
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	18 August 2005	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	PETER McEVOY	DOC:
SUBJECT:	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	REF: PMC
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members commit to the programme for implementation of Local Authority EMAS outlined in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 That Members adopt the draft Environmental Policy contained in Appendix 2.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Local Authority Eco-Management and Audit Scheme is a voluntary scheme of self management aimed at continuous year on year improvement in environmental performance. The scheme is calibrated against an internationally determined standard and is externally audited and accredited. More details of the content of the scheme can be viewed on the European Commission web site, an extract of which is contained in Appendix 3.
- 2.2 The benefits of active engagement in such a scheme include; protecting the environment from ongoing damage and polluting accidents, saving revenue costs e.g. *through lower fuel and water bills*, securing legal compliance with all environmental legislation, meeting social obligations to future generations by saving natural resources and addressing climate change. A more extensive list of benefits is found in Appendix 3.
- 2.3 South Derbyshire District Council has documented its aim of achieving an environmental management system that has been the subject of reports to Scrutiny Committee. An Environmental Management system was described as an aim in the 2003 Corporate Plan. Nevertheless progress has been limited and previous bids for budget to appoint an Environmental Manager to run the scheme have not been successful.
- 2.4 Full Council on 20 January 2005 passed a resolution that the Council commit to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This involves commitment to reducing the contribution to climate change gasses from the Council and its partners.

2.5 Local Authority EMAS offers a single scheme through which it will be possible to manage the delivery of the Nottingham Declaration commitments as well as to drive the wider environmental benefits listed in 2.2.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 An opportunity has arisen to access the expertise needed to implement EMAS at a very economic rate. High Peak Borough Council has been granted Beacon Status for Sustainable Energy and have been accredited to the EMAS standard for some years. As part of the Beacon Status obligations High Peak has to assist a certain number of other Local Authorities to achieve success on the same issue.
- 3.2 To this end High Peak have offered South Derbyshire the services of their EMAS and Sustainability expert, Bill Purvis, for the remainder of the current year free of charge. Similar services are available from Commercial organisations at £600 per day plus expenses.
- 3.3 By utilising the expertise of Mr Purvis throughout the pre-accreditation phase of the project and engaging appropriate managers from each Service to commit to delivering the project it will be possible to avoid the expense of appointing a full time EMAS officer.
- 3.4 Mr Purvis has made a provisional assessment of the Council's position and the necessary steps towards accreditation and has drafted a suggested project outline plan, which if adopted by South Derbyshire District Council, will lead to accreditation in October 2007. The project outline is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.5 In order to secure the time of Mr Purvis, High Peak Borough Council would need prompt commitment in writing to a scheme, such as this, which delivers on the Beacon theme.
- 3.6 A draft Environmental Policy has been produced based on a standard model and members are asked to consider the acceptance of this in principle. Subject to its acceptance by members, discussions will be held with Service Heads and changes may be suggested to tailor the policy to the specific needs of South Derbyshire District and the Council. A final draft, taking account of comments of Service Heads will be put to members for approval in February 2006.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 High Peak Borough Council have asked that South Derbyshire cover the cost of the time committed by Mr Purvis following the end of the Beacon year but this will be recharged at a reasonable £350 per day and the project plan envisages a requirement of up to 10 days in each of the next two financial years. The costs of the expertise will therefore amount to £3500 per year for the next two years compared with previous proposals that involved taking on a permanent employee at around £35,000 per annum.
- 4.2 There are other costs associated with the project namely £1,000 for staff and member training next year and the year after, the accreditation fee of £3,000 plus £1,000 per year to publish a public statement of progress upon accreditation and annually from then on.

4.3 Further costs will be incurred, associated with efficiency improvements and gaining legal compliance, but are likely to bring benefits on an, "invest to save" basis. The scale of this requirement is difficult to predict and will not be itemised until the programme of specific improvements is defined around September 2006. Given that it is hoped to obtain a purpose built new depot around that time, the scale of costs should be limited. A generous allowance might be a fund of around £25k for the first year and £15K for each of the following two. If savings, arising as a result of these investments, were to be returned to the pot and made available to fund future efficiency improvements, that may be all that is required.

4.4 The summarised identified costs of this project are therefore as follows:

2005/6	£0
2006/7	£4,500
2007/8	£7,500
2008/9 on	£4,000 / year

4.5 There is currently no budget for this project so a Service Development Bid will be needed in the Autumn. Nevertheless to secure the assistance of High Peak it will be necessary to confirm commitment within the next month or so. If Members are minded to support the project and, in principle at least, to find the additional budget in due course, Environmental Services could underwrite the costs of High Peak's commitment from existing budgets and thus engage High Peaks Services and allow the project to be commenced.

5.0 Community Implications

5.1 Protecting the environment is in the interests of the community particularly so in the case of future generations. For the Council to demonstrably put its own house in order would represent an important step in community leadership on environmental issues.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 An opportunity has arisen to implement the LA EMAS environmental management system in a more economic manner than previously.

6.2 In order to obtain the services of High Peak Borough Council's Beacon expert, Members would need to make a firm commitment to the project as outlined in Appendix 1.

6.3 The project will involve a modest amount of defined cost and a certain amount of, as yet, undefined cost, in future financial years, as indicated in section 4, which will have to be subject to a Service Delivery Bid.

6.4 Significant management resources will be required from each service and in approving the recommendations of this report Members are indicating their commitment to the allocation of these resources.

