

**Item 2**

**The LG Group and the Department of Energy and Climate Change's agreement on climate change and the Stockport event**

**Purpose of Report**

To update the board on the Local Government Group's climate change offer, the LG Group and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) agreement on climate change, and the Board's event in Stockport.

**Summary**

In his speech at the LG Group conference in July 2010, Chris Huhne asked the Group to develop an offer on how local and central government can work together to meet the UK's 80% CO2 reduction target. This paper provides an update on the offer and the LG Group agreement with DECC. It also reviews the Board's event in Stockport.

**Recommendation**

That the Board takes note of the new agreement between the LG group at DECC on climate change.

**Action**

Lead Members and officers to take forward negotiations in line with the Board's decisions.

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## **Local Government's Offer on Climate Change and subsequent agreement**

### **Background**

1. The LG group submitted an offer on climate change to DECC in September 2010. As a result of that offer the LG group and DECC have been negotiating on a way to take the proposals set out by the Group forward. A memorandum of understanding between DECC and the LG group has been agreed and was signed by Cllr Richard Kemp and the Secretary of State for Environment and Climate Change on Wednesday 9 March. The memorandum of understanding is attached for information.

### **Content**

2. The purpose of the memorandum is to set out the partnership arrangements between the DECC and the LG Group, including scope, governance, accountability and roles and responsibilities.
3. The MOU sets out a partnership arrangement to help meet national climate change, fuel poverty and renewable energy targets.
4. The MOU sets out how DECC and the LG Group will work together help and encourage all councils to take firm action – underpinned by locally ambitious targets and indicators - that enable councils to:
  - 4.1 Reduce the carbon emissions from their own estate and operations;
  - 4.2 Reduce carbon emissions from homes, businesses and transport infrastructure, creating more, appropriate renewable energy generation, using council influence and powers; and
  - 4.3 Participate in national carbon reduction initiatives at the local level, particularly the roll out of the Green Deal, smart metering and renewable energy deployment.
5. The MOU will be reviewed annually and a report will be produced jointly by DECC and the LG Group by the end of May each year. The LG Group Environment and Housing Programme Board is identified in the MOU as taking responsibility for the MOU within the LG Group.
6. The MOU sets out how the Nottingham Declaration will be re-invigorated so that councils can re-sign it and demonstrate new ambitions, based on local opportunities, on climate change.

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- 7 The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and senior political representatives from the LG Group will meet annually in the spring of each year to review the MOU, the Annual Report and council action on climate change.
- 8 Crucially, DECC agrees in the MOU to work with the LG Group to ensure the experience of councils are reflected in DECC's ongoing evaluation of policies, and that the Department's future policy positions take into account local ambition and delivery.
- 9 Through the MOU, the LG Group agrees to take on a leadership role in encouraging all councils to demonstrate their ambition on climate change through the New Nottingham Declaration and other appropriate agreements or declarations. The LG Group is also agreeing to encourage all councils to play their full and active part in reducing emissions and to develop and implement plans for reaching out to those councils that do not take a full and active part in reducing emissions.
- 10 The MOU also has an accompanying Action Plan that sets out key actions for the LG Group and DECC over the forthcoming year.

## **The Board's Stockport Event**

### **Background**

5. As part of the Environment and Housing's Programme Board functions, a series of events, hosted by councils, are being held across the country for councillors.
6. This event on 2 February 2011 was hosted by Stockport Council on behalf of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). The event looked at the low carbon economy, and in particular how AGMA was using its Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to drive this agenda.
7. Chaired by Cllr Loakes, the event heard from Cllr Goddard, setting the scene for work in Stockport and Greater Manchester.
8. The attendees then heard short presentations from Martin Wheatley (LG Group), Mike Reardon (Strategic Director, AGMA), Abigail Burrige (LG Group), Sarah Davies (Strategic Director, Greater Manchester Environment Commission) and Michael O' Doherty (Head of Climate Change, Buildings and Energy, Manchester City Council).
9. The event was closed by Cllr Derek Antrobus and Cllr Clyde Loakes
10. Attendees to the event made the following recommendations for the LG Group:

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- 10.1 Continue to act as a hub for access to knowledge and good practice across the sector, particularly in relation to self-regulation and improvement.
- 10.2 Continue to promote a sector-led approach, particularly in relation to the LG Group Offer on Climate Change, which was designed by and workable for local government.
- 10.3 There was agreement that it would be useful for the LG Group to match up local authorities with similar characteristics to share know-how and ways of working.

And that the LG Group should pursue the following issues with Government:

- 10.4 There was strong support for the LG Group's argument that the Government's stance should be enabling and not imposing.
  - 10.5 The LG Group should lead the discourse with Government on the skills sector to ensure more joined up thinking around delivery.
  - 10.6 The LG Group should continue to solidify councils' role in the Green Deal (as providers, partners, supporters and receivers) with Government.
11. Whilst the event was a great success, it was agreed that more emphasis needs to be placed on councillors giving presentations and their views, rather than presentations from officers.