

Cabinet Committee on Climate Change and the Environment

Meeting to be held on 15th March 2011

Part I - Item No. 5

Electoral Division affected:
All

Energy Strategy for Schools

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This report sets out a proposed strategy for reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption in schools.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Committee on Climate Change and the Environment is asked to note the report and comment on the proposals.

Background and Advice

A report to the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change and the Environment on the 8th December 2010 set out details of the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme and provided information about schools participation in the scheme.

As a further commitment to reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions in schools, the Directorate for Children and Young People is developing an energy strategy aligned to its Capital Strategy for schools which will seek to support schools to reduce their CO2 emissions.

As part of this commitment the Capital Strategy for Schools 2011/14 is intended to target the following;

- Replacement of time limited/ poorly insulated buildings
- Replace inefficient boilers and heating systems
- Provision of energy efficient heating controls
- Zoning of heating systems
- Roof and wall insulation programme
- Window replacement and double glazing
- Replacement with Energy efficient lighting and fittings.

In addition to the above the County Council currently;

- Works with schools by providing advice on ways to reduce carbon emissions as previously reported to the Cabinet Committee in July 2010.
- Has agreed a loan fund with Schools' Forum of currently £1.1 million in 2011/12.

In support of this latter initiative Schools' Forum has commissioned the County's Energy Team to carry out surveys on 25 schools with the poorest energy performance. However, in order to make faster progress in the collection of information needed for decision making and the targeting of further investment on energy efficiency in schools, there needs to be an increase in the number of surveys carried out.

Therefore the Directorate for Children and Young People in conjunction with relevant colleagues from across the Authority wishes to explore the opportunities for working in partnership with organisations who may be able to assist with survey work and potentially gain access to additional funds for targeted capital investment on energy efficiency in schools. This could be considered as part of the feasibility study currently being conducted by Property Group considering a similar arrangement for corporate retained property or alternatively form part of a separate arrangement.

Such a partnership could also be asked to look at the opportunities for exploiting the use of feed in tariffs or FITs from the installation of renewable electricity generation technology such as solar photovoltaic (pv) panels or wind power.

FITs are a Government initiative provided through registered energy supply companies to support the installation of certain renewable energy technologies. A premium is paid for each unit of electricity generated and also any that is exported back to the grid. In addition sites benefit from a reduction in costs from the offset of electricity they would previously have bought from the grid. In the best performing cases a simple return on investment can be achieved of between 8 and 12 years.

There are currently a variety of schemes available where a school could 'lease' part of its roof to a third party. The third party will then pay for and install solar pv panels and use the FIT and export income to repay the investment. They would then sell the electricity to the school at a reduced rate. This is by no means the only way of making use of FITs and other models include direct investment in the appropriate technology allowing full access to the FIT, export and offset benefits allowing the site to benefit, after payback of investment, from the full 25 year life of the FIT.

The window to exploit the highest rate of FITs is short and the Government has also recently announced a review of the scheme due to the high number of commercial organisations making applications. As a consequence the County is currently separately looking at the feasibility of utilising FITs with some urgency and it is proposed that schools be a major part of this exercise.

If schemes such as this progress the electricity generated would be monitored and this would be of interest to the educational curriculum for primary school children.

This report outlines a proactive approach that will allow a full programme to be set for the next four years to address energy and carbon reduction targets through a combination of:

- Help and advice on energy and carbon management for schools
- Investment in energy efficiency measures
- Exploring the potential for renewable energy generation and/or FITs.

Next Steps:

- Achieve an increase in the capacity to assess schools' buildings energy efficiency and carbon emissions so that the County Council has sound information to aid its decision making and on which to base future programmes.
- Explore options for external support to provide additional assistance in achieving energy and carbon savings
- Explore environmentally sustainable initiatives that will engage schools in a positive way and have educational benefits.

Consultations

The Cabinet Member for Children and Schools and the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Planning.
Lancashire County Council's Property Group and Environment Planning Department.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

N/A

Any representations made to the Cabinet Member prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name:	Organisation:	Comments:
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Nil

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A