance through the Council's performance management procedures.
- 1.3 The rest of this report introduces the results of a serious and sustained work programme to adapt the people and places of Sefton to unavoidable climate change; and to maximise investment and employment opportunities as fossil fuels are progressively replaced by renewable energy and a sustainable way of life.

2. The Threat and the Opportunity

- 2.1 **As we approach peak oil, we can no longer deplete natural resources and waste energy with impunity.** Greenhouse gases linked to economic and population growth are altering the climate at an accelerating rate and imposing unacceptable costs on the people of the world. The scientific consensus as reflected in inter-governmental agreements is to drive down the carbon content of economic growth to a level where the planet remains liveable and within its carrying capacity. This means:
- Adapting to unavoidable climate change
 - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- 2.2 A report elsewhere on this agenda describes the considerable amount of work done in Sefton to raise awareness amongst departments and external agencies of the threat posed by climate change. This has resulted in the identification of the highest risks for which partners must prepare. The Council has signed up in its Local Area Agreement to NI 188, which requires a Climate Change Adaptation Partnership and Action Plan in place by March 2011.
- 2.3 The Regeneris Report (2009) looking at the Economic Impact of UK Climate Change Legislation on Liverpool and the Liverpool City Region calculates that the costs of meeting EU and UK legislation targets and standards for carbon reductions will reach about 1 per cent of gross value added (about £200

million per annum) by 2010. Over 90,000 jobs (15 per cent of employment) are in sectors adversely affected by climate change legislation.

2.4 However, these costs can be counter-balanced by the opportunities for investment and creating employment in renewable energy and environmental goods and services. As the Stern Report (2006) on the Economics of Climate Change states, “climate change is the greatest and widest-ranging market failure ever seen.... Tackling climate change is the pro-growth strategy for the longer term and it can be done in a way that does not cap the aspirations for growth of rich or poor countries”.

2.5 **It is possible to both mitigate climate change and grow our way out of recession.** We will do this by substituting clean sustainable energy for dirty fossil fuels, and by becoming more efficient in our use of scarce natural resources. As growth is “de-coupled” from carbon emissions, we will all benefit from

- Secure and affordable energy supplies
- Production and consumption at a level sustainable in the long-term
- The development of a strong and competitive Environmental Products and Services Sector, and
- The mitigation of avoidable weather impacts.

2.6 **It is difficult to exaggerate the scale of the opportunities presented by climate change.** The latest study by Innovas for the Department of Business Innovation and Science (2009) forecasts growth in the “green economy” from £106 billion in 2007/08 to £156 billion in 2014/15, with the most rapid growth in renewable energy. The green economy is remarkably resilient in the face of the recession, and is one of the few areas where the financial institutions are still lending at pre-credit crunch levels.

2.7 Sefton and Merseyside are well-placed to capitalise on these opportunities. The City Region has excellent environmental assets:

- Tidal energy from the Mersey Estuary
- On-shore wind from coastal sites
- Off-shore wind from Burbo Bank and the Irish Sea
- High quality agricultural land
- A flat terrain suitable to electric vehicles.

2.8 In addition it has the critical urban mass in terms of size of industry and population to support:

- Energy from waste
- Biomass from local and imported energy crops and wood waste.

2.9 **Because it is able to exploit these natural assets and locational advantages, the City Region already has significant strengths in the Environmental Products and Services sector.** Regeneris estimates the sector employs 8,700 staff in around 400 companies, with sales of £1 billion

per year and an annual gross value added of £435 million. This is also a high-productivity sector, with GVA per employee exceeding £50,000 per annum.

- 2.10 The most important opportunities within Merseyside are waste management and recycling, renewable energy, energy management and micro-generation. Regeneris forecast employment potential in these industries of an additional 6-7,000 new jobs by 2016.

3. Progress on Low Carbon Economy since November 2009

- 3.1 As requested, officers have undertaken policy development to help identify priorities for action:

Local Economic Assessment

- 3.2 Sefton has agreed to pool with the other local authorities in the City Region its statutory responsibility to produce an assessment of economic conditions. As Low Carbon is one of the four “Transformational Actions” in the Multi-Area Agreement for the City Region, a proper assessment of our carbon footprint, energy use and the profile of our Environmental Products and Services Sector will feature within the Economic Assessment (due November 2010).

Employment & Skills Forecasts

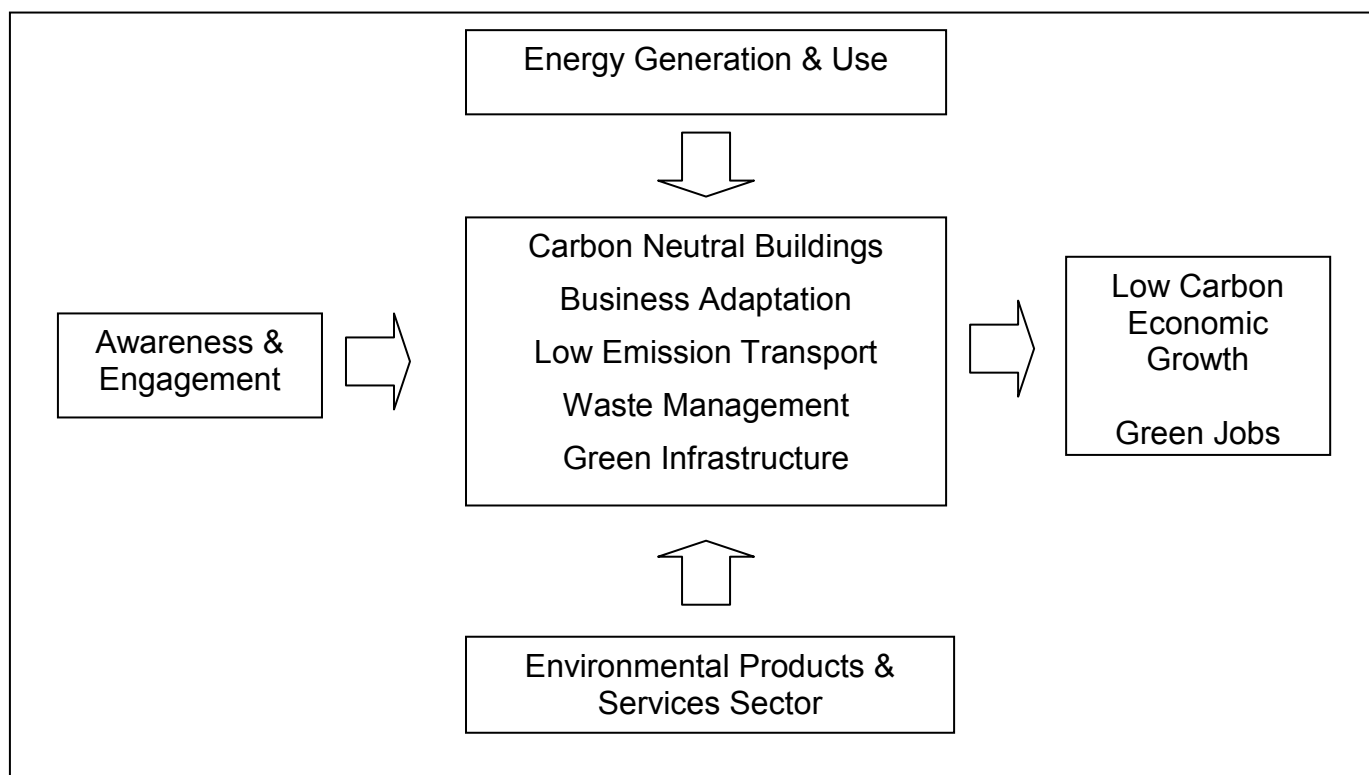
- 3.3 DTZ has updated the Regeneris report with an Assessment of the Impact of the Growth in the Green Economy on Future Jobs and Skills requirements in the Liverpool City Region (2009). It estimates employment in the Green Economy somewhat higher, at 14-17,000 people, with the potential to grow at least another 2,500 jobs by 2015. A skills analysis shows that some new green jobs will substitute for other environmental jobs, but that there is likely to be additional demand for professional skills such as engineers, architects and environmental consultants. Core skills in science, technology, Engineering and Mathematics will be produced in sufficient quantity because of the City Region’s HE institutions (2,000 new graduates per annum), though the critical issue is graduate retention so skills are applied to local green technologies and not dispersed over the UK.

Policy Audit

- 3.4 A detailed review has been completed of over 80 existing and proposed EU, national, regional and Sefton policies related to low carbon and climate change, plus the programmes, strategies and initiatives that stem from those policies. This has revealed the broad engagement with all aspects of climate change across the Council, and forms the basis for an “interim Framework for Action”.

4. Interim Framework for Action

- 4.1 A Low Carbon Strategy will be prepared by the end of 2010 (see below), but the Interim Framework for Action shows how the different parts of the Low Carbon agenda are connected to each other:



Awareness

- 4.2 An essential first step is raising the level of awareness in the community, amongst businesses, across the third sector and within the public sector, of the opportunities presented by the transition to a low carbon economy.
- 4.3 We will undertake a **Community Awareness Mapping Study** in conjunction with the Community Engagement Network of the Sefton Borough Partnership that will both record local interest in climate change, and stimulate greater involvement in innovative solutions.
- 4.3 We will complete **Sefton Business Survey 2010** in September, and profile general business readiness for change as well as the size of Sefton's Environmental Products & Services Sector.
- 4.4 We will commission a **Sefton Energy Study** to improve our understanding of the supply and demand for heat and power. This study will research the energy futures available to Sefton, and provide independent guidance on investment options associated with the development of local sustainable energy infrastructures. It will take forward at a local level the work begun in the Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (Arup – due December 2010).

Engagement

- 4.5 A key theme is the Big Society and enabling the widest possible community support for climate change innovation. We want to develop capacity to engage with the residents, businesses and organisations identified in the Community Mapping Study and Business Survey. This is particularly important where we can identify priorities for local action on energy and carbon emissions that bring together all sectors of the community in a particular neighbourhood.
- 4.6 We will use existing networks such as CEN's **Transform Network** for third sector bodies tackling environmental issues, and support it to attract members and develop proposals.
- 4.7 We will reach out to the **Transition Towns** movement, which has branches in Liverpool and Southport.
- 4.8 We will deliver a **Low Carbon seminar programme** (starting autumn 2010) to small and medium enterprises of Sefton through the StepClever programme, and through the Council's InvestSefton service. All participants will be engaged and supported by professional advisors.
- 4.9 The Council will sponsor an **"exchange of experience" learning programme** on Climate Change and the Low Carbon Economy for public sector agencies in Sefton.

Energy Generation & Use

- 4.10 The development of an **assembly, operation and maintenance hub for the emerging offshore wind industry** has been identified as a major economic opportunity for Liverpool City Region (LCR) in both the 'Mini Stern' report and the draft "Low Carbon Action Plan" (2010). LCR already has substantial onshore and offshore wind assets on The Port Of Liverpool and at Burbo Bank. So far, these turbines have been manufactured outside the UK with local content focused on final assembly and ongoing operation and maintenance.
- 4.11 The East coast is the primary focus for the development of off shore wind farms with the New and Renewable Energy Centre in Blythe, and as a result is likely to be at the forefront of wind turbine R&D. However, a significant development is scheduled for the Irish Sea under Round 3. Centrica was awarded the development rights to The Irish Sea Zone by The Crown Estate. The zone covers an area of 2,200 km², less than 70km from the Port of Liverpool. This could potentially deliver around 4.2GW of capacity – enough to power around 3m homes.
- 4.12 The **Irish Sea development** will involve the manufacture and assembly of upwards of 700 turbines, each over twice the size of the existing turbines on the Port of Liverpool. Construction is not likely to begin until at least 2016 and will last between 8 and 10 years. Investment will be in the region of £5bn, with

wider UK investment exceeding £75bn. More recently an announcement was made to extend some of the Round 2 arrays, with The Crown Estate Award Agreement for lease to extend the Burbo Bank Offshore Wind Farm by a further 234MW over a 40km² area.

- 4.13 The opportunity is being developed in conjunction with TMP and private sector partners to present Liverpool City Region as a key manufacturing and assembly location, with the associated supply chain benefits. Additionally there are opportunities to establish ongoing operation and maintenance hubs. Any investment has the potential to create significant job opportunities. Sefton's assets include The Port of Liverpool and key development sites such as Atlantic Park. The local population also has a concentration of the skills required within this industry and local businesses are seeking to enter the supply chain. A full report on the opportunities relating to offshore wind will be presented later this summer.
- 4.14 The Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (Arup – due December 2010) is likely to identify priority zones for **biomass combined heat and power (CHP) and wind power**. It is also likely to advise on the type of planning policies needed in Sefton's emerging Local Development Plan to ensure new development connects to existing or proposed district heating schemes, or helps to bring forward realistic proposals for new networks; as well as encouraging building-integrated renewable energy and energy efficient buildings within new development schemes.

Environmental Products and Services Sector

- 4.15 The **Sefton Business Survey** will help profile the size and significance of the sector in Sefton. In conjunction with other evidence, the Local Economic Assessment will create a detailed and credible picture of the sector's assets and potential.
- 4.16 Work is in hand to stimulate the supply chains involved in the low carbon economy. An example is the Stepclever team's approach called **Generic Referral Clusters**. A Generic Referral Cluster (GRC) is a group of companies in a common business/trading sector that are not in competition with one another, but could provide mutually beneficial referrals between themselves and their respective clients.
- 4.17 A GRC of six Bootle companies has been formed by the Stepclever Business Development Manager for south Sefton around the theme of sustainability in the built environment. The chosen domain name for the cluster is Liverpool Sustainability. The pilot programme consists of the following collaborators:
- **Cunliffes Ltd** (Property and Construction Consultants) – A multi-disciplinary private practice offering sustainability solutions for property and construction services such as Building and Quantity Surveying, Project Management and Design Services. They are often the first point of contact for the cluster with the mandatory Design Energy Certification

(DEC) requirements and provide leads for the other members to correct or improve the energy efficiency of public and private buildings.

- **Eco-Environments Ltd** (Environmental Equipment Installations) – Providing environmentally friendly, energy efficient, cost saving products and services to the Construction, Property, SME and Domestic sectors. The products and services include Energy Efficient Lighting, Heating Control, Thermal Insulation, Microgeneration from Solar Power, Photo Voltaic, Wind Power and heat pumping systems.
- **Floorscan Acoustics Ltd** (Acoustic Surveys and System Design) – Surveys of buildings and structures in relation to Sound Proofing, Acoustic Management, Legislation and Compliance. Design of Acoustic Systems and Component deployment for existing and new build projects.
- **soundtesting.co.uk** (Testing of installations of acoustic systems within buildings) – Established to be a complimentary company to Floorscan Acoustics to independently verify the work standards of acoustic installations.
- **CPA Instrument Services Ltd** (Process and Measurement instrumentation) - Calibration, repair and supply of Process Control and Analysis Instrumentation including Electrical, Pressure, Temperature, Flow, Measurement and Testing instruments and meters. Their role in the cluster is to provide accredited calibration and repair for the instruments used by the other cluster members.
- **Sustainable Homes and Gardens Ltd** (Design and advisory service for the current and pending domestic dwellings legislation with a view to providing a carbon neutral solution for all new builds and a significant carbon reduction programme for existing homes and gardens.

4.18 Further information on the performance of the cluster will be brought to a later meeting.

Carbon Neutral Buildings

4.19 New planning, Building Regulations and other legislation require all new housing to be carbon neutral by 2016, public sector buildings to be carbon neutral by 2018, and all new non-domestic buildings by 2019. Increasingly stringent carbon reduction standards will be reflected in local plans and act as a major driver to improve energy efficiency in new buildings. However, this will shift the greater part of the problem of energy inefficiency to the older existing housing stock.

4.20 Currently, Sefton Council is the lead agency with regard to a Merseyside project (**REECH**) to undertake a programme of energy efficiency and microgeneration measures within social housing on behalf of a consortium of social housing providers and local authorities. It has a geographical focus on the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas in Merseyside and Halton where

many fuel poor residents live. The rationale for this project was outlined by the NWDA commissioned Fraser Associates Report (2009), which showed the need for public sector intervention to stimulate a number of low carbon technologies, which currently show poor returns for consumers.

4.21 It is anticipated that the programme will comprise capital investment of at least £14.3 million (ERDF grant of approx £7.1 million) in the social housing stock for hard to treat properties, with a major thrust of the programme aimed at the following measures which were deemed to show low returns within the Fraser Report:

- Internal and external solid wall insulation
- Solar water heating systems
- Biomass boilers
- Heat pumps
- Micro CHP systems

4.22 In order to fully maximise the energy efficiency of the above measures, the consortium will put in place additional measures whose market is more mature, without ERDF grant. They are -

- Hot water tank jackets
- Cavity wall insulation
- Loft insulation
- Double glazing
- Draught proofing

4.23 Taken together, these measures are intended to drive up demand for technologies which are not as yet mature, and also to boost local low carbon technology related employment. Independent analysis by Inner City Solutions suggests that this programme of works could sustain 300 net additional jobs, and a net reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of 46,000 tonnes per annum.

Business Adaptation

4.24 The wider business population beyond the Environmental Products and Services Sector itself will need encouragement and incentives to switch tariffs, substitute materials and processes, generate renewable energy and cut carbon emissions.

4.25 The council is developing a number of low carbon and climate change business support initiatives using a range of new and existing external funds. They include:

- CLASP** – climate change adaptation support programme. The Council (Environmental & Technical Services, with support from Planning & Economic Development) has successfully bid for monies to help Sefton businesses assess adaptation risks and take appropriate action, including the reduction of CO2 emissions. Invest Sefton will support the project by identifying and referring businesses for support.

- **Low Carbon Pilot.** Invest Sefton has developed a proposal under its WNF-funded Sefton Integrated Business Support (SIBS) project to provide a mix of specialist advice and financial support to help SME's in target areas receive free environmental health checks. The project will also provide direct financial support to qualifying businesses.
- 4.26 The Council is also tracking support available from other sources (such as Carbon Trust and Enworks) that can be redirected to Sefton companies to increase local take-up.

Low Emissions Transport

- 4.27 The Government's Carbon Reduction Strategy for Transport (July 2009) is based around the themes of:
- Supporting a shift to new technologies and fuels
 - Promoting lower carbon transport choices
 - Encourage a shift to lower carbon transport
- 4.28 Sefton Council has participated in a Low Emission Strategy (LES) Programme since 2007. This programme is supported by Government to encourage local authorities to work together and to share, adopt and implement low emission policies, strategies and measures. **Sefton Council is now championing a Regional Group Initiative (RGI)** for the Liverpool City Region under Phase II of this programme with outputs due to conclude in March 2011.
- 4.29 The key objectives of the RGI are to raise the level of awareness and readiness, and maximise co-operation between local authorities in the geographical area of Merseyside. Importantly it aims to accelerate the deployment and penetration of low emission transport fuels and technologies.
- 4.30 The key outputs are -
- A Merseyside RGI planning policy note that aims to help accelerate the uptake of electric and alternative fuel vehicles, within Merseyside.
 - Inclusion of LES in LTP3e
 - Production of a model scheme for using offset contributions received in lieu of LES actions to support low emissions buses.
 - A report on the 'Development of LES Guidance for construction and demolition'.
 - A report on 'LES and how they can be included in taxi licensing'.
 - A report on the inclusion of LES principles in developing a Sustainable Procurement Strategy'.

- 4.31 The work to include LES into LTP3 has prompted a successful Expression of Interest to the Office for Low Emissions Vehicles (OLEV) under the Plugged in Places programme. The plugged in places programme aims to increase the availability of infrastructure, such as charging posts, to support the wider take up of electric vehicles. The development of the EOI attracted support from across the public and private sectors and from local academic institutions. At present it appears that the Plugged in Places programme will be retained with possibly some minor changes. The partners have been advised to continue to develop the full bid and a meeting is being organised with OLEV to discuss the bid. If successful, a full bid for between £1.1 and £2.1 m will be submitted by the end of September 2010.
- 4.32 The LCR scheme will establish between 480 and 750 charging points at locations on streets, in car parks, railway hubs and workplaces. It will include innovations such as developing an electric taxis focus, fast-charging pilots, and training in using and maintaining the equipment. It will also have incentives to use electric cars built in such as free travel through the tunnels, and bookable car park spaces online.
- 4.33 It is crucial to capitalise on our advantages as we develop the low carbon economy. Our region is flat and of great environmental interest, with ideal travel distances for electric vehicles bounded by an iconic city centre and classic resort of Southport, which will be a particular focus for the LCR-wide scheme.
- 4.34 Emerging planning policy for Sefton (e.g. **Core Strategy**) aims to reducing carbon emissions from transport, thereby improving air quality, through -
- Reducing the need to travel by locating homes, jobs and services close to each other, to public transport and walking and cycling networks; and encouraging people to use more sustainable transport methods than the private car.
 - Supporting the take-up of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles and, in particular, encouraging domestic and other new developments with parking facilities to include cabling for charging infrastructure and charging infrastructure.

Waste Management

- 4.35 The draft **Merseyside Waste Development Policy Document** (currently out for consultation) has estimated that Commercial, Industrial and Construction and Demolition waste will level off at just under 4,000,000 tonnes per year by 2030. The policy aim is for net sub regional self-sufficiency for waste management. The City region currently relies very heavily on exporting waste for landfill disposal, the available capacity of which is reducing and the cost of use due to Landfill Tax rising significantly. Landfill is a significant source of carbon, accounting for about 3% of the UK total carbon emissions.

- 4.36 Recently there have been a number of consents awarded for new energy from waste facilities and other waste recovery facilities within and around the City Region political boundary. Some of which are at a scale as to be of regional if not national significance for example the Ince Marshes Waste Recovery Park. There are a number of others waste infrastructure developments that are progressing towards planning application stage. Should all the facilities seeking or having been awarded consent be actually built and operated, it is suggested in the Waste DPD that there would be enough waste management capacity to meet the needs of the sub region. There will be a demand for jobs in constructing, operating and servicing the new facilities.
- 4.37 Regeneration has been a priority for the City Region with numerous construction and demolition projects generating significant amounts of construction and demolition waste, such as Liverpool One and the Housing Market Renewal initiatives. There are a number of facilities within the sub-region which recycle and reprocess construction and demolition waste, such as a facility set up at Trafalgar Dock that has recycled 49,000 tonnes of demolition waste. This not only reduces the amount of waste going to landfill but also reduces the need and carbon impact from the use freshly extracted primary aggregate materials and is a good example of resource efficiency.

Green Infrastructure

- 4.38 The **Green Space Strategy** for Sefton, existing and emerging planning policy for Sefton (e.g. Core Strategy), recognise the importance of protecting trees, green space and green infrastructure, enhancing its climate change and other services [benefits], and creating new green infrastructure linked to new development where necessary.
- 4.39 Green space, trees and other green infrastructure can reduce flood risk (e.g. river flooding, surface water flooding), reduce air temperatures locally, provide shade and shelter (trees), act as carbon sinks and improve air quality. Sefton's natural coast provides a defence against coastal storms, sea level rise and coastal flooding, complementing the built defences. Green space, trees and other green infrastructure also reduces the need for car travel, and provides attractive routes for walking and cycling rather than car use, local recreation, local timber and food products.
- 4.40 Most of Sefton's agricultural land - drained peatland, which in itself is a source of carbon emissions even without fuel and fertiliser inputs – is some of the best quality and most productive agriculture land in the region and entire country. The Council's future planning policies for the rural area and its role in shaping land use management practices needs to be set within the emerging national debate about soil quality, climate change, food and fuel security, low carbon agriculture and sustainable farming and forestry practices.
- 4.41 There is a strong partnership approach to the delivery of Green Infrastructure actions within Sefton through the Green Space Strategy Steering Group, the Sefton Coast Partnership and the Mersey Forest. It is important that this

continues with the expectation that there will be less resources in the foreseeable future.

5. From Ideas to Action

5.1 Our aim is to spread awareness and introduce incentives and pilots to the point where critical mass is achieved and personal, community and entrepreneurial inventiveness drive forward the low carbon economy.

5.2 The routeway to a Low Carbon Strategy & Programme is as follows:

- We will establish the Low Carbon Economy as a workstream in the preparation of Sefton's **Sustainable Economic Development Strategy**
- From this workstream we will develop a clear statement of **Low Carbon policies and a Framework for Action** by end-2010, and how it supports and is enabled by other elements of the Sustainability Strategy.
- By spring 2011 we will prepare and develop a **Low Carbon Programme** based on a portfolio of key projects, targeting funding streams such as ERDF, JESSICA and the new Regional Growth Fund, and creating opportunities for the private sector to invest with confidence in Sefton.
- We will introduce new projects into the Programme using tried and tested methods of risk mitigation and project management. All new proposals will pass through a project gateway and be tested for Strategy fit and contribution to overall outcomes.

5.3 Strong governance arrangements for tackling climate change are essential. On 7th June 2010, the SBP Operations Board approved the Transition Plan for the Economic Development & Sustainability Thematic Group. This proposes

- The establishment of a new **Climate Change Forum** drawn from public, private, and voluntary and community sectors
- The Forum takes responsibility for tackling climate change on behalf of the SBP and co-ordinates its response
- The Forum is directly accountable to the SBP Operations Board for its performance
- In addition, the SBP Strategy Board will be asked to review and evaluate the Low Carbon Framework for Action and the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy as a whole
- We will take additional steps to involve the private sector as investors and developers, and to engage with representatives of the Environmental Products and services sector
- We will ensure that the voluntary and community sectors are involved and supported so they can play a full part in the Forum.

5.4 The Forum will alternate officer business meetings with **open meetings** to which the Climate Change Champions and all members of Council and the SBP Strategy Board are invited to receive presentations on progress and best

practice. This will help members influence the development of the Partnership's climate change objectives, and strengthen the involvement of community leaders.

- 5.5 As the Climate Change agenda is very wide, we propose a **broad allocation of responsibilities to lead officers** as follows, which mirror the portfolios of the three Climate Change Champions:
1. Adaptation – co-ordinated by the existing Corporate Climate Change Group, under the leadership of the Environment & Technical Services Director
 2. Mitigation (Private, Public & Community Energy Efficiency) – co-ordinated and led by the Neighbourhood & Investment Programmes Director
 3. Mitigation (Low Carbon Economy) – co-ordinated and led by the Planning and Economic Development Director.
- 5.6 The preparation of a Low Carbon Framework for Action and Programme (see 5.2 above) will therefore be co-ordinated by PEDD, but shared and consulted on across the whole Forum and the wider Partnership.
- 5.7 The work of the Forum is potentially complex. We propose the three strands of work are co-ordinated by a **lead officers group under the general direction of the Strategic Director for Communities**, who will also chair the Forum. The lead officers group will report progress to the Forum on a regular basis and support the Forum on an ongoing basis.
- 5.8 In addition to formal (“vertical”) accountability, it is essential to create a rapid communication channel “horizontally” across the different strands of work and all sectors of the Partnership so that opportunities and information are readily available to all. This **Climate Change Network** may be as simple as an email list, a website and occasional Network meetings. In time it may develop further into a training and best practice network, looking outwards to the city region and internationally.
- 5.9 We believe that there is widespread interest in tackling climate change but Sefton lacks a clear central focus for capturing and reflecting that enthusiasm. Therefore we propose that as part of the awareness, engagement and planning process, we initiate Sefton's first major **Climate Change Conference**. It will be held at a date to be arranged before March 2011, funded from within existing resources and/or sponsorship, with the aim of showcasing Sefton's achievements, attracting support, developing our thinking, introducing providers, and connecting with the wider climate change community. We would expect the three Climate Change Champions to be prominent in their support for the event.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This report has identified highly significant investment and employment opportunities. They will make an important contribution to our recovery from the recession, and in addition will stimulate private sector job growth to

compensate for any possible public sector employment loss in the coming years.

- 6.2 We will need a credible long term vision of a low carbon future, backed up with clear policies and strategies. This framework will provide the certainty that investors need to invest in confidence, and will drive forward our engagement with energy companies, the Environmental Products and services Sector, and developers.
- 6.3 Finally, we fully expect the new local carbon economy to reflect and enhance the distinctive geography of Sefton, with strong co-operation and mutual learning between local businesses, schools, social landlords, civic and community centres and visitor destinations as they build low carbon communities for the future.