

**“Delivering Reductions in Suffolk’s Carbon Footprint” prepared by the Local Authority Area Agreement Scrutiny Sub Group.**

**A response from the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership Executive**

**Summary**

1. During early 2009 the Local Area Agreement Joint Scrutiny Panel (the Panel) received information and presentations from members of the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership regarding the Suffolk Strategic Partnership’s aspiration to be the county with the greatest reduction in carbon emissions.
2. The Panel also received the latest set of performance data for the Local Area Agreement indicators and targets, and a presentation about the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) from Edwina Childs, of the Audit Commission, helping them to identify where scrutiny might contribute to or add value to CAA.
3. As a result the Panel agreed to set up a sub group to scrutinise how the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership plans to deliver the proposed reductions in Suffolk’s carbon footprint, with particular reference to the performance indicator to reduce the per capita CO<sub>2</sub> (NI 186). The Scrutiny sub group agreed the draft report at their meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and presented their findings to the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership Executive Group on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009.
4. This report summarises response of the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership to the scrutiny report. The report does not incorporate the views of the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership Board due to the changes in the Suffolk Strategic Partnership Board meetings schedule.

**Recommendations of the Scrutiny Sub Group with the relevant actions by the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership**

**Communications and Education – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 1 - Communications and Education
What? Communication of the messages, actions and work being done need to be improved and increased to raise awareness, promote interest and encourage recording and sharing of good practices.
How? A single, shared, comprehensive and county wide communications strategy, which has sufficient resource to ensure it is widely known, acted on, measured and reviewed by all partners and stakeholders.
Whom? Delivery Partnership, using particular expertise within Delivery Partnership eg Radio Suffolk
When? Immediate, progress to be reviewed December 2009

Recommendation 2 – Communications and Education

What? To reach young people, particularly in the 11-25 age group

How? Improved and effective working with schools, colleges and University Campus Suffolk (UCS) to ensure that the messages about the need to reduce Suffolk's carbon footprint reach young people

Whom? Delivery Partnership and Suffolk County Council (SCC)

When? By September 2010, with a review of progress in December 2009

Recommendation 3 - Communications and Education

What? Communication skills and expertise within the Delivery Partnership should be used to raise communications skills and ability of other Delivery Partnership members

How? Members to share their expertise and resources to make communications stronger across the whole partnership eg Radio Suffolk

Whom? Delivery Partnership

When? June 2010

Recommendation 4 - Communications and Education

What? To raise awareness and commitment by communicating the campaigns, projects and ideas from the Delivery Partnership board to help share outcomes, promote good practice, avoid duplication, maximise resources and take actions forward

How? 1 Communications Strategy, as a function of the Delivery Partnership and its Board

2 Set up a central information database to record individual work, initiatives, progress, outcomes, learning and results

Whom? Delivery Partnership Board

When? June 2010

**Communications and Education – related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

5. A draft Delivery Partnership Communications Plan was considered at the Executive on 21<sup>st</sup> July. The Executive will focus on this at the next meeting to ensure all current work is co-ordinated and determine what can be done to strengthen the Plan.
6. The Delivery Partnership will continue to raise the profile of its objectives and achievements using the skills within the wide partnership, this has already resulted Dame Ellen MacArthur being confirmed as the keynote speaker at its annual conference in October 2009. The conference will focus on supporting local businesses, communities and voluntary organisations to adapt to climate change as well as launching the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Creating the Greenest County Awards.

7. The Delivery Partnership will continue to develop projects to engage 11-25 year olds such as the recent “Cool Suffolk” project. The idea of the Cool Suffolk project stemmed from a comment made by a member of the St Edmundsbury Youth Forum; “Climate change films are patronising and boring”. Suffolk Climate Change Partnership decided to challenge the young people at Suffolk secondary schools to come up with their own communications on climate change that they would find interesting and inspiring. Lots of exciting entries were received and from these were selected 12 finalists that were invited to attend a presentation event at BT at Adastral Park. The 3 winning films can be view on the Green Suffolk website. [Cool Suffolk weblink](#)
8. The Delivery Partnership also now has a regularly updated presence on “Facebook” and “Twitter” to engage with young people. It is also planned to live stream the October conference on the website and produce short videos to post on “You Tube”.
9. The Delivery Partnership has now employed a full time Communications Officer to co-ordinate the Partnership’s activity and ensure that best practice and expertise in the partner organisation are used to best effect.

**Delivery Partnership – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 5 - Greenest County Delivery Partnership
<p>What? Delivery Partnership members to understand the targets that the GCDP has to deliver, and individual members to understand their role, and the role of the organisation they represent, in achieving those targets</p> <p>How? Clarify responsibilities and feedback mechanisms within the GCDP to ensure closer working – this could be done as part of the Communication Strategy (see recommendation 1 above)</p> <p>Whom? Delivery Partnership</p> <p>When? December 2009</p>

Recommendation 6 – Greenest County Delivery Partnership
<p>What? Members of the Delivery Partnership should have sufficient seniority/authority to take actions forward</p> <p>How? Partner organisations nominate representatives with sufficient seniority, authority and influence, and to be able to demonstrate commitment to the principles and objectives of the Delivery Partnership</p> <p>Whom? Suffolk Strategic Partnership (SSP) Board and Delivery Partnership Board,</p> <p>When? December 2009</p>

Recommendation 7 – Greenest County Delivery Partnership

What? The Panel scrutinise progress on the Suffolk Climate Action Plan

How? Placing the scrutiny of the Suffolk Climate Action Plan on the Panel’s forward work programme

Whom? The Panel

When? June 2010 (one year after the final action plan is due to be launched)

Recommendation 8 – Greenest County Delivery Partnership

What? Engagement of the voluntary and community groups in this work, bringing together individual plans, actions and initiatives to maximise effective partnership working, so recognising and sharing good practices and avoiding duplication

How? Develop a strategy to engage and support the voluntary and community sector, with actions and outcomes, and an effective two-way channel of communication giving information and support, and receiving feedback on initiatives taking place

Whom? Delivery Partnership and Voluntary and Community Sector

When? December 2009

**Delivery Partnership - related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

10. The newly appointed Suffolk Climate Change Partnership Manager is leading on putting a structure in place that will be capable of driving development of the Suffolk Climate Action Plan and will be presenting the Delivery Partnership Executive Group with a proposed comprehensive monitoring and reporting process for the actions within the Suffolk Climate Action Plan. Regular contact with all the partners committed to delivering elements of the Plan will increase understand about high level objectives and their role in delivering the targets.
11. The Delivery Partnership will invite all partners to consider their representation at the Delivery Partnership Executive and Board meetings in the light of the scrutiny comments.
12. The Suffolk Climate Action Plan was not available to be scrutinised by the Sub Group as it was still being agreed by the Partnership. The Action Plan has now been published (July 09) ([Suffolk Climate Action Plan - weblink](#)) it was developed by the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and details how organisations both from the public, private and voluntary sectors across Suffolk will be working together to help people reduce their carbon footprint and adapt to the effects of climate change. The implementation of this Action Plan will be managed by the Delivery Partnership.
13. The Delivery Partnership accepts that a greater degree of emphasis to date has been about developing links with the public and private sectors. However, the support of community groups is now being targeted with Performance Reward Grant funds. This support will increase the level of grant funding

available for community and voluntary groups to develop practical projects and obtain training to increase their knowledge and capacity.

**Local Strategic Partnerships – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 9 – Local Strategic Partnerships
What? LSPs need to link formally into the whole LAA process so that work being done is recorded and good practices shared
How? Establish clear lines of accountability, reporting responsibilities and feedback mechanisms
Whom? SSP Board, LSP Boards, Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership
When? December 2009

**Local Strategic Partnerships – related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

- The Delivery Partnership has recognised that Local Strategic Partnerships do not necessarily see a link with the delivery partnership as a high priority and that engagement tends to be ad hoc. The scrutiny sub group has identified this as one of the most important recommendations. A future meeting of the Delivery Partnership Board will consider how we can better target and involve the Local Strategic Partnership Boards. The Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership Executive thought that this Scrutiny observation may have wider application across all the LAA Delivery Partnerships.

**Measuring what has been achieved – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 10 – Measuring what has been achieved
What – The indicator that measures per capita CO <sub>2</sub> emissions in Suffolk (NI186) gives an incomplete picture, is difficult to achieve, is centrally measured, has 2 year old data and allows very little influence or information at local level
How? Change the measurement of NI186 for LAAs from a national to a local measurement, reflecting local contributions and achievements
Whom? The Panel and Delivery Partnership to make representations to the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Audit Commission
When? Immediately

**Measuring what has been achieved – related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

- The Delivery Partnership recognises the problems the sub group has identified and has made representations to Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Audit Commission officials. Officers have also met with the consultancy organisation working for DECC to produce the data in order to better understand how to approach the issues.

16. The development of a monitoring and reporting process for the actions within the Suffolk Climate Action Plan will take into account the problems with the nationally collected data set and aim to produce a comprehensive story of the impact of actions we have actually taken at the local level.

**Resources – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 11 – Resources
What? To minimise the uncertainty and lack of funding information.
How? Produce a full funding statement showing current and future funding
Whom? Delivery Partnership Board
When? December 2009

Recommendation 12 – Resources
What? To further increase advice for Small and medium enterprises (SME's) through Business Advisers
How? Increase investment in the Business Advisor role, which is making a making a measureable difference locally with positive outcomes
Whom? Delivery Partnership Board
When? Immediately, with a review of progress in December 2009

**Resources – related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

17. The Delivery Partnership has now established a baseline level of funding to support a small team to focus on co-ordinating and monitor the delivery of the actions within the Suffolk Climate Action Plan. This team will also be capable of accessing further external funding to supplement the external resources already committed to this agenda such as the European funded 'A North Sea Way to Energy Efficient Regions' (ANSWER) Project. <http://www.answerproject.eu/>
18. The capacity for the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership to advise local businesses has recently expanded. Previously there was one advisor covering all of Suffolk. There is now a second who will develop contacts and advise businesses in the Suffolk Coastal area. The ANSWER project will also shortly be funding a third advisor to cover the whole county. All 3 posts are part funded and hosted by Groundwork, a local organisation which has assisted in developing a methodology of interaction that is now being championed on a regional basis.

**Community Action – Scrutiny Recommendations**

Recommendation 13 – Community Action

What? Current community initiatives, good practices and outcomes should be recorded to promote further local interest and action.

How? Capture, analyse and disseminate the information and share this with other organisations and communities – could utilise current processes such as the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) survey

Whom? Delivery Partnership

When? December 2009

Recommendation 14 – Community Action

What? There are planning issues related to making changes and improvements to the energy efficiency of listed buildings and conservation areas

How? Ask “Communities and Local Government” to provide appropriate national guidance

Whom? Delivery Partnership

When? Immediately, with a review of progress in December 2009

**Community Action – related Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership actions**

19. The Delivery Partnership through the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership has a dedicated Community Advisor who will be able to highlight case studies of community initiatives, good practices and outcomes identified through contact with such groups and share these with the network of communities being developed through this work. In addition we aim to expand community reach by working more closely with complementary organisations such as Suffolk ACRE (Action for Communities in Rural England) and SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils, an organisation which brings together Suffolk’s Parish and Town Councils, with Suffolk County Council’s Localities team and by establishing a forum for Suffolk communities to share experiences, contacts and best practice.
20. The Delivery Partnership through Suffolk County Council’s Sustainable Construction working group will monitor the ongoing consultation the building regulations with respect to listed buildings and conservation areas. We will contact the Government department ‘Communities and Local Government’ to request that the appropriate national guidance be generated to support planning teams around the potential amendment which removes the exemption of such building stock.

**Conclusion**

21. The Local Authority Area Agreement Scrutiny Sub Group's report stimulated a useful discussion at the Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership's Executive Meeting on 21 July 2009. The Delivery Partnership benefited from a fresh external view which stimulated a good discussion about the current position of the partnership.
  
- 22 After the discussion of the scrutiny report the Executive carried out its own analysis of its strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) which is attached at appendix A.

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Bryn Griffiths, Chair Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership

25 August 2009

## **Creating the Greenest County Delivery Partnership Executive**

### **SWOT Analysis**

The following is a full explanation of comments received through the SWOT analysis.

#### **Strengths**

- The dedicated office resource developing and managing the partnership and its actions.
- The partnership is representative of local people valuing the high quality Suffolk environment, including historical elements, accompanied by a sense of pride/feel good factor. This is evident in Mori Polls and other surveys.
- Specific areas of interest are informed and strengthened by the partnership, which also conveys the interests to a wider audience.
- The partnership conducts a wide range of stakeholder involvement.
- The partnership has a good sense of common purpose and ethos.
- The partnership contains a great deal of enthusiasm and determination on behalf of its members.
- The partnership is based on strong existing established delivery partnerships such as those for: biodiversity, climate change and waste.
- The partnership has successfully prioritised securing support from the business sector.
- There is a broad appeal to the partnership, and it does not have a “governmental “feel to it.
- The partnership exhibits strong connectivity between its inclusive themes.

#### **Weaknesses**

- The lag that occurs with the national reporting of carbon emissions by Defra is making the success of local actions difficult to gauge.
- The partnership could engage voluntary organisations to as greater extent.
- A lack of a dedicated resource for the communications element of the partnership has restricted capacity in this area.
- The broad range of issues covered by the partnership can make it difficult to maintain relevance to all individuals/businesses/communities involved in the partnership.
- The partnerships main communication messages must be maintained simplistically.
- There is a degree of mismatch between the group’s membership, aims and accountability.
- Do the organisations on the partnership really ‘own’ the targets and do they really understand them?
- Performance management focused on national indicators can stifle innovation and action.
- A danger of bureaucracy getting in the way of action.
- The partnership size maybe unwieldy.

## **Opportunities**

- A real opportunity to develop and exchange best practice and share ideas/funding strategies etc.
- A chance to gain capacity through partnership cooperation, particularly among smaller organisations.
- The opportunity to influence decisions and raise profile of aims.
- The opportunity to work more effectively with the press.
- To fully exploit the opportunity presented by the Adaptation Conference.
- The constituent partnerships could make more use of the wider Creating the Greenest County partnership membership.
- The strength of support from businesses could be exploited to as greater extent.
- Greater communication of the success of the Awards Programme.
- Further work with younger generation including expanded use of new technologies and web based tools.
- To further capture the public's imagination.
- To further the national profile of the partnership.
- An opportunity to develop the low carbon economy in Suffolk.
- The recession gives the partnership breathing space to make a difference to skills, adaptation and how we deliver services.

## **Threats**

- A lack of resources will restrain the work of the partnership.
- A misjudging of the public mood may restrict partnership success with its aims.
- The uncertainty caused by Local Government Review and potential Quango review does not help the partnerships long term vision.
- Climate change impacts on habitat could overtake the partnerships existing actions.
- Non-governmental partners' buy-in could be challenged.
- Population growth and other external factors may outstrip any success a partnership such as this can achieve.
- A lack of consistency in the messages from the partnership may limit success.
- The uncertainty of media interest and emphasis is a potential limitation.