



Fife Council: Carbon Emissions Reduction A Business Case approach



SUMMARY

With an active energy management programme for over a decade and a Carbon Management Plan developed in 2006, increasing demands and expectations on the council from a growing population and changing economy have meant that we are struggling to limit our carbon emissions. At the same time we are facing more demanding emissions targets. The approach that we have now chosen is to build carbon management into all of our work in addition to conventional energy efficiency projects.

BACKGROUND

Conventional energy efficiency projects can yield carbon and money savings, but we realised that we needed to go further. We brought together managers from right across the council along with the Carbon Trust, Forum from the Future, SSN and other councils to identify how best we could tackle this.

We need to understand the impact that every decision in the council has on our emissions. Linking carbon and money was one way of making carbon relevant to all employees rather than just specialist environmental teams.

As a result Fife Council's Carbon Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) builds on ongoing work and has four main components:

Component 1: Corporate and Service Governance

This focuses on: roles and responsibilities, systems, processes and operations, with particular focus on buildings governance. We need to identify people-based solutions as well as technology-based solutions.

Component 2: Review and Strengthen Support Mechanisms

We need to develop and use existing expertise to support services in managing emissions. Projects include embedding carbon into finance, decision making, audit and behaviour change.

Component 3: Reporting and Scrutiny

Robust data is key: "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it". The Carbon Emissions Audit process we developed allows us to identify and support progress at a departmental level.

Component 4: Monitoring and Review

We need to keep the "how" as well as the "if" under review. Integrating carbon emissions reduction into all council business is new ground, and we cannot assume that processes and systems will work first time round.



Harnessing methane at the council's landfill sites: combined methane and electricity generation savings equivalent to 60,000 tonnes of CO2.

KEY CONTACTS

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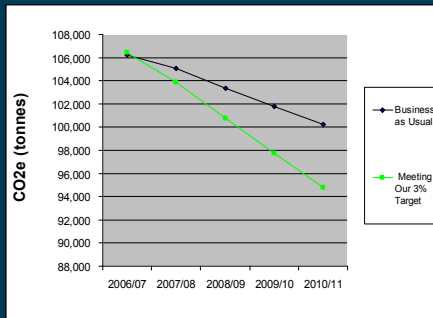
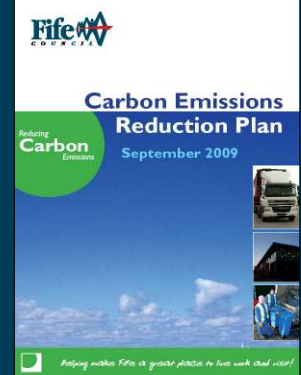
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Fife Council Carbon Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP)

www.fifedirect.org.uk/CERP



LOOKING AHEAD

What will the outcome be?

This is only the beginning of a process: it will take years for the impact of some of the decisions that we take now to materialise. Developing whole life costing and carbon assessment tools is important as it catches decisions before they have a negative impact on our carbon emissions.

We have already benefitted through learning that our earlier approach was not going to be enough. We stand to make direct financial as well as carbon benefits from efficiency gains: our value at stake calculations suggest that by 2020 we will spend an extra £150 million on fuel and carbon rather than on delivering services unless we get our emissions back on track.

Next steps

In addition to a series of short life working groups we are developing a communications plan: we need to work out how best to get our message across and we are keen to learn from anyone else's experiences.

A medium term project is to develop an energy strategy with partners across Fife. Combining clean energy and energy efficiency provides a classic instance of carbon reduction supporting sustainable economic development, and underpins our aspiration to thrive in a low carbon economy.

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