

**Meeting date:** 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
**Report to:** Cabinet Member for Resources and Delivering Value



**Subject/report title:** Carbon Management/Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020  
**Report from:** Alan Brown, Assistant Director for Highways and Environment  
**Report author/lead contact officer:** Andrew Greenall

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**Wards affected:**

All Wards |  Bickenhill |  Blythe |  Castle Bromwich |  Chelmsley Wood |  
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath |  Elmdon |  Kingshurst/Fordbridge |  Knowle |  
 Lyndon |  Meriden |  Olton |  Shirley East |  Shirley South |  
 Shirley West |  Silhill |  Smith's Wood |  St Alphege

**Public/private report:** Public

**Exempt by virtue of paragraph:**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To seek approval to sign up to the Government's Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020.

**2. Decision(s) recommended**

2.1 To sign up to the principles of the voluntary Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020.

2.2 To support the wider public sector target of 30% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020/21 (from a 2009/10 baseline), it is proposed the Council adopts a 45% reduction target.

2.3 To propose the Council adopts a minimum 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2024/25 (from a 2009/10 baseline).

**3. What is the issue?**

3.1 The Government's Clean Growth Strategy (launched Oct 2017) proposed a voluntary carbon target of a 30% reduction by 2020/21 (from a 2009/10 baseline) for the wider public sector.

3.2 Following from this proposal, the Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020 was launched in April 2018. The aims of the pledge are to:

- (a) Standardise public and higher education sectors reporting
- (b) Engage sector leaders
- (c) Encourage future action on decarbonisation.

3.3 The scheme covers the wider public sector, which includes Local Government, National Health Service (NHS), Academies and Maintained Schools, Further and Higher Education, Police and Emergency Services and other public bodies

3.4 In signing up to the pledge, public sector organisations are committing to adopt the principles, which are to:

- (a) Develop and implement the business case for measuring and reducing energy use, cost and carbon emissions in their organisation
- (b) Implement the Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020, using regular measurement to inform management action
- (c) Report its energy use/carbon emissions to Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) annually
- (d) Share best practice in their local area and within the sectors
- (e) Report energy use/carbon emissions from their operations to BEIS annually.

3.5 The Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020 invites participants to contribute to the 30% reduction target set out in the Clean Growth Strategy for the wider public sector.

#### **4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?**

4.1 The Council could choose not to sign up to the Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020. The implications would be:

- (a) Reputational risk; the Council would be seen as not supporting a Government programme.
- (b) The Council would not be able to access the benefits/resources of the pledge, for example; the use of the pledge logo, best practice and BEIS events.

4.2 The Council could choose to adopt the minimum target, however as this has already been achieved. As it is unlikely that emissions will increase then this could be seen as a meritless or easy target.

#### **5. Reasons for recommending preferred option**

5.1 In signing up to the ERP 202, the Council are the pledging to adopt the ERP 2020 reporting principles. The Council already has systems in place to report emissions and therefore the current processes need only be modified with little additional work. The current reports can be seen in Appendix 1.

- 5.2 A review of the ERP 2020 criteria compared to the Council's activity is presented in Appendix 2. It can be seen that our current systems are largely in line with the ERP 2020.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the Council reports on corporate buildings, street lighting, and transport (including the Strategic Environment Contract), and excludes schools and academies. A separate pledge on behalf of schools and academies could be developed and adopted.
- 5.4 In order to contribute to the wider target of 30%, it is proposed that we adopt a target that supports the 30% target for the sector. The Government has stated that it encourages the setting of higher targets, and therefore it is proposed the Council set a minimum 45% target.
- 5.5 The reasons for exceeding the target are:
- (a) The Council has already achieved a 30% reduction in 2016/17.
  - (b) The Council has assessed its future emissions and, with the current level of commitment and proposed projects, it is predicted that a 45% reduction is achievable.
- 5.6 It is recognised that the 45% target appears not to be challenging, however this reduction is not a forgone conclusion as it is dependent on sustained commitment to carbon reduction and successful project delivery.
- 5.7 In order to provide challenge to the Council, a target of a minimum of 50% by 2025 is proposed. This additional 5% reduction requires the funding of projects that reduce emissions by 1000 tonnes. Further revision of the target can be undertaken by the Carbon Management Group through its work on future emissions projections and the generation of business cases. (To provide context, Worcestershire County Council invested £1.5m to generate a reduction of 730tonnes per annum, however the payback time was 7 years giving annual cost savings of £200k).
- 5.8 In relation to the schools estate the evolving strategy will now recognise the role of different Responsible Bodies, as designated by the Department for Education, and their responsibility for managing the schools estate as we move forward.
- 5.9 Building on the work undertaken with individual schools in recent years, and continuing to work at that detailed level, but as part of a wider asset management process being employed across the Council, a further period of engagement is proposed that recognises the role and remit of the key Responsible Bodies including the Council, Diocesan Authorities (Church Schools) and Academies (or their trusts). Embracing that diversity will be the key to building partnerships that can mutually agree targets and proposals for change. As such, and for an interim period it is proposed that we exclude all schools from the pledge.
- 5.10 Whilst not in the scope of the proposed pledge, the Council will continue to support all schools to reduce emissions, to develop an effective approach to reducing emissions that incorporates all stakeholders and enables a level baseline for reporting across the borough.

5.11 On this basis it is anticipated that a separate pledge could be developed on behalf of Responsible Bodies, albeit based upon a target that incorporates the current reduction in emissions by 25%; but reflects a realistic forward trajectory that all parties can sign up to.

## 6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 Delivery of key themes in the Council Plan:

How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of the key themes in the Council Plan? *(select which themes apply and briefly state how the options / proposals in this report contribute to their delivery):*

- Improve Health and Wellbeing
- Managed Growth –A key priority in the Council Plan is the “Planning and delivery for Solihull's low carbon future”. The signing of the ERP 2020 is a public demonstration of the Council’s commitment to carbon reduction which supports this key priority and actions within the Green Prospectus.
- Build Stronger Communities
- Deliver Value – effective carbon management and energy reduction measures reduces energy costs. Current efforts focus on projects with good returns on investment.

6.2 Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

6.2.1 N/A

6.3 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.3.1 N/A

6.4 Financial implications:

6.4.1 The proposed actions required to sign up do not require any additional funding.

6.4.2 Current work around carbon reduction delivers savings in energy costs, and efforts are focussed on those with favourable payback periods.

6.5 Legal implications:

6.5.1 N/A

6.6 Risk implications:

6.6.1 Reputational risk; the Council would be seen as not supporting a Government programme.

6.7 Statutory Equality Duty:

6.7.1 N/A

**7. List of appendices referred to**

7.1 Appendix 1 – draft Carbon Report 2018, including draft reports for Street lighting, Corporate Buildings, Schools, Strategic Environment Contract., (does not include Corporate Transport with partners/contracts)

7.2 Appendix 2 – Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020- Review of actions need by SMBC to comply

**8. Background papers used to compile this report**

8.1 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/721973/Guidance\\_note-ERP-July2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721973/Guidance_note-ERP-July2018.pdf)

**9. List of other relevant documents**

None.