

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING – COUNCIL SERVICES

23 February 2015

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND STRATEGIC DIRECTOR
OF ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT**

CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT OFFICER CONTRACT EXTENSION

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to fund the extension of the Climate Change Project Officer (CCPO) contract until 31 March 2016.

2. Information and Analysis

The 2008 UK Climate Change Act commits the UK to reducing emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels. It also requires the Government to assess the UK's risks from climate change, prepare a strategy to address them, and encourage critical organisations to do the same.

Derbyshire County Council has benefited from having a corporate Climate Change Project Officer post since July 2008. The post was funded initially through an East Midlands Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) project, from which all upper tier authorities in the East Midlands were allocated a support officer to advance their work on climate change adaption. The work programme for this network of CCPOs was co-ordinated by Climate East Midlands and supported by the UK Climate Impacts Programme. The post has been funded solely by Derbyshire County Council since the end of March 2012.

The CCPO post has proved to be an invaluable resource for Derbyshire County Council in furthering understanding of climate change adaptation and planning to manage future risks to services associated with a changing climate. The CCPO has engaged closely with regional partners to ensure the County Council is at the forefront of research and learning in this critical area of work and has liaised with partners locally to support them to develop action plans.

The CCPO plays an important role in supporting climate change activities across the Council. In terms of the climate change adaptation agenda, the CCPO work programme has included:

- Developing and finalising, in close collaboration with departmental representatives, the County Council's Adaptation Action Plan which was formally adopted by Cabinet on 22 January 2013.
- Representing Derbyshire County Council in the regional 'Well Adapted East Midlands' project and the new Climate East Midlands and Environment Agency joint project to develop adaptation indicators and assess the economic benefit of adaptive actions.
- Co-ordinating the involvement of key Derbyshire County Council staff in the development of the adaptation indicators project.
- Providing on-going support and advice to partner agencies across Derbyshire on climate change adaptation.

Looking forward, the CCPO will have a significant role to play in assisting with the development of renewable energy technologies on Council owned land. This area of work is being led on by the Principal Policy Officer, but significant support is required to facilitate management of the sustainability agenda. The CCPO will continue to play a role in supporting departments to implement actions detailed in the Adaptation Action Plan. The CCPO will also continue to work in partnership with Climate East Midlands on the monitoring of the regional Adaptation Indicators.

In addition to climate change adaptation, the CCPO has contributed to the County Council's climate change mitigation activities, both internally across council departments and by assisting Derbyshire communities, businesses and householders to reduce their carbon emissions. The CCPO is involved in a wide range of activities including:

- The development of a County wide Climate Change Charter that will help communities, businesses and individuals to set goals and work towards the low carbon agenda (launched in 2014).
- Co-ordinating membership of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum Climate Change Group to enable collaboration and the sharing of best practice across the County.
- Supporting the development of the Low Carbon Economy agenda in partnership with the University of Derby and Derby City Council.
- Delivery of an Eco Teams project in collaboration with Global Action Plan (GAP) to develop expertise in delivering simple carbon reduction messages among County Council staff, partner organisations and local communities.
- Contributing to Derbyshire County Council Council's Environmental Sustainability Group.
- Representing the County Council at the Local Authority Energy Partnership (LAEP) officer working group meetings and events.

- Developing an internal County Council officers' environmental network.
- Further developing the Domestic and Business Energy Monitors projects.
- Co-ordinating a Climate Change Community Conference.
- Ensuring the accuracy and relevance of the Derbyshire County Council website and Dnet sustainability content.
- Responding to enquiries about environmental sustainability, climate change and carbon reduction from staff, partners and members of the public.

On 11 February 2013 Cabinet welcomed a report outlining the positive progress being made corporately to achieve the County Council's challenging target to reduce carbon emissions by 25% by 2015.

As the council's carbon emissions have reduced, so too has the council's energy bill. The overall expenditure for electricity, gas, oil and solid fuel has been significantly reduced over the last 5 years. Continuation of the CCPO work programme will provide much needed support to sustain the momentum gained to date to achieve our targets.

Funding for the CCPO Post

East Midlands RIEP funding for the CCPO posts ended at the end of March 2012. Since 2012/13 the post has been jointly funded by Policy and Research and Economy, Transport and Environment budgets.

Given the importance of this area of work, it is recommended that funding for the contract for the Climate Change Project Officer be extended for a further 12 months until March 2016. The cost of this, which will be £36,000, can be met from existing budgets, split equally between Chief Executive's (Policy and Research) and Economy, Transport and Environment.

Employment Arrangements

The CCPO is currently employed by Nottingham City Council, on behalf of East Midlands Councils. The day to day management of the post is undertaken by Derbyshire County Council as outlined within the report.

3. Financial Considerations

The total cost of extending the CCPO contract for a 12 month period will be no more than £36,000, to be funded equally from Chief Executive's (Policy and Research Division) and Economy, Transport & Environment Department budgets.

4. Environmental Considerations

The impacts of climate change are already being experienced across the world. Manifestations in the UK include projections of less predictable and more intense weather events, such as floods of recent summers, although no

one weather event or those experienced throughout the season or year can be directly or solely attributable to climate change. The amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere will ensure that the impacts of climate change will continue to be experienced in decades to come, therefore it is not only important to mitigate our emissions but to also learn to adapt to a changing future climate.

5. Human Resources Considerations

The post will continue to be hosted by Derbyshire County Council, whilst officially employed by Nottingham City Council on behalf of East Midlands Councils.

6. Background Papers

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environmental Services, 14 March 2013, Extension of Climate Change Project Officer Contract.

Report of the Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, 27 March 2014, Extension of Climate Change Project Officer Contract.

7. Key Decision

No

8. OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That approval be given to fund the extension of the Climate Change Project Officer (CCPO) contract until 31 March 2016.

Ian Stephenson
Chief Executive

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director of Economy, Transport and Environment