
REPORT TO:	Environmental and Development Services	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	27th August 2009	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Mark Alflat, Director of Community Services	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Simon Mortimer, Contaminated Land and EMAS officer	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Certification of the Council to ISO14001 and the Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All District	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That members adopt the Environmental Statement that has now been verified by external auditors as the final part of our verification to the Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) attached as appendix 1.
- 1.2 That members accept the full external verification and accreditation to the ISO14001 and EMAS standards for the council as whole and;
- 1.3 Announce to the public that South Derbyshire District Council is now one of only 5% of Councils in the UK that operates according to an accredited environmental management standard that assures legal compliance and year on year improvement on environmental performance.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report has been compiled to formally announce that SDDC has been awarded, at the first time of asking, certification to both of these international standards for environmental management.

These certifications confirm that SDDC are performing well to these standard with regards to their environmental management and that we have no known legal breaches or non-conformances.

Members are also asked to formally adopt the Environmental Statement that is the basis of the Councils accreditation as the main document to communicate the Councils environmental performance to interested parties.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Over the past few years the Council has been working towards establishing an Environmental Management System (EMS) across all its operations. The standard selected was the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

- 3.2 The purpose of such a management system is to ensure complete legal compliance with environmental protection law and to assure the organisation takes a rational and progressive approach to year on year improvement in its environmental performance.
- 3.3 In addition to the above the EMAS standard in particular requires the organisation to publish a public statement annually reporting on its environmental performance and the standard stipulates the minimum contents of such a statement which includes such requirements as;

the environmental policy and a brief description of the environmental management system of the organisation;

a description of all the significant direct and indirect environmental aspects which result in significant environmental impacts of the organisation

a summary of the data available on the performance of the organisation against its environmental objectives and targets with respect to its significant environmental impacts, including figures on; pollutant emissions, waste generation, consumption of raw material, energy and water, noise etc.

The information in the Environmental Statement must comply with and be validated by an external environmental verifier as being;

- (a) accurate and non deceptive;
- (b) substantiated and verifiable;
- (c) relevant and used in an appropriate context or setting;
- (d) representative of the overall environmental performance of the organisation;
- (e) unlikely to result in misinterpretation;
- (f) significant in relation to the overall environmental impact, and makes reference to the organisation's latest environmental statement from which it was drawn.

3.4 The Councils Environmental Statement has been verified by the auditors SGS as meeting this standard.

3.5 In achieving this standard the Council also becomes eligible to receive the ISO14001 award.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

4.1 The system has now been fully verified. There are ongoing commitments associated with the maintenance of the accreditation. There will also be potential investment opportunities that will be carefully cost/benefit assessed aimed at improvements in resource consumption. These will be highlighted in detail within future reports for the consideration of committee.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Corporate Plan has a major focus on sustainable growth and also high standards of corporate governance. The establishment of this Environmental Management System contributes to both. It provides the management mechanism to deliver the year on year improvements required if the Council's own activities are to become more sustainable over time. It also ensures that the Council itself can be confident about its own compliance with all legal requirements pertaining to the environment including new impositions as they arrive, which is both an hallmark of

good governance and a pre-requisite of community leadership on environmental matters.

5.2 Resource issues are highlighted in section 5 above.

5.3 The accreditation to the EMAS and ISO14001 standards are a considerable achievement demonstrating both good progress environmentally and the establishment of the mechanisms to deliver further improvement. Now that the external auditors have confirmed the Council's high level of performance the Environmental Statement should be published and the positive message about what the Council is doing to improve the environment should be publicised.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The Community Strategy is entirely focussed on creating a more sustainable area. Accreditation to this standard shows both a good degree of progress and the establishment of the mechanisms to deliver further improvement.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The adoption of the Environmental Statement is a key instrument in the development and accreditation of our EMAS system. The information within the document relates to the Council's major environmental impacts and delivers concise, clear and verifiable data. It is a requirement that this document is publicly available and to achieve this it will be placed on the Internet and be issued in hard copy by request.

7.2 This internationally recognised achievement is significant and demonstrates to stakeholders that we are actively managing our impact on the environment and furthermore making significant improvements both integrally to service delivery and in practical operational terms, that to date only 5% of Councils in the UK have obtained.

7.3 It should also be remembered that system will require continued drive and backing if it is to be used to its full potential and help to deliver the challenging sustainability targets that face the community such as reducing our Carbon emissions by 80% by 2050.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 The Environmental Statement