South Bucks
District Council

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DEMOCRATIC AND ELECTORAL SERVICES

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Dear Councillor

ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

The next meeting of the Environment Policy Advisory Group will be held as follows:

DATE: **TUESDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2015**

TIME: **6.00 PM**

VENUE: **ROOM 6, CAPSWOOD, OXFORD ROAD, DENHAM**

Please note that this meeting is not open to the public.

Only apologies for absence received prior to the meeting will be recorded.

Yours faithfully

Jim Burness

Director of Resources

To: The Environment Policy Advisory Group

Mrs Sullivan
Mr Bradford
Mr Harding
Miss Hazell
Mr Read
Mr D Smith

Declarations of Interest

Any Member attending the meeting is reminded of the requirement to declare if he/she has a personal interest in any item of business, as defined in the Code of Conduct. If that interest is a prejudicial interest as defined in the Code the Member should also withdraw from the meeting.

A G E N D A

(Pages)

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **JWC Update Presentation**

3. **Minutes**

   To receive the minutes of the meeting of the PAG held on 15 September 2015. **(5 - 8)**

4. **Reports from Members**

   To receive any reports from the Chairman or PAG Members.

5. **Current Issues**

   The Portfolio Holder and Head of Service to update Members on Part 1 current issues relating to the PAG and to receive feedback from Members (if any).

6. **Reports Likely to Lead to Portfolio Holder making a Decision in Accordance with the Scheme of Delegations to Cabinet Members**

   (a) **Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy**

   To consider report of the Interim Director of Services. **(9 - 14)**

   Appendix 1 **(15 - 38)**
   Appendix 2 **(39 - 52)**
   Appendix 3 **(53 - 66)**

7. **Reports Likely to Lead the Portfolio Holder making a Recommendation to Cabinet**

   (a) **Portfolio Budgets**

   To consider report of the Director of Resources. **(67 - 72)**

   Appendix **(73 - 88)**

8. **Any other business**

   Any other business which the Portfolio Holder considers is urgent.

9. **Exempt Information**

10. **Current Issues (Part II)**

The Portfolio Holder and Head of Service to update Members on Part II current issues relating to the PAG and to receive feedback from Members (if any).

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday, 1 March 2016

ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting - 15 September 2015

Present: Mrs Sullivan (Chairman)
Mr Bradford, Mr Harding, Miss Hazell, Mr Read and Mr D Smith

11. PRESENTATION BY THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

The PAG received a presentation from David Kent on the work of the Natural Environment Partnership (NEP). Members were given the opportunity to ask questions during the presentation.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- Introduction to the NEP
- Purpose of the NEP
- NEP partnerships
- Structure and membership of the NEP
- Key themes
- Work Plan Progress – over the last 12 Months
- Project locations

The PAG thanked David Kent for his presentation.

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the PAG held on 15 June 2015 were received.

With regards to ownership of Littleworth Common, the PAG were advised that the Council was still waiting for the relevant information to be provided regarding proof of ownership and adequacy of title. An update to the PAG would be given once the information had been provided.

13. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

14. CURRENT ISSUES

The PAG were advised that the Council had purchased a new cleaning street vehicle and would be issuing a press release to inform residents of the new vehicle.

15. GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE CHARGES 2016/17

The PAG received a report on the 2016/17 Garden Waste Collection Services Charges seeking their advice to the Portfolio Holder as to whether:

1. the early bird discount of £35 should be continued for a third year during the month of February with the price rising to £45 in March;
2. an early bird discount of £36 should be introduced with the full price being £46;
3. or whether the early bird discount should cease and a charge of £40 for online customers and £45 for telephone subscriptions be charged.

With regard to paragraph 4.4, the PAG were advised that since writing the report, an additional 150 customers had signed up to the service therefore increasing the income and erasing the projected shortfall in income of £6,500. As a result, the 2016/17 financial implications of each option, as set out in paragraph 7.1 of the report, were revised as follows:

Option 1 – the 2015/16 income forecast would be achieved based on the 2015/16 budget and revised number of customers signing up this year.
Option 2 – the 2015/16 income forecast would be exceeded by approximately £7.5k based on the 2015/16 budget and revised number of customers signing up this year.
Option 3 – the 2015/16 income forecast would be exceeded by £25k based on the 2015/16 budget and revised number of customers signing up this year (based on 80% of customers signing up online).

In connection with options 1 and 2, the PAG were advised that the early bird discount was popular with customers, with around 75% signing up during the discounted period. However, paying the full price was not considered to be a disincentive to sign up as the service was still good value for money. An incentive for customers to pay early for a short period of time helps the service operationally because extra staff can be employed during this period to process the majority of payments. The reasoning behind option 3 was that processing online payments could require a lower level of resources than for payments made over the telephone and offering a discount for paying online could reduce pressure on resources in the long term.

As stated in the report, as was the case last year from 1 September 2016 the subscription cost would be reduced to £30 for the rest of the service year.

The PAG were advised that the Council had recently brought one of its old refuse collection vehicles back into service to cope with the higher number of customers.

In the discussion which followed, a number of Members questioned whether they were in a position to advise the Portfolio Holder on which option to pursue given the absence of a breakdown of the cost of the service, including income. The PAG received an assurance that the income generated from each of the options would cover the cost of the service in 2016/17. The PAG also received an explanation as to why the 2015/16 budget had been reduced by £30,000.

One member questioned why both an early bird discount and an online discount could not be introduced.

Following consideration of the options and the benefits of the early bird discount scheme, the PAG was minded to support option 2 provided that further information was circulated demonstrating that the charges being proposed and the projected income to be received would meet the cost of providing the service.

Having considered the advice of the PAG and their concerns, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED,** subject to receiving confirmation that the charges being proposed would meet the cost of providing the service, to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that option 2 (early bird discount of £36 to be introduced during the month of February with the full price being £46 in March) be approved.

16. **BRING SITE REVIEW**

The PAG received a report on the results of a review of recycling bring site facilities in the District. The PAG were asked to advise the Portfolio Holder on a number of recommendations set out in the report to improve services and collection efficiency.

The review of collection data and bring site capacity monitoring has highlighted the top and bottom performing bring sites. As a result, Officers were recommending that 6 sites in total be closed due to poor performance. Appendix A provided background and a map showing the distribution of sites throughout the District which would not be significantly affected by these closures and the alternative sites that would still be available. It was also proposed that 9 sites be retained as a result of the high usage and tonnage collection.

As it was no longer possible to continue to provide small household electrical banks as a cost neutral service, it was proposed that all small household electrical banks be removed from 5th October 2015.

The PAG, having considered the results of the review and the reasons for the proposals, were in support of all the recommendations set out in the report. The PAG stressed the importance of keeping District Ward Councillors and Parish Councils informed of progress.

Having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that

1. the following bring sites (6 total) be closed;

    - Beaconsfield Motorway Services
    - Neville Court Car Park, Burnham
    - South Buckinghamshire Golf Course, Stoke Poges
    - Taplow Train Station
    - Dumb Bell Pub, Taplow
    - Post Office Lane, Wexham

2. the following bring sites (9 total) be retained;

    - The Beacon Centre, Holtspur
    - Waitrose, Beaconsfield
    - Penncroft Car Park, Beaconsfield
    - Jennery Lane Car Park, Burnham
    - Summers Road Car Park, Burnham
    - Denham Railway Station
    - The Broadway Car Park, Farnham Common
    - Packhorse Road Car Park, Gerrards Cross
    - The Evreham Centre, Iver

3. new bring site facilities at the new Bishops Centre Tesco Development be introduced.

4. all small electrical banks be removed and recycling promoted through household collections.

5. textiles banks from the South Buckinghamshire Golf Course be removed.

6. bring site capacity be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure adequate containers are provided.

17. **FIXED PENALTY NOTICES**

The PAG received an information report on the implementation of the Council's Fixed Penalty Notice Policy.

A policy regarding the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) was agreed by Cabinet in April 2013 but had not been a priority for the Authority since. Now that the Council was in a position to introduce an education and awareness raising campaign with the Bucks Waste Partnership, the necessary steps required to implement it would be undertaken.

In the discussion which followed, the PAG noted that only trained and authorised persons would be able to issue an FPN.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

19. **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

"That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 following item of business is not for publication to the press or public on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act."

20. **CURRENT ISSUES**

None.

The meeting terminated at 7.31pm

South Bucks District Council **Environment PAG – 8 Dec.2015**
Chiltern District Council

SUBJECT:	Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy
REPORT OF:	Luisa Sullivan, Chair, Environment Portfolio Holder, Environment Policy Advisory Group
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Anita Cacchioli Interim Director Services/ Martin Holt Head of Healthy Communities
REPORT AUTHOR	Joanna Faul, Joanna.faul@southbucks.gov.uk 01895 837280
WARD/S AFFECTED	All

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to advise the Portfolio Holder on the Bucks Energy Strategy, the reason for the strategy and to advocate its adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

Endorsement of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy and its adoption.

2. Executive Summary

The Bucks Energy Strategy was developed because of the growing national move towards decentralised energy generation. It focusses on opportunities for community owned energy generation projects, and on overcoming barriers to the implementation of energy schemes. It is technology agnostic, the key aims being local generation, retention of money in the local economy and reduced cost of energy.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

Through producing local energy there would be the potential to secure cheaper energy and retain energy spend within the local economy. It would enable local returns on investment and provide the potential to draw down funding. A further possible outcome would be the provision of jobs.

4. Content of Report

National Context

4.1 To highlight the speed of change in the energy sector, Citi Bank[1] estimated that by 2020, independents, community owned and municipal suppliers will be supplying 30% of UK energy compared to just 1% in 2008. A report by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)[2] set out how councils could benefit from

- the changes that are happening in the energy sector
- the opportunities to become involved in the supply of energy to local

[1] ENERGY DARWINISM, The Evolution of the Energy Industry, Citibank, 2013
[2] http://www.ippr.org/publications/city-energy-a-new-powerhouse-for-britain

residents
- raising finance for investment in low carbon energy infrastructure – particularly in local energy generation.

Underlying this is the ever present concern regarding energy security, the over reliance on imported fossil fuels and the volatility of energy prices.

4.2 The Community Energy Strategy published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2014[3], aims to increase the amount of home-grown energy generation whilst reducing energy use efficiency measures. Individuals and local communities will also be able to make an important contribution to maintaining energy security and keeping costs down for consumers. The government's ambition is that every community that wants to form an energy group or take forward an energy project should be able to do so. The Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy sets out a variety of initiatives to support this ambition.

Development of the Bucks Energy Strategy

4.3 The development of an energy strategy for the County started in early 2014 with the production of a Prospectus. The Prospectus made the case for Buckinghamshire using a novel approach to strategy development based on the benefits that energy generation projects can bring, irrespective of the technology used. This means that Bucks Energy Strategy is benefits led and technology agnostic. It is based on the premise that the people of Buckinghamshire, who want to see these benefits come to their community, will increasingly influence energy generation schemes. This influence is not limited to technologies used and scale of deployment, however, but the ownership and financing options which influence how benefits are generated and received.

4.4 Workshops were held with wide ranging stakeholders. Various successful financial models were discussed as potential ways forward for energy developments such as local share issues, crowdfunding and the selling of bonds. In addition, the strategy provides the catalyst for drawing down any future EU funding.

Delivery Framework

4.5 There are a number of linked documents which comprise the Energy Strategy, as follows:-

- **Energy Baseline** – a document establishing the Counties energy situation, the reasons for taking action and likely benefits
- **Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy** – a 25 year high level document which established the approach Buckinghamshire is taking. It sets out the framework within which future actions will be planned, monitored and reported upon. This is the core document of the strategy, which should not be read in isolation
- **Action Plan One** – 2015 - 20 a living document which sets outs the

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-energy-strategy

priorities, and describes the targets and associated performance measures for the first 5 year delivery cycle

These documents are appended to the report.

4.6 In order to structure and coordinate activity, actions have been arranged into four broad themes. These do not operate in isolation and there will be important areas of overlap between them. The four key themes of the Strategy are:-

- Increasing local energy generation
- Improving the efficiency of buildings
- Ensuring communities influence and benefit from projects
- Growing the local economy

4.7 The Energy Strategy provides a clear framework for action and investment within the County, taking account of the fast changing nature of energy policy. Indeed, it recognises the increasing opportunities and benefits in relation to the decentralisation of energy, the emergence of SMART and micro grids, heat networks and emerging possibilities around energy storage.

Governance Structure

4.8 The Natural Environment Partnership for Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes (the NEP) provides the strategic direction for the Energy Strategy, and has ratified the Energy Strategy. The NEP's own Strategic Priorities also overlap with the aims of the Energy Strategy, so there are synergies to be achieved.

4.9 The Action Plan sets out the actions that will be undertaken by the various stakeholders or the way in which they can assist in delivery of the Strategies various themes. The Action Plan day to day delivery will be overseen by the Buckinghamshire Energy and Resources Task Group comprising the five Buckinghamshire local authorities and the Low Carbon Chilterns Co-op[4] .

Recent Work and Funding

4.10 A central plank to community energy development was solar. Subsequent to the delivery of the Bucks Energy Strategy, the Government has put the Feed in Tariff (FiT) on hold. This has jeopardised the development of self-sustaining community energy enterprises locally and nationally.

4.11 The intent for Bucks was to facilitate an energy 'hub' where businesses, communities and the public sector worked together to provide local energy opportunities. The removal / reduction of FiT has meant that the business approach to local energy developments via a 'hub' in Bucks has also been put on hold. Bucks energy community is, however, exploring the opportunity of working with an established energy 'hub' in Oxfordshire, reducing time, effort and overheads.

[4] http://www.lowcarbonchilterns.org/lccc/pages/lcc.php

4.12 The Energy and Resource Task group is compiling a list of existing renewable energies in the County.

5. Consultation

The Energy Strategy comprises input from businesses, public sector, community and voluntary sectors, together with the Natural Environment Partnership.

6. Options

There are two main options and these are as follows:-

a) Do nothing. This means that should energy opportunities arise then South Bucks Council and Chiltern District Council will not benefit from any income generation or reduced price energy. Money spent on energy will continue to flow out of the County

b) Continue working with the Strategy and in partnership with stakeholders to secure:-

i. energy opportunities
ii. engagement of a wide range of stakeholders
iii. potential to secure cheaper energy
iv. the potential to draw down funding
v. local returns on investment
vi. retention of energy spend within the local economy

7. Corporate Implications

Financial
There are no overt financial implications to the Council. A time investment will be required from the Sustainability Officer. There may be future opportunities to invest in energy developments.

Legal
There are no current legal implications. Should energy opportunities arise then the Sustainability Officer would need to access the Council's legal team.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues
Production of renewable energy addresses the above two issues through reducing the use of fossil fuels.

Social Inclusion
The Strategy addresses social inclusion through the potential opportunity to supply reduced cost energy to fuel poor residents, or those in off-gas areas.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- Sustainable environments where people take pride in their community and embrace low carbon living

- Prosperous and diverse economies that encourage local employers and small businesses so we can protect the areas' economy for the future and achieve a better balance between the jobs available and the people to fill them;
- We will strive to conserve the environment and promote sustainability
- Support South Bucks people to reduce their carbon emissions

9. Next Steps

South Bucks Council and Chiltern District Council will continue to contribute to the delivery of the Energy Strategy, and will continue to work in partnership with stakeholders to establish energy opportunities across both Districts.

Background Papers:	As set out in the footnotes to the report

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Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy

Introductory prospectus for stakeholders in Buckinghamshire

Contents

This document

This document is designed to provide you with enough background information that you need in order for you to participate in the development of the new Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy, irrespective of whether you can attend the planned workshop on the morning of 18th February 2014 or not.

The document is deliberately short and does not go into detail. As the Energy Strategy will be focussed on benefit and not technology or targets, the main emphasis of the information provided is therefore on benefits to the county and not technology. In this way the selection and deployment of a given technology will be as a means of providing the specific benefits being sought and not a means to an end in its own right. Please note that the Workshop will also focus not on detail, but on creating a high level vision of what the Energy Strategy should deliver.

We have also included some development Scenarios for you to consider. The objective of these is to gain your views on the various approaches that might be taken within the Energy Strategy. In each case, the assumptions that are behind the Scenario are explained and a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of each is also supplied.

By providing your initial feedback on these options we will be able to better focus the workshop activities based on the emerging consensus view. In order to ensure your attendance and that of other key players, the workshop will only occupy a morning.

The outcomes from the Workshop will be used as the basis for the development of the final Strategy and associated Action Plans.

Finally, please feel free to pass a copy of this document pack and feedback questions to others who you think can add value to the process of developing an Energy Strategy in the county.

The potential benefits from energy generating projects

Social benefits

There are a number of social benefits that can come from controlling the local supply of energy. These fall into the following general categories:-

Alleviation of fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is a social issue that will grow as fossil fuel prices rise on the international market, especially as demand rises post-recession. This will impact most on those on low incomes in poor housing, or households in rural areas away from the gas network.

While programmes like ECO and Green Deal can improve building energy efficiency for those in fuel poverty, there is a risk that those managing these schemes will focus less on relatively affluent counties like Buckinghamshire. Energy efficiency is not part of this Strategy but is being taken forward separately within the county.

Increasing energy supply cost will remain the biggest risk factor for those in fuel poverty.

Electricity generating technologies that do not need purchased fuel to drive them have the capacity to supply electricity through the supply network at a fixed price for the life of the technology (typically 25 years). Developing or owning projects with this in mind is now possible for the community, Local Authority or Housing Associations. Example technologies are wind, solar photovoltaic (PV) and hydro.

Heat supply from locally produced fuels like biomass (wood) should lead to lower price inflation pressures than fossil fuels. It also means that the money spent on fuel will remain in the local economy to the benefit of local people.

Creation of jobs

This can occur at a number of levels. Energy generation projects being developed locally can be done with the express intent of using local suppliers, installers and maintenance staff wherever possible.

As described above, it is possible to provide ‘inflation proofed’ electricity from some renewable energy technologies. Putting this benefit on offer can attract inward investment and thus job creation, increasing the local GDP. It will also reinforce Buckinghamshire as a good place to invest relative to competing locations.

	Moving to large scale biomass uptake will also create rural jobs and at the same time create the means by which woodlands can be brought back into management. This will further enhance job retention/creation and can enhance Buckinghamshire's reputation as a good place to live, work, visit and enjoy.
Social resilience	The opportunities open to communities to create their own income streams from energy and the potential for self-supply creates the potential for communities to become more resilient and self-supporting. Examples are the capacity to create community infrastructure such as social or leisure facilities or even to subsidise transport giving the community wider access to local services.

The National Trust has recently published a paper describing these benefits with some examples from its Estate (see http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/document-1355801605221/).

Many of these benefits are closely linked to the incomes that can be gained from owning low carbon energy generation or from community contributions from developers of energy schemes.

Economic benefits

Energy generation can provide a stable cash flow over a long period of time. Changes to the energy market also allow more people to generate and sell energy, making self or local community supply possible. As described above, this cash flow and the profits from it can be used to deliver many benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire. Indeed, few other opportunities offer the range, size and longevity of economic benefits that can be achieved through an energy project.

The government has put in place a range of financial support schemes designed to promote the uptake of energy projects. These range from the Renewables Obligation (RO), the Feed in Tariff (FiT), the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) plus specific incentives for projects like the proposed new nuclear projects.

It must also be recognised that energy projects have the capacity to recycle large amounts of additional money around the community in which they are based increasing local economic activity and resilience. This is especially so where local fuels such as biomass are bought. Based on past experience the impact of this new local investment can provide a four-fold enhancement of local economic performance.

So that communities can enjoy these benefits the government has set up a £15m Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF). This is aimed at helping rural communities in England to access funding to carry out feasibility studies for renewable energy projects and fund pre-planning studies and preparation of planning applications.

While all energy consumers and taxpayers pay the cost of these support schemes, only those with generation projects of their own have any of this money returning to them. As a

county which has a relatively low uptake of renewable energy, Buckinghamshire sees a net outflow of money from the county to support projects elsewhere. This will also lead to lower social benefits within the county of the kind described previously.

Increasingly, it is recognised that developers of energy schemes should in some way compensate local people out of the profits from the project. For example, wind energy developers have produced a protocol covering larger schemes which sees at least £1,000/Megawatt/year returned to the community (see http://www.renewableuk.com/en/renewable-energy/communities-and-energy/community-benefits-protocol/index.cfm). For reference, most single large onshore wind turbines are in the size range 0.5 to 3 Megawatts. In Scotland the community benefits paid from wind alone currently tops £5 million/year. The point to note here is that this level of payment is only possible because of the high inherent value of the project. All of this value can potentially be available to local people if the community and/or Council drive the development.

Local energy supply and use based on new technologies can also overcome the economic inequality gaps that exist when energy is only found in a small number of locations. For example, when coal was a major fuel, South Wales was economically vibrant and everyone in the community had access to affordable fuel, which was not always the case elsewhere. With the decline in the production of coal the same area now has social deprivation and fuel poverty as fuel is bought in from other locations. This means that ensuring energy supply is sustainable and local is essential to underpin a stable local economy and thus to ensure the continued success of Buckinghamshire into the future.

Policy benefits

With dwindling incomes, the public sector often struggles to meet all of its policy objectives. As demonstrated above, the correct approach to energy generation projects can yield benefits which can be aligned with some identified policy needs. This can come from either additional direct income or by displacing costs such as those associated with dealing with the social impact of fuel poverty.

In addition, by focussing an Energy Strategy on achieving volume in the sector, other benefits such as better woodland management and enhanced timber values in the long term as a result of wood fuel extraction can also be encouraged.

It is also the case that most of the opportunities highlighted are associated with renewable energy. This means that the benefits from carbon reduction come ‘for free’ as an associated benefit.

A change in approach to local policy around energy deployment is likely to bring many linked benefits as outlined above. Clarity on the kinds of energy projects that are likely to be supported in the county will create the potential to proactively approach developers and financiers directly to achieve these outcomes. This will reduce the risks for all parties and is likely to be welcomed.

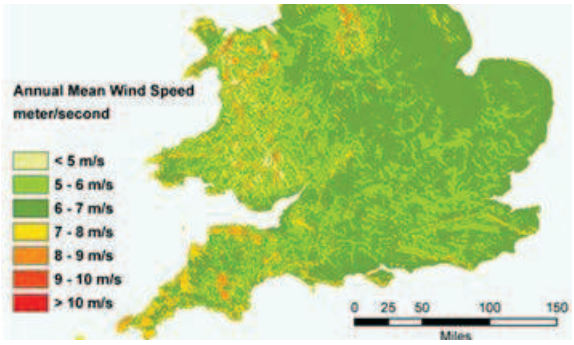
An Energy Strategy will also allow those planning development of electricity and gas grid networks to plan with more certainty future network routes and investment activities. This in turn has the potential to unlock inward investment based on increased network capacity.

Energy opportunities in Buckinghamshire

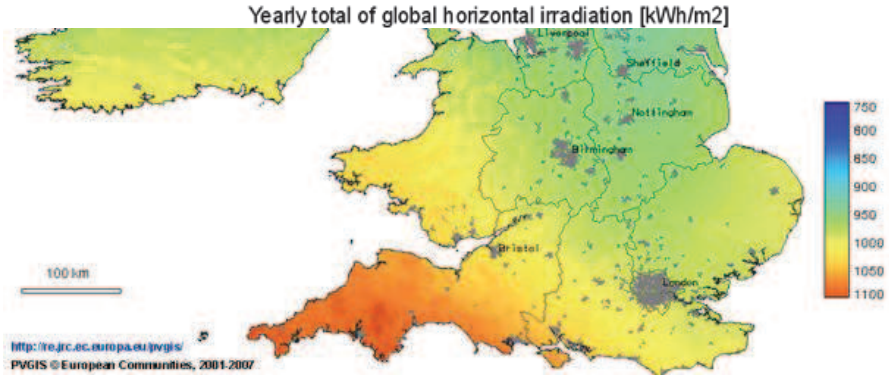
Energy resources

Buckinghamshire has reasonably good availability of energy resources, although these are not among the best in the country.

Looking at the electricity generation resources, the map below shows annual wind speeds. In general, economically viable wind speeds are considered to be 6 metres per second or higher. The UK is one of the best places in Europe for wind energy and Buckinghamshire has some areas that offer sufficiently high wind speeds to be attractive for viable wind development. This is confirmed as a number of applications to develop large scale schemes have been made in the county.

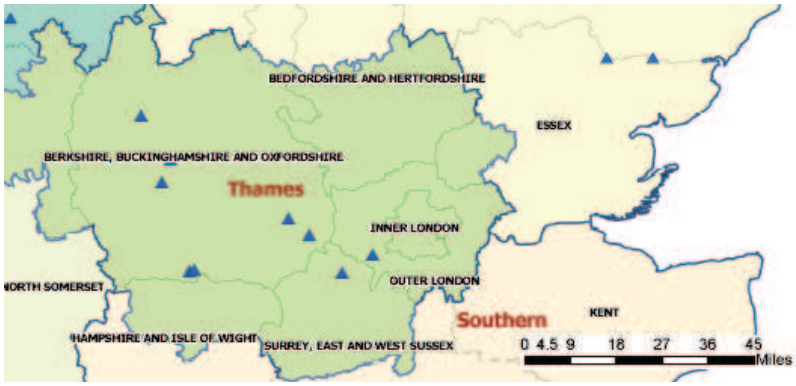


The situation for solar photovoltaic (PV) is broadly similar. Buckinghamshire is in the high to mid-range of solar energy yield making it capable of supporting development of solar electricity generation projects at all scales. This is shown in the solar irradiation map below.



Clearly solar thermal (heat production) yields rank in the same way as for solar PV.

Based on a recent national study, the hydroelectricity potential of the county is poor, with only seven sites found in the survey area that combined Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. These are shown on the map below. Small, low-head schemes may be possible on an opportunistic basis wherever there is a consistent flow of water, but these are likely to be marginally economically viable because of the low energy yield.



Combustion fuels

Combustion fuels are clearly targeted at heat applications, but at the larger scale combined heat and power is possible. Within the county, waste represents the largest single source of available combustion fuel. In April 2013 the County Council signed a contract to build and operate an Energy from Waste facility at Greatmoor with FCC Environment. In addition, Agrivert and Countrystyle Group have been awarded interim biowaste treatment contracts. These contracts tie up a large proportion of the available waste.

In the case of wood fuel, 9.4% of Buckinghamshire's area is woodland (approximately 17,573 ha). The Chilterns AONB has an overall woodland cover of 21% (nearly 17,400 hectares), much of which is dominated by beech high forest. Within the Chilterns AONB there are approximately 450 woodland owners, with 75% of the woodland resource in private ownership.

Forestry Commission has estimated the wood fuel resource from the South East. This is shown in the Table below.

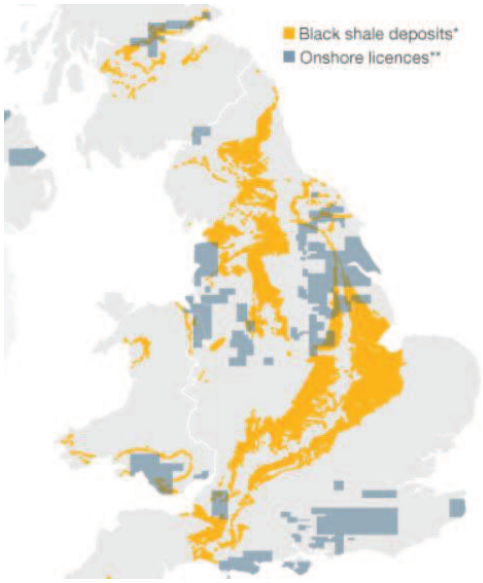
Woodfuels Summary Table

	Forest and Woodland (ODT)	Arboricultural Arisings (ODT)	Short Rotation Coppice (ODT)	Primary Processing Co-Products (ODT)
South East	446,396	144,645	792	22,191

Figures are given in oven-dry tonnes. Woodfuel will never be delivered at this moisture content. Typical moisture contents will vary from 50-60% (measured on a fresh weight basis) for harvesting brash to 25-30% for conditioned woodchips.
Figures are estimates of the annual sustainable production that can be made available taking account of technical and environmental constraints. They do not take account of economic or market constraints.

The above table indicates that there is enough fuel available from this area alone to support a major wood heating programme, with more fuel available from the areas to the north of the county.

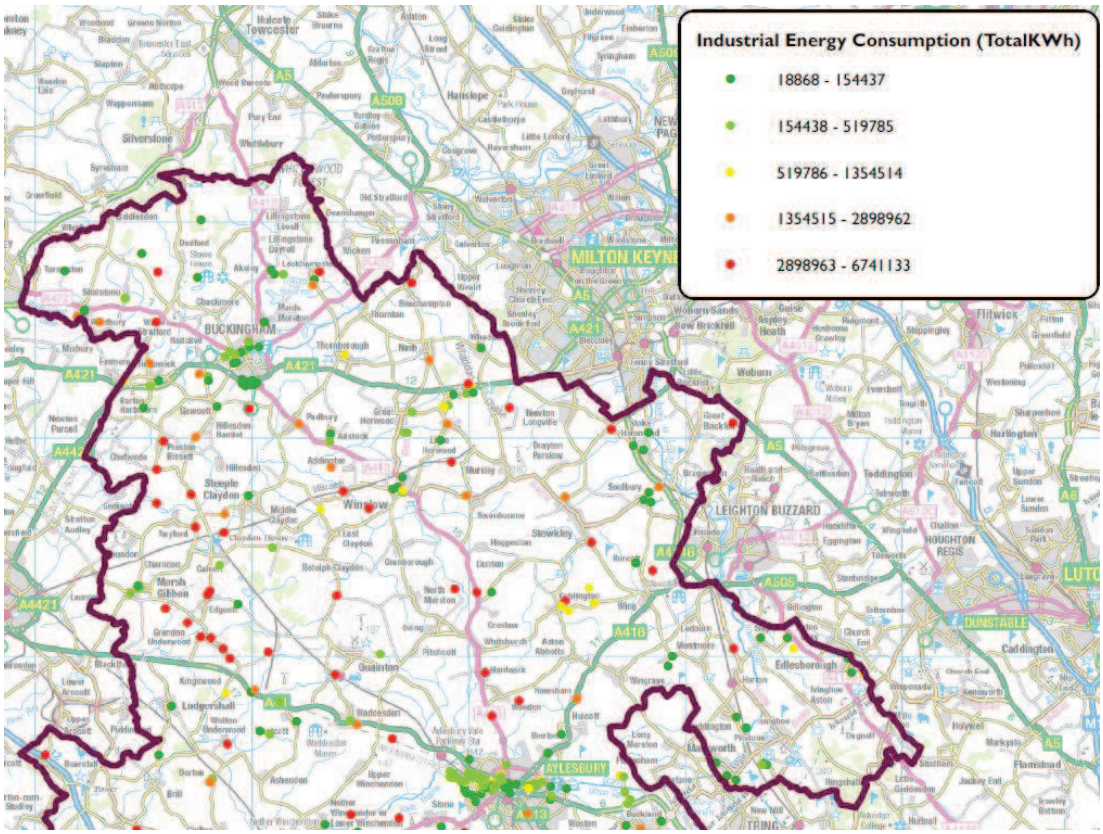
The map below shows the distribution of shale gas across the UK. According to information from DECC, despite having significant shale gas deposits, geology and other reasons make it currently unlikely that Buckinghamshire will be a strong candidate for commercial scale shale gas extraction. However, this remains a possibility in the future as the government has indicated support for the extraction of UK shale gas.



Energy markets

While electricity will always find a ready market through sale into the national grid, heat requires local supply and use.

Buckinghamshire County Council has recently completed a heat mapping exercise. This has identified the location, size and intensity of heat demand as a means of identifying potential heat markets in the county. The map below is one example of some of the output from this work. It shows point sources of industrial heat demand and the magnitude of that demand.

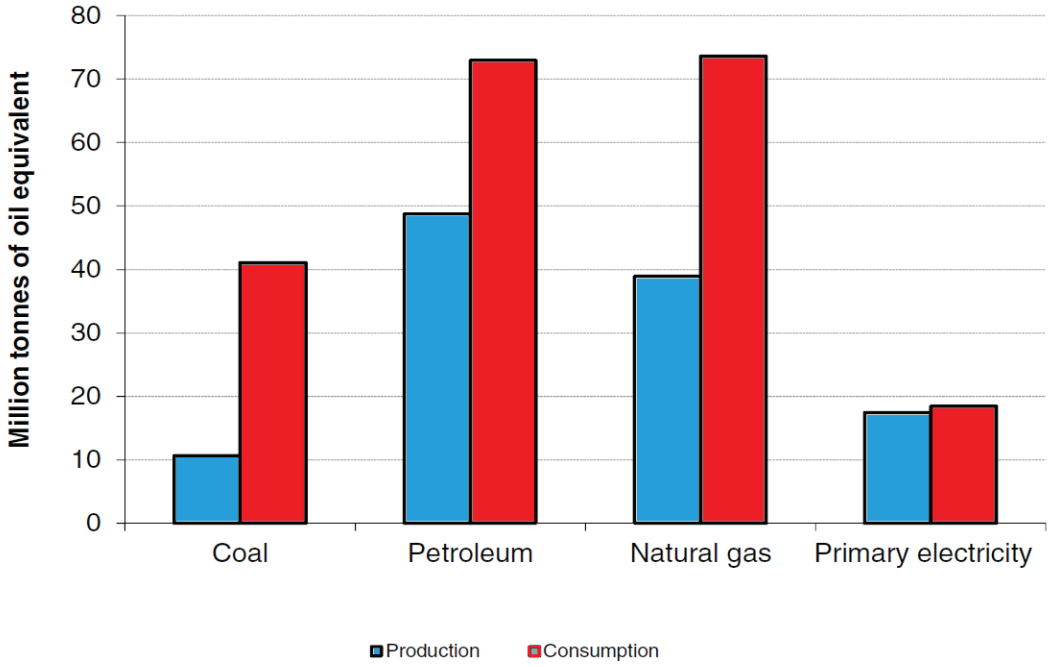


Conclusions

From the evidence shown above, Buckinghamshire has enough resource potential to benefit from significant energy development in support of a new Energy Strategy.

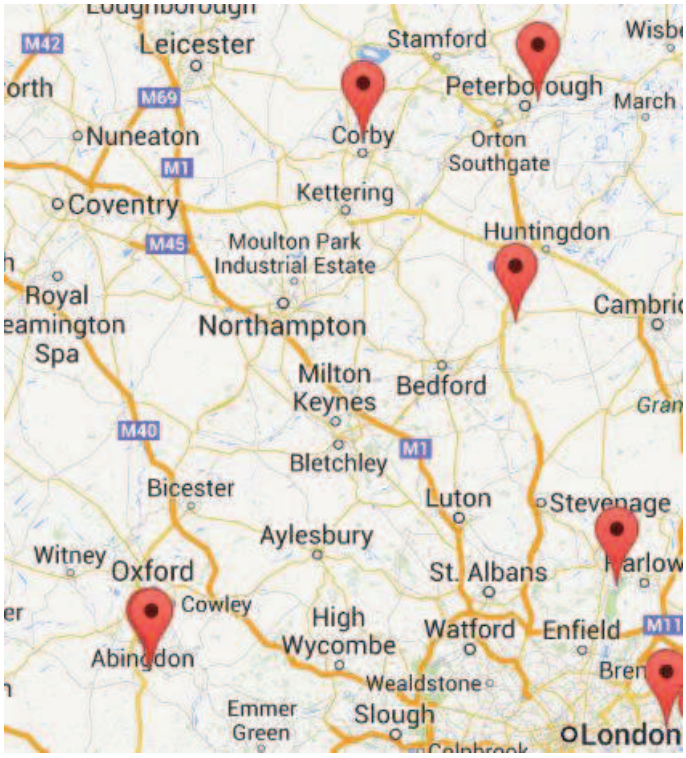
The Position of Buckinghamshire in the national energy supply picture

The graph below shows the UK production and consumption of primary fuels. Primary electricity is generated from sources other than the primary fuels shown. Examples are nuclear and renewable energy. This graph clearly demonstrates that the UK is a net importer of all fuel types.



Traditional power generation

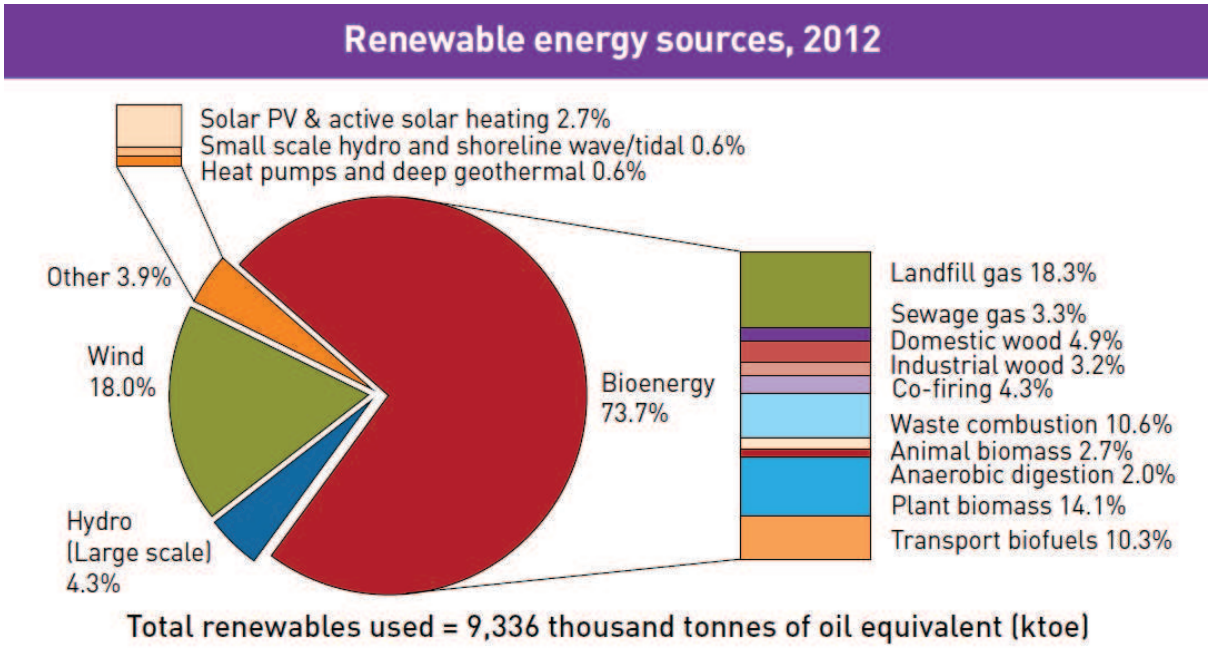
The map below shows the location of major fossil fuel power stations. With the recent closure of Didcot 'A' coal fired power station, all of those in the vicinity of Buckinghamshire are now gas-fired. There are no fossil fuel power stations within the county.



Renewable energy

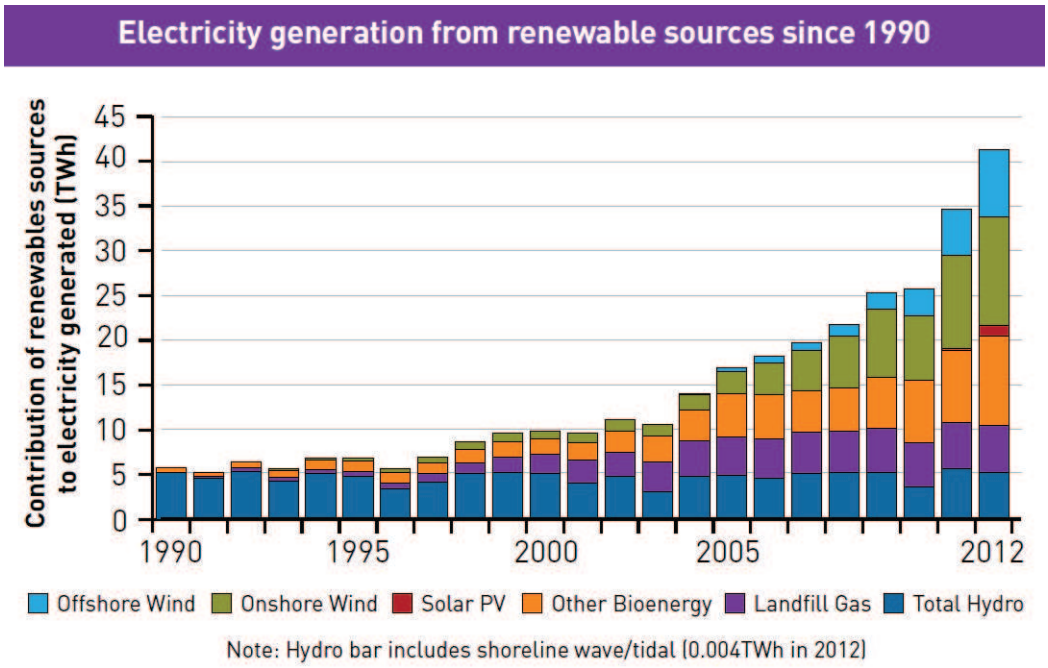
Renewable fuels

The term renewable fuel refers to fuels used for activities other than power generation, including where solar PV is used only to provide heat. In 2012, renewables supplied 9,336 thousand (9.36 million) tonnes of oil equivalent (the governments standard unit of measure). The breakdown of this supply is shown below.



Renewable electricity supply

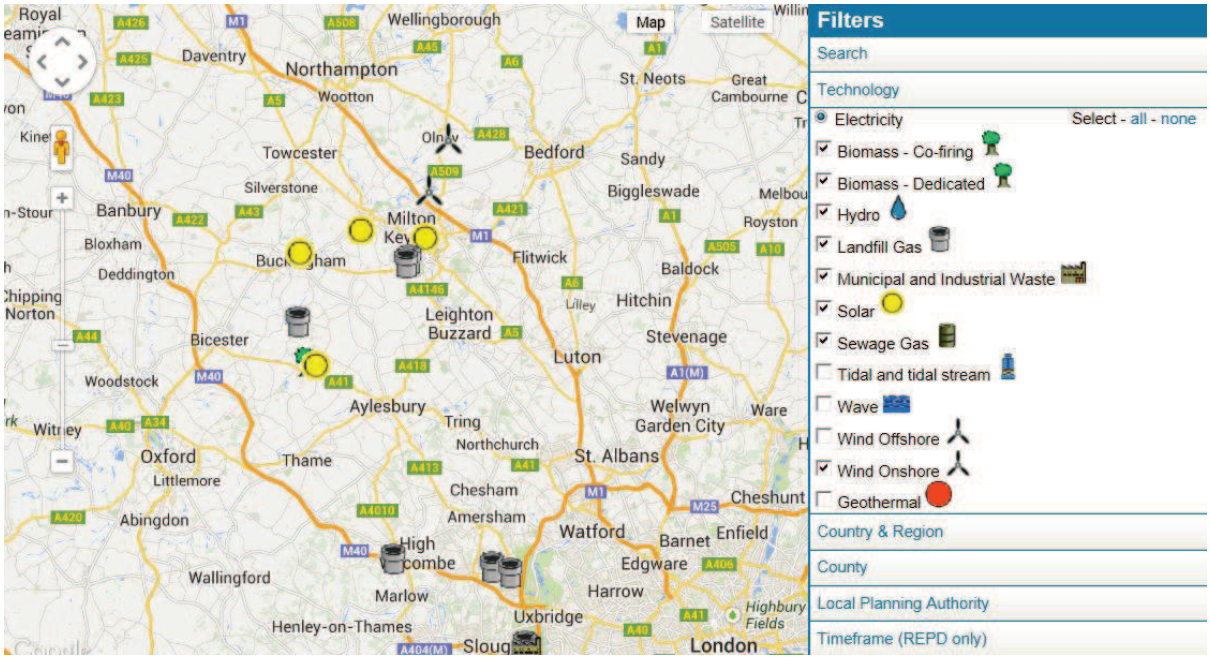
In 2012, renewable electricity supplied 11.3% of UK demand, which is up by a fifth on the previous year. The chart below shows the breakdown of these sources of electricity for the UK and how their contribution has changed in recent years.



Renewable energy in Buckinghamshire.

In Buckinghamshire, renewable energy sources currently account for 3.2 % of the county's energy needs. This is below the Government's national target of 15% by 2020.

The map below shows renewable energy projects that are either operating or are under construction. Currently no wind projects are operating in the county, but three planning applications have been rejected for wind projects sized at 10MW, 0.8MW and 0.02MW.



Conclusions

As a county with a relatively low uptake of renewable energy, Buckinghamshire sees a net outflow of money from the county to support projects elsewhere. It is also not enjoying the social and economic benefits associated with these projects. For instance, had the 10MW wind project proposed for the county been built, based on £1,000/MW/y of developer contribution and a 25y operating life, it would have returned £250,000 to the local community.

Whilst government policy in this area appears to be in a state of flux, the UK's international commitments remain in place including the requirement to meet EU targets for renewables by 2020. This is likely to mean that Buckinghamshire will be expected to increase its contribution to renewable energy at some point in the future. Through the new Energy Strategy, there is real potential to do this in a way which is focussed on people based benefit, turning local energy development into opportunities and not threats.

Development Scenarios

1 – Business as usual

Assumptions within this Scenario:

- There is no particular interest in developing energy opportunities in the county even where they might lead to social or economic benefit.
- No government pressure is applied to increase the rate of renewable energy generation
- There are no changes to approach in Buckinghamshire to planning applications for renewable energy
- The public does not apply pressure to have more energy projects in the county
- Incentives associated with the development of renewable energy projects do not increase over current levels
- No efforts are made to influence energy supply/energy infrastructure are made by the County Council or others
- Energy efficiency measures continue to be developed as currently being proposed.

As a result the Scenario is:

- Any new energy developments in Buckinghamshire will be opportunistic.
- Energy developments will occur at locations selected by the developer not the community.
- The lack of clarity over what (if anything) comprises an ‘acceptable’ energy development will be seen as a risk by developers who will seek to invest elsewhere.
- Local benefits will be few (if any) and the people of Buckinghamshire will continue to be net donors of money to schemes delivering benefit elsewhere.
- As the availability of low carbon energy becomes more important to inward investors, Buckinghamshire will potentially miss out to competing locations.
- Associated benefits from employment in the energy sector, local fuel supply, etc. will be minimal.
- Buckinghamshire will continue to fall behind government targets meaning that potentially ‘catch-up’ activities may be required which may lead to less well considered outcomes relative to planned development.
- Buckinghamshire is in entirely ‘reactive’ mode when considering energy developments.
- There will be no insulation from the effect of fuel price rises from local energy generation and use.

SWOT analysis - Business as usual Scenario

Strengths	Weaknesses
• No changes needed to current approach • May be seen as low risk by some • Currently politically acceptable locally and nationally.	• Social and economic benefits from energy projects will be minimal or non-existent • County not getting its 'fair share' of money to support energy projects. • A 'reactive' approach means that the developer will lead and will select sites and technologies to suit their business needs not the needs of local people. • Buckinghamshire will become increasingly marginalised as the UK moves towards a lower carbon economy • The 'do nothing' option may increasingly be seen as weak and may become increasingly untenable. • While energy efficiency measures will make some impact on energy costs, the benefits from energy generation will be lost
Opportunities	**Threats**
• No opportunities are associated with the business as usual scenario	• Inward investment may go elsewhere • Lack of proactivity may make the county vulnerable if major development such as 'fracking' is proposed in the county. • Lack of financial benefits from energy projects will mean that the public sector will continue to bear the growing cost burden associated with fuel poverty, unemployment and other activities that can potentially be addressed through new approaches to energy development. • The Local Authorities in the County will become increasingly involved with meeting the financial and social cost of fuel poverty. • Communities within the county will become less resilient and increasingly impoverished from a financial and infrastructure perspective. • No insulation from energy prices rises due to local energy supply and use

2 – High Social Benefit

Assumptions within this Scenario:

- A proactive approach is taken within the county to develop energy projects that will deliver clear social benefits and it is these benefits which are the target.
- These benefits are so clear and universally accepted that 'NIMBY' attitudes are largely marginalised
- The local political framework within the county aligns to support this approach
- Current government support mechanisms persist.
- Steps are taken to engage with the community and with other groups to encourage them to become involved with or to lead and "have a say" in the development
- Project returns do not have to be optimal as long as they give benefit over the life of the project and can be financed.
- Energy network operators are supportive and where possible facilitate grid connection, power transmission, etc.

This makes the Scenario:

- Buckinghamshire's Councils take a proactive leadership role to drive the development of socially beneficial energy projects in the county, including taking a development role where appropriate.
- All community focussed renewable energy projects are supported (especially through the planning system) irrespective of location.
- Buckinghamshire (through its Local Authorities) actively seek government support by attracting grants and other support mechanisms to support delivery of social benefit.
- Local policy supports the development of those energy projects which bring tangible social benefit.
- Local policy and other measures specifically aligned to facilitate socially beneficial energy development.
- Steps are put in place to stimulate the formation of community groups and to promote their active participation in energy project developments where they will benefit
- Local Authorities within the county actively support energy projects bringing social benefit such as by making their own energy market available for local supply.
- Local Authorities within the county seek and bring in investment and support from local energy network providers to facilitate the development of socially beneficial energy projects and infrastructure within the county.
- The Councils in the county take steps to signal that the county is 'open for business' in terms of energy project development where these bring clear social benefit.
- (As in Scotland) the Councils publish their expectations on community benefit payments from energy projects developed by third parties (i.e. non community groups from outside of the county)
- Net inflow into the county of investment supporting energy projects relative to local spend on 'green' taxes to support these activities.
- The Councils in the county develop a clear policy on gas shale fracking that identifies the high social benefits and community payments that they seek from any developments of this nature

- Communities benefiting from incomes from energy projects become more resilient and able to invest to secure their own future
- Government targets met or exceeded without the need for any further intervention

SWOT analysis - High Social Benefit Scenario

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Otherwise unavailable social benefits flow • Clear leadership is demonstrated • More resilient communities formed • (Potentially) Council budgets will not be drawn into increasingly costly support for energy poor families • Demonstrates Buckinghamshire as a good place to invest, work and live • Net inflow of investment and government grants/support funding into the county • Reduced investor risk leads to more developer interest and thus potentially more private sector investment to deliver these social benefits • No pressure from government to increase renewable contribution targets	• Clear social benefit may still not overcome NIMBYism • Lack of capacity and skills within the county in this area • Past poor performance of the county in granting planning for renewables may create a legacy of distrust in the developer/investor community. • Relies on a large number of organisations, policies, etc. aligning • No clear 'delivery body' appears to be in place • May require 'seed corn funding' in a time of shrinking budgets
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Potential opening up of the Councils own energy markets to de-risk and support implementation of this approach • The public land assets across the county that might potentially support generation projects • Currently available funds/support mechanisms from government • Rising energy prices creating a major driver for switching to renewables • Reduced technical risk from low carbon technologies which are now mature • Availability of investment funds for the 'right' projects. • Likelihood of support from large private sector organisations thorough their CSR interests	• Government support may dry up • National policy moves away from the encouragement of renewables • Active revolt within the county as a result from the greater uptake of 'visual' renewables such as wind. • Unless this scenario is delivered in a bold and credible way with some 'quick wins' there is danger of the approach falling into disrepute.

3 – High Economic Benefit

Assumptions within this Scenario:

- The county takes a proactive approach to energy development based on the economic benefits it can bring
- Social issues are not a priority
- Projects will be developed to maximise return however possible
- Likely to be led by those enjoying maximum benefit, which may focus more on the private sector
- Planning focusses on viability triggers to ensure only the best projects get built
- All economic benefits may not be retained in the county
- Larger schemes will likely be favoured
- Investors will see the county as a good place to invest in energy projects.

This makes the Scenario:

- Buckinghamshire's Councils take proactive leadership roles to drive the development of economically beneficial energy projects in the county, including taking a development role where appropriate.
- All economically beneficial renewable energy projects are supported (especially through the planning system) irrespective of location (although specific environmental designations such as SSSIs and AONBs are still respected).
- Local policy supports the development of energy projects bringing economic benefit.
- Local policy and other measures are specifically aligned to facilitate economically beneficial energy development.
- Steps are put in place to stimulate the identification and development of economically beneficial energy project developments, especially in the private sector.
- Local Authorities within the county actively support energy projects such as by making their own energy market available for local supply.
- The Councils in the county seek investment and support from local energy network providers to facilitate the development of economically beneficial energy projects within the county.
- The local Councils take steps to signal that the county is 'open for business' in terms of energy project development where these bring clear economic benefit.
- Government targets met or exceeded without the need for any further intervention
- Higher cash flow within the local economy yield additional spin-off economic benefits
- Greater economic resilience, especially against the effects of rising energy prices.
- Industry within the county can potentially be more cost competitive

SWOT analysis - High Economic Benefit Scenario

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Otherwise unavailable economic benefits flow into the county and GVA increases • Clear leadership is demonstrated • (Potentially) Council budgets can be augmented by income from energy schemes • Demonstrates Buckinghamshire as a good place to invest. • Net inflow of investment and government grants/support funding into the county • Reduced investor risk leads to more developer interest and thus potentially more private sector investment to deliver these economic benefits • No pressure from government to increase renewable contribution targets • Greater economic resilience • Enhanced brand strength for Buckinghamshire	• Just providing economic benefit is unlikely to overcome NIMBYism • Lack of capacity and skills within the county in to drive energy development • Past poor performance of the county in granting planning for renewables may create a legacy of distrust in the developer/investor community. • Relies on a large number of organisations, policies, etc. aligning • No clear 'delivery body' appears to be in place • May require 'seed corn funding' in a time of shrinking budgets
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Potential opening up of the Councils own energy markets to de-risk and support implementation of this approach • The public land assets across the county that can be made available for energy project development • Currently available funds/support mechanisms from government • Rising energy prices creating a major driver for switching to renewables • Reduced technical risk from low carbon technologies which are now mature • Availability of investment funds for the 'right' projects. • Likelihood of interest from the private sector as a means of reducing operating cost, reducing business competitiveness and increasing resilience.	• Government support may be withdrawn • National policy moves away from the encouragement of renewables • Active revolt within the county as a result from the greater uptake of 'visual' renewables such as wind. • Unless this is scenario is delivered in a bold and credible way with some 'quick wins' there is danger of the approach falling into disrepute.

4 – Resource Led Approach

Assumptions within this Scenario:

- This is a maximum deployment scenario - all viable renewable and low carbon energy sources will be exploited wherever possible.
- The presumption within the county is that energy development will go ahead with no unreasonable barriers put in place although environmental designations (SSSI, ANOB, etc.) will still influence planning decisions
- Social or economic issues are not a priority although some of these benefits will flow opportunistically as a result
- Constraints such as grid connection, access, etc. will limit deployment
- All organisations within the county have the potential to become involved in and benefit from energy generation where viable resource exists
- Energy resources such as waste heat, commercial waste, etc. will be actively encouraged into energy generation.
- A 'liberal' attitude to energy development will attract inward investment

This makes the Scenario:

- Buckinghamshire's Councils take a proactive leadership role to drive the development of energy projects in the county, including taking a development role where appropriate.
- All viable renewable energy projects are supported (especially through the planning system) irrespective of location.
- Local policy supports the development of energy projects of all kinds.
- Local policy and other measures are specifically aligned to facilitate energy development.
- Steps are put in place to stimulate the identification and development of viable energy project developments.
- Local Authorities within the county actively support energy projects such as by making their own energy market available for local supply.
- The Councils in the county seek investment and support from local energy network providers to facilitate the development of energy projects within the county.
- The county through its Councils takes steps to signal that the county is open for business in terms of energy project development.
- Government targets met or exceeded without the need for any further intervention
- New local industry will form around this 'new' market sector.
- Buckinghamshire derives maximum benefit from new energy opportunities based on the energy resources available within the county.

SWOT Analysis – Resource Led Scenario

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Maximises the benefits from local energy resources. • Clear leadership is demonstrated • (Potentially) Council budgets can be augmented by income from energy schemes • Demonstrates Buckinghamshire as a good place to invest. • Maximum inflow of investment and government grants/support funding into the county • Reduced investor risk leads to more developer interest and thus potentially more private sector investment to deliver these economic benefits • No pressure from government to increase renewable contribution targets • While not a specific target, social and economic benefits will come to the county • New local industries will be created • Buckinghamshire known as a high renewable energy/low carbon/high sustainability county and this enhances brand strength and inward investment.	• Lack of capacity and skills within the county in to drive significant energy development • Past poor performance of the county in granting planning for renewables may create a legacy of distrust in the developer/investor community. • Relies on a large number of organisations, policies, etc. aligning • No clear 'delivery body' appears to be in place • May require 'seed corn funding' in a time of shrinking budgets
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Currently available funds/support mechanisms from government • Rising energy prices creating a major driver for switching to renewables • Reduced technical risk from low carbon technologies which are now mature • Availability of investment funds for the 'right' projects. • Likelihood of interest from the private sector as a means of reducing operating cost, reducing business competitiveness and increasing resilience.	• Likely to promote significant backlash among local people opposed to energy development which may cause political support for this approach to reduce • Government support may dry up undermining this approach • National policy moves away from the encouragement of renewables • Unless this scenario is delivered in a bold and credible way with some 'quick wins' there is danger of the approach falling into disrepute

Your Feedback

We would value your initial reactions and feedback to the idea of developing an Energy Strategy for Buckinghamshire. We will then use these to produce an initial idea of what this Energy Strategy might look like for further discussion at the workshop that we will run on the morning of 18 February 2014.

To help you to provide your feedback we have provided some questions for you in a separate document called Your Feedback.

Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy

June 2015

Foreword

The way we generate and use energy is entering a critical period at both the national and local levels. As the cost of heating and lighting our homes increases and concerns of energy security grow, we must also act to reduce our impact on the climate and continue to protect Buckinghamshire's special environment.

It is not, however, enough to only address these risks. There are significant benefits to be gained by improving energy efficiency of both domestic and commercial premises and increasing local generation where communities are the primary beneficiaries – delivering these benefits is central to our Energy Strategy.

Changing the way energy is generated and used in Buckinghamshire is a big challenge and requires long term commitment if it is to be achieved. Our Strategy therefore sets out a 25 year vision and framework for action, which together provide the certainty and flexibility which will be necessary. These are supported by the first Action Plan which sets out detailed priorities for the initial 5 years of delivery.

Achieving our vision will not be easy and we must continue to work together if we are to deliver on our ambition. This Strategy has emerged from a collaborative process between Buckinghamshire's five councils and a wide range of business, community, education and individual stakeholders. As we move from planning to delivery, the support and expertise of this stakeholder group will prove all the more valuable.

We hope that this Strategy will both lead and catalyse action to ensure that the communities of Buckinghamshire benefit from their energy resources.

Warren Whyte

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Buckinghamshire County Council

Nick Naylor

Cabinet Member for Environment, South Bucks District Council

Board Member of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership

Summary

Buckinghamshire generates little of its own energy – there are no major power stations in the county and there has been a relatively low uptake of renewable generation projects. As a result, there is an outflow of financial support to those areas which are utilising their energy resources. At the same time, we are seeing communities across the country benefiting from the generation of their own energy.

Doing nothing is no longer an option.

To tackle this, the local authorities in Buckinghamshire in partnership with the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (the NEP) have led the development of this Energy Strategy. Supporting this has been a wide range of stakeholders from community groups, businesses, charities as well as other partnerships such the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Together we have a created a Strategy with the aims of improving energy efficiency of both domestic and commercial premises as well as delivering greater local generation with the benefits this produces being received by the community.

In order to do this, our Energy Strategy focuses action in four key areas:

-
- Improving the energy efficiency of public, commercial, residential and community buildings.
- Increasing generation which benefits local communities
- Ensuring communities influence and benefit from projects.
- Growing the local green economy.

The development of energy resources takes time and needs long term certainly if the necessary investment is to be attracted. This Strategy therefore has a 25 year lifetime within which detailed action planning is conducted in 5 year cycles.

Action Plan 1 (2015-20) sets out our priorities and targets for the first 5 year planning cycle and can be found here.

Developing our Strategy

The District Councils of Buckinghamshire in partnership with the County Council commissioned the development of this countywide Energy Strategy. This started in early 2014 with the development of an Energy Baseline which provided a description of the baseline against which the Strategy was developed. This document also made the case for the county using a novel approach to strategy development based on the benefits that energy generation projects can bring, irrespective of the technology used. By the use of various development scenarios, feedback was sought at a series of four stakeholder workshops. This has resulted in a process of strategy development which has been highly consultative with wide ranging stakeholder input. This includes the public and private sectors and community groups.

Within this process, the first question asked of stakeholders was if the strategy should maintain a 'business as usual' approach or go further. The focus on the use of energy based projects to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits for the people of Buckinghamshire unified stakeholders and led to their unanimous rejection of a 'business as usual' approach. Taking this approach will also go some way to redressing the situation in place at the time of the consultation whereby the people of Buckinghamshire are exporters of money through their energy bills and general taxation to support energy schemes elsewhere in the country.

During the development of this strategy it was identified that a 25 year view was required and for it not be based on short term issues. This reinforces the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy as a high level document. As a result, the Strategy creates a long term framework within which projects will be developed but it contains no specific targets or actions. This does not mean that the Energy Strategy is devoid of these essential elements. Instead, these are contained in separate but linked Actions Plans each covering a 5 year period. The Action Plans will set out short to medium term actions and targets and a clearly identified route to delivery.

While development of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy has led to wide ranging support, there is still the potential for tension when specific projects are considered for development, especially if they involve contentious technologies such as large scale wind or shale gas extraction. This Strategy does not however advocate one technology over another. Instead it aims to ensure that the benefits which can be generated are a key consideration in the projects which are brought forward.

It is also important to recognise that the Strategy operates within the existing planning system and the generation of benefits alone doesn't guarantee planning permission or final development. There are a broad range of factors which interact to determine the success of an energy project – both under planning regulations and in its commercial and technical feasibility – and so whilst the Strategy is benefits led, we must be pragmatic as to its real world application.

A Shared Vision for Buckinghamshire

The Energy Baseline describes the existing low level of energy generation in Buckinghamshire. It also describes some of the benefits which can be achieved by working with communities to increase the uptake of generation projects. The work to transform the way Buckinghamshire generates energy is based on a shared vision of what our relationship with energy should look like:

"Communities are central to the future of energy generation in Buckinghamshire and are the key beneficiaries of the development of energy resources."

We will know we have achieved our vision when we can all say the following and it won't be unusual or extraordinary, but simply the way things are in Buckinghamshire:

- My community is involved in decision making about new energy generation opportunities.
- I know public sector energy generation is protecting funding for frontline services.
- I have seen the benefits from local energy schemes in my community.
- Local businesses are delivering the goods and services which help provide my energy.
- The local economy is benefiting from more inward investment.
- We all use energy carefully and have learnt how to use even less.

Our Mission

In order to achieve this vision, we need to describe the work which is needed to achieve it – this is our Mission:

"To deliver significant, long term benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire by increasing local energy generation and reducing energy demand."

The mission establishes the key mechanism by which we are to achieve our vision and allows us to decide whether a proposed project would help achieve this. There are two central criteria for this:

1. Will the project deliver benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire?
2. Will the project help to increase local energy generation, or reduce energy demand?

If a proposed project can answer "yes" to both of these questions, then it will contribute to the achievement of the Vision. We will then always look for projects that deliver best value in terms of the benefits they deliver.

Background and Baseline

The situation regarding energy generation that was in place in Buckinghamshire at the time this Energy Strategy was developed is described in the Energy Baseline.

The Energy Baseline identifies that small scale, local energy generation using new technology is a growing reality across the UK which cannot be ignored. Generating energy at point of use is also amongst the most cost effective and efficient methods of generation and reduces the need for grid enhancements, thereby keeping installation costs down. Implementing more efficient ways to use energy can also help to reduce the impacts of rising energy costs on the lives of Buckinghamshire people.

The baseline also summarises the energy resources available in the county and whilst these are not the most abundant in the country, they are sufficient to support generation projects in many areas. In particular the baseline highlights the potential for energy projects using wind, solar and wood fuel. Local energy generation brings a unique set of financial and social benefits, as set out in the Baseline. These come from a range of options for local people to become involved in energy projects including project ownership. Energy generation schemes can also deliver significant environmental benefits, such as the creation of biodiversity enhancing habitats, as well as reducing the carbon intensity of energy generation.

Strategy Principles

As outlined in the Baseline, Buckinghamshire has notable energy resources which could be used to generate both more energy in the county and, importantly, a range of social, economic and environmental benefits.

Our approach to developing these energy resources has two key principles:

- It is benefits led – delivering economic, social and environmental benefits to the communities of Buckinghamshire is central to the development of energy resources.
- It is technology agnostic – we are not defining which technologies should be used.

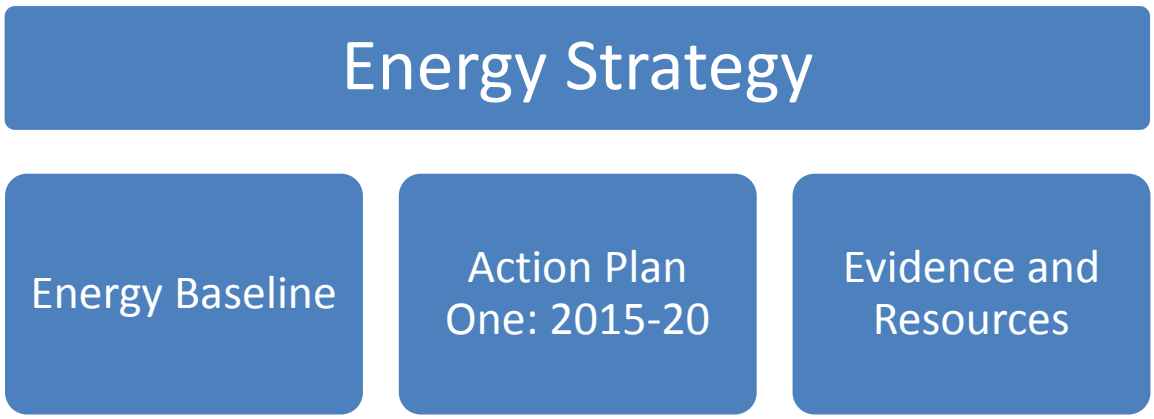
Together these position the Energy Strategy as one which is flexible in how it can be applied, allowing local conditions and needs to be accounted for, but is very clear on the need for benefits to be delivered to communities.

Where energy generation schemes are proposed, we want the surrounding communities to not only be consulted with, but given opportunities to be involved in the projects. This could be through involvement in the financing of schemes, part ownership or influence of the design, layout or scale of the development.

Where communities are involved in such ways, we can both create schemes which communities genuinely feel a sense of ownership of and ones which do not create the opposition which can often arise when schemes are imposed on communities and not developed with them.

Strategy Structure

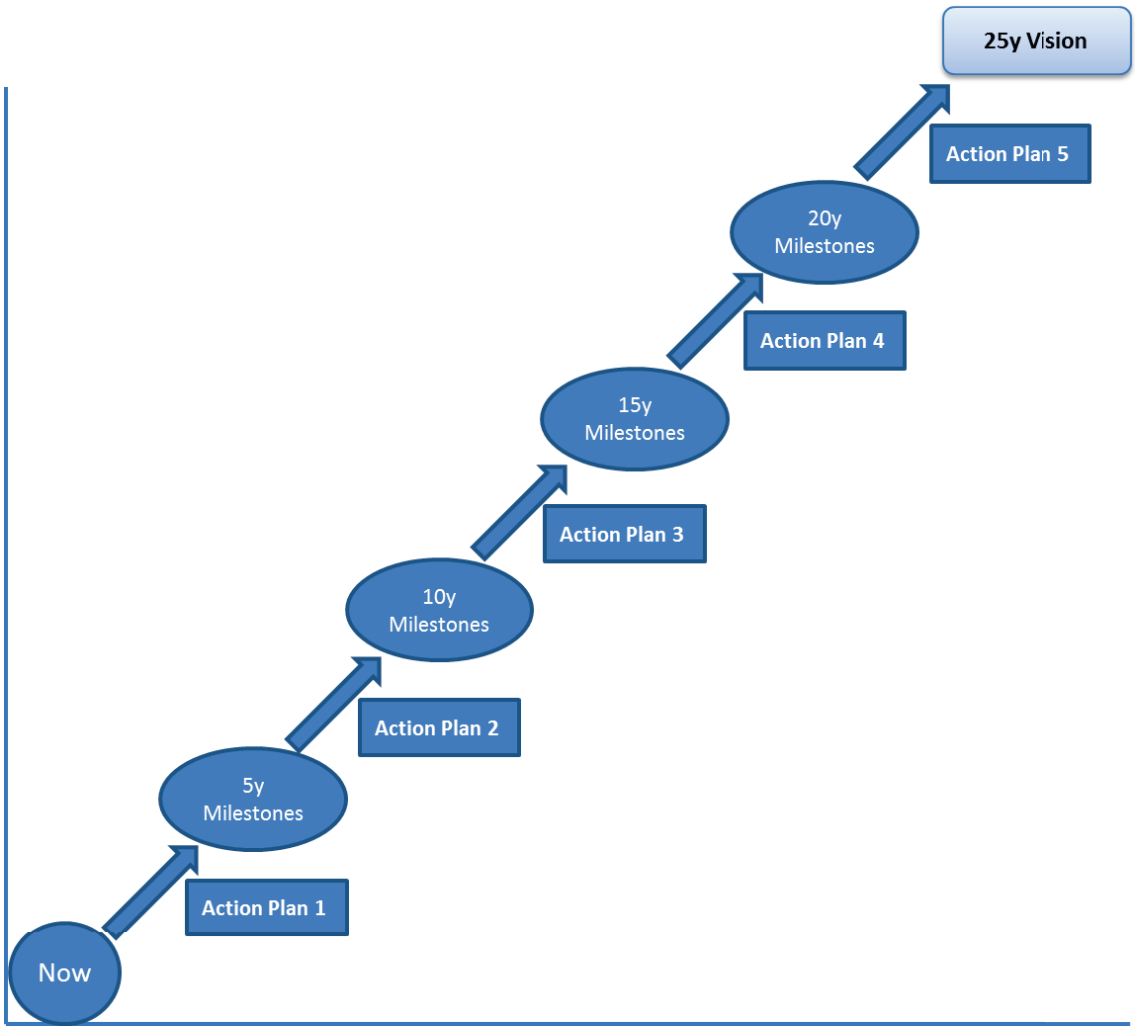
The Energy Strategy forms the core of a number of linked documents. The Energy Baseline provides the background against which the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy was developed; Action Plans describe the targets that will be met and the actions by which they will be achieved and additional evidence and resources (e.g. case studies and briefings) will help inform and support this work.



A Framework for Delivery

In addition to establishing the vision for energy in Buckinghamshire, this document sets out the framework within which future actions will be planned, monitored and reported upon. It is not realistic or practical to plan all actions over a 25 year period as many aspects and policies will evolve and challenges not yet considered will arise throughout this time.

The Strategy therefore establishes five, 5 year planning periods through which the milestones for the next phase are confirmed, and key areas of work for their achievement planned. These milestones are likely to change during this period, but it is important to establish a pathway early on in the knowledge that this will need to be reviewed and updated as progress is made.



Year	Milestone Statement
2020	There is significant and widespread community interest in energy generation and many schemes are being proposed or developed. Local authorities work with communities to develop jointly owned projects. Energy efficiency improvements to residential properties are common place. Local businesses have started to grow due to increased local demand for energy related goods and services.
2025	Community groups are regularly developing energy generation projects and the benefits derived attract significant positive attention. Local authority generation has significantly increased – income protects frontline services. Energy efficiency improvements are commonplace in business premises as are energy generation projects. Local education and training establishments have increased energy related content in response to calls from local businesses. Important energy research and development projects are taking place.
2030	Community generation schemes are regularly being delivered across the county. Energy efficiency measures now mainly address hard to treat buildings which have longer payback periods. Local businesses work closely with education and training establishments to ensure skills demands are met. Local businesses are funding energy developments and commercial services relating to energy delivery are growing. Nationally significant research and development work is conducted in Buckinghamshire. Buckinghamshire is increasingly seen as a place to invest.
2035	Community generation continues to grow with the benefits derived seen as essential to providing community based services. Energy efficiency is a mature business sector with significant exports to other counties, including the export of related training and education.
2040	Community energy underpins many local services. Buckinghamshire leads the development of many new energy technologies and research and development is a significant part of the local economy. The energy goods and services sector leads national practice.
Vision	Communities are central to the future of energy generation in Buckinghamshire and are the key beneficiaries of the development of energy resources.

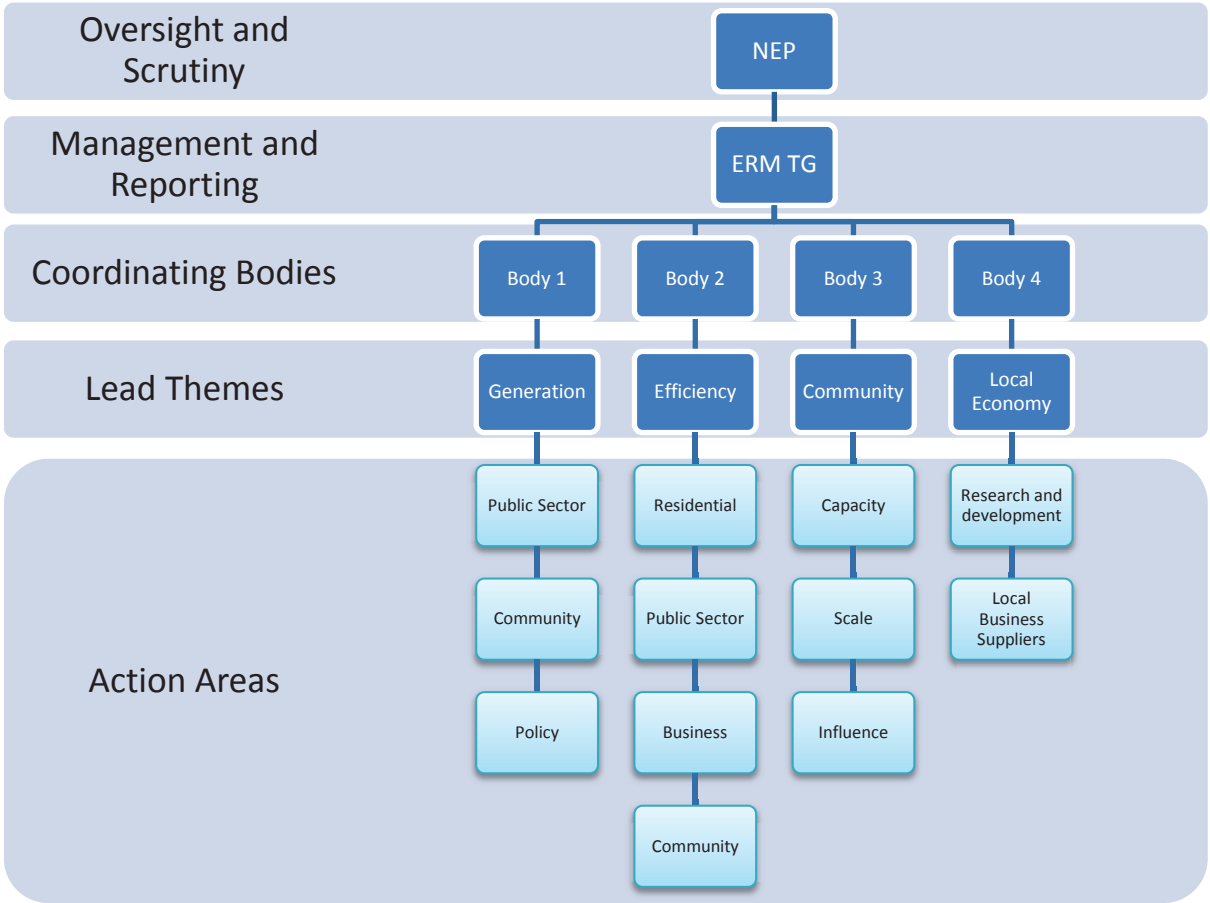
The Governance of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy

In order to ensure the achievement of our vision, it is important that its work is overseen and coordinated in a robust but flexible manner. It is also important that the body providing this oversight and scrutiny has a strategic view of the issues which will influence and determine the success of the Strategy.

For these reasons, the Natural Environment Partnership for Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes (the NEP) will provide the strategic direction for the Energy Strategy. The NEP's own Strategic Priorities overlap with the aims of the Energy Strategy and this work will therefore sit well within the NEP's wider work programme.

As part of this strategic role, the NEP will provide oversight to the Energy and Resource Management Task Group (ERM TG) – a group which includes officers from the four District councils and the County Council, along with a range of other supporting bodies. This group will oversee the day to day management and delivery of the Action Plans and will report and be accountable to the NEP.

The action which will deliver the vision will draw in many different groups and organisations. In order for these to coordinate effectively, they are arranged into complimentary themes, although there will be overlapping activities. These themes will each be coordinated by an appropriate body or partnership.



Themes

There are many ways in which the Energy Strategy will be changing the relationship between people and energy. In order to structure and coordinate our activity, actions have been arranged into four broad Themes. These do not operate in isolation and there will be important areas of overlap between them. The four themes of the Strategy are described below.

Efficiency

Our Energy Strategy recognises that reducing demand for energy and increasing the energy efficiency are key areas of work.

Improvements in energy efficiency need to reach all parts of the county and will broadly target groups in 4 buildings uses – residential properties, businesses, public sector bodies and community groups. There are already a range of projects and organisations which help to deliver improvements in energy efficiency and we will work to support these wherever possible.

Generation

When work began on the Energy Strategy, Buckinghamshire generated little of its own energy – there are no fossil fuel power stations within the county and renewable energy sources currently account for 3% of the county's energy needs. As set out in the Energy Baseline, this means many opportunities are not being realised and our economy is more vulnerable to increasing and volatile energy prices.

In this area of focus, efforts are made to increase the amount of energy generation in the county and through this deliver benefits to communities. This is done both actively, by local authorities developing proposals on their estate i.e. PV on schools roofs, and by creating the conditions to enable community groups to develop their own schemes.

To support and enable greater local generation, we also need to ensure that local planning policy and guidance supports appropriate generation schemes.

Community

At the heart of our Energy Strategy are the people and communities of Buckinghamshire – it is they who need to have a clear voice in determining which technologies are used, where they are installed and at what scale. In order to deliver this, we need a thriving network of community groups which have the capacity to deliver their ambitions.

In this area of focus, we will work to find innovative ways to grow and support community groups across the county, so that they can effectively lead the change they wish to see. As the network of community groups grows, work to build capacity to deliver projects will become increasingly important.

Economy

Many of the benefits which can be derived from energy generation and improvements in efficiency have an economic aspect. The economy is not only a beneficiary of this action, but a key ingredient in achieving our vision.

In order to deliver the greatest benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire from energy based projects, the range of goods and services which are needed should be delivered by local businesses. This will also mean that the provision of the knowledge and skills which support these businesses needs to be present, and as demand for the services increases, so will the need for supporting education and training.

These economic benefits are not limited to the scaling up of existing business sectors in the area. Involvement in the research and development of new technologies would also bring benefits, such as further employment opportunities. This along with the early deployment of new technologies, and will complete the transformation of Buckinghamshire to an area which is leading on energy across sectors.

Work in this area will therefore help to create the demand for goods and services and promote the use of local suppliers. We will also work with training and educational providers to ensure that the required skills are available and deliverable locally. We also need to ensure that the conditions for advanced research and development work are present, and that Buckinghamshire is shown to businesses to be an enthusiastic partner for exploring new technologies.

Benefits and Outcomes

It is a principle of the Energy Strategy that it is nearby communities which should benefit from local energy generation schemes. Ensuring that the desired benefits are articulated clearly is important if we are to ensure these are maximised at every opportunity.

Some of the benefits which we are aiming to deliver are summarised below. However this is not an exhaustive list of benefits, as innovative schemes can deliver new and unforeseen benefits which would not be excluded from our vision.

It is also important to highlight that benefits for which a monetary value cannot (or cannot easily or accurately) be assigned are not excluded either – ultimately, benefits which communities wish to see are those which need to be delivered.

- **Income for community groups** – the return on investment from energy generation can provide a long term income source for community groups, which can help to support the services they provide.
- **Reduced energy bills** – there are a variety of finance and ownership models for generation schemes, but in common is their ability to reduce energy bills for those connected to the generation.
- **Protection of the natural environment** – increasing renewable energy generation can reduce the environmental impact of energy generation, both locally and nationally, for example by reducing carbon emissions.
- **Enhancing and creating new habitats** – the development of energy resources often provides opportunities for habitat protection and biodiversity enhancements, such as planting wildflower meadows or hedgerows.
- **Represented Communities** – criticism of energy schemes can arise where local concerns have not been reflected in the final design. Ensuring communities are represented early on in the development process will help to deliver appropriate and sought after schemes.
- **Protection of public services** – reducing operational costs and providing new income opportunities are important ways that public bodies can address increasing demand for services and reductions to budgets.
- **Contributing to climate change mitigation** – reducing carbon emissions from energy generation is a key way in which the effects of climate change can be reduced.
- **Protection from volatile energy prices** – generating more of our own energy helps to reduce dependency on international energy markets where prices can fluctuate significantly and security of supply can become difficult.
- **Community cohesion** – collectively developing and owning a generation project can help to create new networks and connections between individuals and groups, thereby strengthening a community.

- **Employment** – as demand for energy related goods and services grow, local businesses will have an opportunity to expand to meet rising demand, creating sustainable jobs in the process.
- **Resilience –** increasing the amount of energy generated locally – both at a community and household scale – helps to increase the resilience of communities. This is both through the financial benefits and in reducing dependency on national energy infrastructure which can be vulnerable to extreme weather.

Conclusion

The approach taken in this Strategy and the means by which it has been developed is innovative and represents a model for others to follow. The true value of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy, however, will come from the social, economic and environmental benefits that it will deliver to the people of the county now and into the future.

To achieve this outcome requires everyone within Buckinghamshire to understand that these benefits are real, can be delivered across the county, and can make a positive difference to everyone. It will also require a re-think of the attitude towards the energy projects that will need to be considered to be the source of these benefits. This needs to be but within a framework where local people are more deeply involved in what is developed and where.

This will be an exciting journey. Be part of it and help to make it a success!

To find out what work is currently being undertaken to deliver this Strategy, please refer to the most recent Action Plan, available here.

Action Plan One: 2015-2020 Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy

June 2015

Introduction

Buckinghamshire's Energy Strategy establishes the framework for delivering our shared vision for energy in Buckinghamshire. To allow the delivery of our vision to evolve over its 25 year lifetime, it has been divided into five planning periods of 5 years each. Each period will build upon previous progress, and by considering the changing opportunities and challenges, establish new focus areas, opportunities and challenges to be tackled.

As this is the first Action Plan, our starting point is reflected in the Energy Baseline and the Activity Baseline. These provide examples of projects which are already contributing to the achievement of the vision and which will continue to do.

This Action Plan sets out the key areas for action, the main challenges which we must respond to and the way we will monitor our progress. The detailed action plan at the end of this document contains the targets for the various projects and areas of work which contribute to the delivery Energy Strategy.

Some of these projects are already well established and operate independently of the Strategy, but are included here to encourage further coordination and collaboration of efforts. Other projects and areas of work will be new and are being started as a direct result of the Energy Strategy and are therefore strongly directed by its Vision. This split between directly controlled projects and those more broadly associated with the Strategy is a result of the collaborative and cross-organisational approach taken to its development.

Focus Areas

The energy strategy captures a wide range of existing and new areas of work which overlap and strengthen each other – these are the themes which are set out in the Strategy:

- **Generation** – increasing the amount of energy generated in Buckinghamshire, including through community projects, and supporting this through engagement in planning policy consultations.
- **Efficiency** – improving energy efficiency levels across the county, particularly by addressing buildings in four sectors – residential, public sector, business and community owned.
- **Community** – creating a thriving network of community groups with the capacity, scale and influence to deliver significant benefits from energy generation schemes.
- **Local Economy** – increasing the demand for energy related goods and services, with local businesses able to meet the demand.

Within each theme, there are several focus areas for action. These do not limit or form the extent of activity and there are many important areas of work which will contribute to the achievement of our Energy Vision. They do however represent a central pillar of work which needs to be undertaken to advance each theme.

Generation

Increasing the amount of energy generated in Buckinghamshire is the primary way benefits are to be delivered as part of this strategy. In this first Action Plan, there are three key aspects to this:

- **Public Sector –** local authorities in Buckinghamshire have a key role to play in leading the greater development of energy resources, particularly by making greater use of their estates. Not only will this help to secure public services, but the development of energy generation in public buildings (such as libraries and schools) helps to demonstrate the benefits and real world application of the technologies close to communities, and can help to inspire further action. We will therefore bring forward programmes of work to further develop energy resources in public ownership and use these to catalyse further action.
- **Community** - delivering significant benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire is a central part of this strategy, and this cannot be achieved without substantial community involvement. We therefore need to grow the level of community involvement in energy generation with the aim of community groups developing their own energy generation schemes. Our work will be to support and grow more community groups, so that they have the capacity, capability and opportunity to deliver their own projects.
- **Policy** - whether a scheme is being proposed by a community organisation, a local authority or a private developer, all must gain planning permission**.** In order to encourage greater development of energy resources, we need to ensure that appropriate and viable schemes are not unnecessarily refused permission and that the policies which determine these decisions support such developments. We will therefore fully engage in the processes of creating planning policy and its associated guidance with the aim of creating planning policy which encourages the development of energy resources.

Efficiency

In order to balance both sides of the energy equation, we cannot only increase local generation but must also improve energy efficiency across Buckinghamshire. Much of this work is already underway and is being conducted by many organisations involved in the development of this strategy. Work to improve energy efficiency tends to focus on buildings by use or occupier and so this theme has four main areas of activity.

- **Residential** – improving the energy efficiency of homes and thereby reducing energy bills, is one of the most direct ways to deliver benefits to the people of Buckinghamshire. The local authorities of Buckinghamshire are already supporting this through community energy champions and a Community Interest Company (CIC) involved in delivering residential efficiency measures.
- **Business** – large businesses are typically well placed to delivery energy efficiency measures, with specialist teams and financial resources to draw upon. Ensuring that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can also improve their efficiency is an important way the local economy can be supported, both through the provision of expertise and financial support.

- **Community** – improving the efficiency of buildings which are used by the community has a very important role to play. Not only does this help to reduce the operating costs and therefore serve the community more economically, but it also demonstrates the real world benefits which can be achieved.
- **Public Sector** – Buckinghamshire's local authorities have been improving their energy efficiency for a number of already and will continue to do so along with other public bodies. Further details of the work being undertaken are available in the Action Plan.

We will therefore continue our work to improve energy efficiency through a range of organisations and projects, collaborating to ensure the benefits can be maximised across the county.

Community

The people and communities of Buckinghamshire are central to our Vision – and to achieve this we need community groups which are actively contributing to its achievement.

- **Scale and Capacity**: Whilst there are already a number of active community groups, it is recognised that more are required to achieve the scale of our ambition. Therefore, we will find innovative ways to build a network of community organisations, ensuring that the support necessary for them to grow and become sustainable is available.
- **Influence**: Community groups do not necessarily need to develop their own energy generation schemes to receive benefits from one. Developers are increasingly looking to involve communities in the development process and in such circumstances it is important that these groups can influence proposals and ensure the necessary benefits are derived. The early influence of the community is important in achieving a locally desired development.

Local Economy:

Buckinghamshire will not fully benefit from greater energy generation and efficiency if the local economy is not involved in achieving this.

- **Local business suppliers:** many businesses in Buckinghamshire are already active in the energy sector, for example installers of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy developers. As this strategy aims to increase the use of such goods and services, there is an opportunity for local businesses to grow as they meet rising demand. This in turn helps to cycle the financial benefits into the wider economy. We will therefore work to ensure local businesses are aware of these opportunities and are supported in accessing the right training and development required to realise them.
- **Research and development**: the development of new energy technologies, particularly around generation and storage, is an increasingly important part of the energy landscape. Whilst many of the technologies may be decades away from large scale deployment, there is significant investment in their development and testing which we are not currently

benefiting from. Attracting this investment would help to position Buckinghamshire as a leader in the energy sector.

- **Business Investment**: In addition to improving the efficiency of the their buildings, opportunities for investing to low carbon and renewable technologies is a further way local businesses can generate additional revenue and reduce costs. We will therefore encourage and support businesses to investigate these opportunities.

Key Challenges

Through the development of the Energy Strategy, significant challenges and barriers to increasing local generation have been highlighted. If we are to deliver our vision, we need to ensure that these are addressed. At the start of this 25 year strategy, we have identified three specific key challenges which we need to address within the first 5 year Action Plan.

1. Demand for Action

There is strong demand amongst many in Buckinghamshire for action on energy. However, there are also those who may be ambivalent towards greater development of energy resources or are unaware about the need for action and the benefits which can be delivered. There are also those who, often through a desire to protect the natural environment and landscape of the county, may wish to see little or no development of energy resources in Buckinghamshire.

Understanding the reasons for a lack of such demand from some and the concerns of those who may oppose greater development of energy resources is crucial if this strategy is to be for all the people of Buckinghamshire.

Our Response

To do this we will work with our energy strategy partners to develop and deliver a coherent and compelling communication strategy, with the aim of raising awareness and interest in energy generation, advocating the benefits which can be delivered and allaying concerns of inappropriate development. We must ensure this is a two way process by listening to and addressing concerns as well as delivering a positive message of the benefits which can be delivered.

2. Delivering Appropriate Development

We must acknowledge that energy generation projects have not always been universally welcomed by communities. In part, this can be attributed to a lack of community involvement in the design and development process and the feeling of being imposed upon (i.e. “done to” rather than “done with”) which such an approach can create. However, designs which may be considered unsympathetic to the area also contribute to opposition to further development of energy resources.

Buckinghamshire has extensive areas covered by the Chilterns AONB as well as many other land designations such as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and Green Belt to name two, which can constrain or influence what development is appropriate. We must therefore be alert to the full range of factors which determine what is possible as well as appropriate.

Our Response

We must first acknowledge that *appropriate* development is a subjective matter and we cannot guarantee that all developments will be universally welcomed. The planning system works to balance the impacts and benefits of developments whilst preserving the best of our heritage and we should not try to replicate or replace this system.

Instead, our focus will be in pre-planning application stages, encouraging communities and developers to collaborate early in the development process. Developers are increasingly consulting early on and we will further encourage and facilitate early dialogue between communities and developers, so that concerns and opportunities can be identified and taken into account.

3. Capacity

There are already a number of active community groups in the county which have an interest in energy issues. In order to deliver the scale of change necessary, we need to significantly increase the capacity of community groups in Buckinghamshire to deliver projects and positively influence proposals. This can be done by both supporting existing groups and by helping new groups to form and become operational.

Our Response

In order to increase the number of active community groups in the county, we will work to identify potential groups and provide the support and guidance they need to overcome the barriers to establishment. We will also look to increasingly support groups who are already working to deliver our vision, ensuring that progress already made continues to be built upon.

Monitoring our Progress

The progress and success of the Energy Strategy will be measured in two important ways. Firstly, we will monitor the delivery of agreed actions against their deadlines.

Secondly, and arguably more importantly, is the change across a number of measures which characterise the relationship between energy and the people of Buckinghamshire. This is not limited to just the amount of energy generated, but also changes to the efficiency of its use, the level of community activity, the economic value and job creation of the sector as well as the benefits delivered as a result.

The following table sets out potential measures which will show our long term achievement. For some of these data is already available, others will require new reporting mechanisms if they are to be understood and some may not be possible in practise. The further development of a comprehensive monitoring framework also forms part of the action plan.

	Key Measures	2015 Value
Generation	• Total generation capacity within Buckinghamshire. • % of Buckinghamshire's energy demand met by local generation. • % of local generation which comes from renewable sources.	• TBC
Efficiency	• Average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and Display Energy Certificate (DEC) ratings. • Value of energy efficiency sector in Buckinghamshire.	• TBC
Community	• Number of active community groups supporting the Energy Strategy. • Income received by community groups from investment / ownership in local generation.	• TBC
Local Economy	• Value of the energy generation sector in Buckinghamshire. • Number of people employed in the energy sector in Buckinghamshire. • Investment in energy related research and development projects.	• TBC
Benefits	• Income received by community groups from investment / ownership in local generation. • Area with new biodiversity enhancements. • Avoided CO_2 emissions.	Benefits delivered, in part or in full, by this strategy and so 2015 values equal zero.

Detailed Action Plan

The following tables set out the range of projects and actions the organisations that have collaborated in the production of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy are taking.

This will be regularly updated as new projects are started, existing ones modified and as more organisations join the Strategy. It should also be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of all the work which supports the Energy Strategy – if you are aware of a project which helps to meet our aims or have any suggestions, please contact energy@buckscc.gov.uk.

Theme: Community				
	Area of work	**Organisation / Project**	**Target**	**Target Date**
Capacity	Establishment of a new mechanism / organisation to lead and accelerate the development of community energy in Buckinghamshire.	ERM TG - supported by all District Councils, County Council, BTVLEP, NEP and others.	Agree the mechanism / organisation which is to be taken forward, considering the local context.	Apr-15
			Secure funding for initial start-up costs.	Jul-15
			Establish the mechanism, with clear aims and objectives and business plan for self-financing.	Dec-15
Scale		New organisation / partnership.	Achieve a network of 20+ community groups actively supporting the aims of the Energy Strategy.	Jun-16
			Network to include 10+ businesses.	Jun-16
Influence			Half of community group network own or have influenced the design of energy generation projects.	Jun-17

Theme: Generation

	Area of work	Organisation / Project	Target	Target Date
Public Sector	Review of BCC estate for renewable energy generation potential (not restricted to electricity).	BCC / Communities / Community Groups	Complete review of agricultural estate and present findings to relevant BCC boards.	Feb-15
			Proposals for community role in projects to be complete.	Aug-15
			Consult with community groups on potential sites / projects	Oct -15
	Engagement with commercial sector	ERM TG	Raise awareness amongst commercial developers in Buckinghamshire regarding the aims of the Energy Strategy.	Jul -15
	Potential for Energy from Waste (EfW) plant to provide heat to local users	BCC / FCC	Keep the potential to convert EfW plant for heat draw under review.	Ongoing
Policy	Monitoring planning policy and guidance development, responding to represent aims of the Energy Strategy (covering energy generation and efficiency)	ERM TG / BCC	Process for identifying and coordinating responses to consultations established.	Mar-15
			Begin coordination of responses on local plans already under consultation.	
			Monitoring, consulting and responding as appropriate	Ongoing
	Addressing grid capacity limits across Buckinghamshire.	ERM TG / stakeholder group	Begin consulting with DNOs on options / approaches.	Apr-15
Community	Solar noise barriers along M40 corridor	M40 CEG / WDC / LEP	Results of HA Procurement Competition for Innovative Barriers Noise Maps for parts of M40 Chilterns	Apr-15 End 2015

			Pilot scheme details First solar noise barriers installed (subject to HA timetable)	End 2016
	Installation of renewable generation	Low Carbon Chilterns	Installation of renewable generation on community buildings	Ongoing

Theme: Efficiency

	Area of work	Organisation / Project	Target	Target Date
Residential	Improving energy efficiency in homes using Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.			
	Help residents to reduce energy usage and bills.	Community Energy Champions / BCC	Expand the network to 120+ members.	Dec-2015
			Provide further training to enable greater impact.	Dec-2015
			Continue thermal imaging activities.	Ongoing
			Help residents to switch energy suppliers.	Ongoing
	Addressing fuel poverty.	District councils / Registered social landlords (RSL)	Continued engagement with and support for the affordable warmth network.	Ongoing
			Use 'super homes' to exemplify the benefits which retrofitted energy efficiency technologies can achieve.	

			Data mining to understand where to target (available) resources (e.g. EPCs)	
Public Sector	Carbon Management Plans and utilisation of Salix loans	Each local authority respectively	BCC – continue to fully utilise Salix loan for energy efficiency improvements across estate.	Ongoing
	Action on social housing energy efficiency	District Councils	Continue to report under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) to DECC on practical and cost effective measures for improving energy efficiency.	Ongoing
Business	Improving efficiency in SMEs	Low Carbon Workspaces (Ngage Solutions, Buckinghamshire Business First)	Secure funding for same or similar projects beyond end of 2015	Dec-15
Community	Improving efficiency in community buildings	Low Carbon Chilterns	Installation of energy efficiency measures in coming buildings	Ongoing

Theme: Local Economy

	Area of work	Organisation / Project	Target	Target Date
R&D	Using Bucks as a test bed for smart energy projects	BTVLEP	Initiate a smart city project in Buckinghamshire.	2020
Suppliers	Circulating economic benefits by using local suppliers.	BTVLEP, Bucks Business First	Utilise procurement approaches to maximise local multiplier effect.	Ongoing
Skills and training	Helping business to recognises the benefits and value of energy efficiency and generation		Messaging in communication strategy to target businesses. Support provided to businesses to highlight value.	Ongoing
Investment	Helping proposals to attract investment	New community organisation / partnership / BTV LEP	Support for developing proposals to an investment ready state.	March 2016

Challenges / Other Actions

	Area of work	Organisation / Project	Target	Target Date
Demand for Action	Communications strategy to promote benefits of community energy and energy efficiency.	ERM TG	To be launched with Energy Strategy	Aug-15
	Community Energy Champions	BCC	Expand the network of Energy Champions to 120 Hold training sessions focused on promotion of community energy schemes	Dec-15
Delivering Appropriate Development	Policy engagement	ERM TG	See Generation – Policy. Inform stakeholders of relevant consultations, coordination and sharing of responses.	Mar-15 + Ongoing
	Communication to interested parties - developers and communities	ERM TG	Through communication strategy, advocate benefits of early engagement between communities and developers. Resource bank of measures / design features which help to mitigate impacts of energy projects.	Apr-15 Sep-15
Capacity	New mechanism / organisations to lead and accelerate growth of community energy.	BCC / Communities / Community Groups	Clarity on the mechanism which is to be taken forward considering the local context.	June-15
			Secure funding for initial start-up costs.	Sept-15
			Establish the mechanism, with clear aims and objectives and business plan for self-financing.	Dec-15
	Development of investment ready proposals.	New community organisation / partnership	Development of three energy generation scheme proposals.	Jul-16
	Identifying sources of funding for generation and/or efficiency projects.	ERM TG / All	Investigate accessing finance from Allowable Solutions framework. Share knowledge or potential funding sources.	Aug-15 Ongoing

Monitoring and measuring	Monitoring and measuring of key characteristics of energy generation and consumption in Buckinghamshire.	ERM TG	Secure data or explanation of unavailable data for first progress report to NEP Board.	Jul-15

SUBJECT:	Portfolio Budgets 2016/17
REPORT OF:	Councillor Luisa Sullivan – Environment Portfolio Holder
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Jim Burness – Director of Resources
REPORT AUTHOR	Jacqueline Ing – Principal Accountant 01494 732292, jing@chiltern.gov.uk Chris Marchant – Head of Environment
WARD/S AFFECTED	All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. To provide Members with information on the draft revenue budget for 2016/17, including the context of the overall financial position facing the Council for the coming year.

1.2. This report provides summary information on the budgets and highlights issues for consideration. The accompanying booklet presents the detailed information to assist Members in their decision making.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are requested to advise the Portfolio Holder on the approval of the following items for onward submission to Cabinet:

- the 2016/17 revenue budget
- the 2016/17 fees and charges.

2. Context to the 2016/17 Budget

2.1. As a result of the Government's deficit reduction strategy, local authority funding is subject to continuing significant reductions. Local authorities also face constraints on the level of council tax increases.

2.2. It would therefore be prudent at this stage not to include any funding for new recurring expenditure to improve or expand services. The Authority also needs to identify measures to compensate for the reductions in resources referred to. Part of these measures will be the benefits from joint working with Chiltern DC.

2.3. The progressing work with Chiltern DC is resulting in more services being provided by joint teams. Where this affects budgets in this Portfolio area it is highlighted in the detailed information. Note: At present when a service is hosted at CDC then the detailed budget information is held at CDC, and the SBDC budgets only show the appropriate expenditure contribution. For next year the Finance team will be reviewing the presentation of shared service budgets in order to allow greater scrutiny of the detailed budgets at the non host authority.

2.4. The SBDC Overview & Scrutiny Committee established a Financial Savings Panel to look at potential savings options. This Panel reported back to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2015 and recommended that a number of saving options are progressed. None of these options have yet been built into the draft budgets.

3. Budget Assumptions

3.1. The budgets have been prepared in accordance with the following inflation assumptions:

- Salaries inflation from April 2016 of 1%
- Contracts inflation 1.9% (unless different rate specified within contract)
- Business rates 1.9%
- Gas 1.8%, Electricity 9% and Water 1.9%
- Insurance 3.5% - as Insurance Premium Tax has gone up from 6% to 9.5%.
- Other expenditure heads 0%
- Income 0%.

4. Summary Revenue Budgets

4.1. The draft budgets presented to Members at this stage represent the net direct running costs of services. They do not contain the apportionment of support service charges such as accommodation, IT, finance etc. These will be included in the final approved budgets, once the budgets for these support services have been set. The budgets reflected in this report are therefore the direct costs under the Portfolio Holder's control.

4.2. The budgets have been reviewed by the appropriate service manager for any material volume or changes related to maintaining current service standards.

4.3. The net budget figures for the Portfolio are shown below. A more detailed breakdown by service is shown within the booklet.

Actuals 2014/15 £'000	Budget 2015/16 £'000	Draft Budget 2016/17 £'000
2,560	2,384	2,322

4.4. The decrease from the current year's approved budget to the 2016/17 draft budget is £62k (2.6%). The main changes are detailed below:

	£'000	Comment
2015/16 Budget	2,384	
Change in Salaries		
- Provision for pay increase	3	
- Waste Contract Management	1	Increments
Inflation		
- On expenditure	2	

	£'000	Comment
Savings / Income Increases		
- District Cleansing	-14	Saving on Biffa Contract
- Refuse Collection	-8	Saving on Biffa Contract
- Refuse Collection	-6	Increased income for bulky items collection
- Refuse Collection	-5	Increased income for refuse container hire
- Recycling	-2	Savings on building repairs
- Recycling	-25	Saving on Biffa Contract
- Recycling	-6	Increased income for recycling credits
- Recycling	-9	Increased income for green waste items
Other Changes		
- Waste Contract Management	3	Increase in mileage and phone costs
- Increase in Insurance cover	4	
2016/17 Draft Budget	**2,322**	

4.5. Further details of the budgets for each area are shown within the booklet**.**

5. Commentary on Budgets

Main Elements of the Budget

5.1. The main elements of this budget are as follows.

- The refuse, recycling and street cleansing contract with Biffa Municipal Ltd is the Council's largest single contract. It changes annually in line with the indices chosen by the Council at the tendering stage.
- This year the indices have been lower than predicted, particularly in the case of the cost of fuel, which has decreased significantly and offset the labour increase.
- However Members are asked to note that some of the contract savings are because two Easter Holidays fall in 2015/16 and none in 2016/17. The cost of Easter 2016 is therefore being borne this financial year and not in 2016/17 so is not a true contract saving.
- We also have a new vehicle fleet and the current lower maintenance costs reflect this.

Budget Priorities

5.2. The budget reflects the following Council priorities.

- Provide great value services
- Conserve the environment
- Promote sustainability

Risks

5.3. When considering the proposed budgets for the coming financial year it is important to be aware of the risks within the budgets. For this Portfolio the main risk areas are:

- Changing levels of recycling volumes of paper, glass and cans.
- The cost of the refuse, recycling and ancillary services contract.

5.4 The actions taken to mitigate or monitor these risks are as follows.

- The contract costs are agreed in September/October for the following year in line with indices agreed at the tendering stage. Therefore the risk of a sudden increase is unlikely. Risks such as inclement weather are covered by internal procedures to reduce the likelihood of services being affected.

5.5. An overall review of the main risk issues for the 2016/17 budget will be undertaken once Cabinet has agreed a proposed budget. This review and proposed actions to mitigate the risks will be part of the final report to the Cabinet on the budget in February.

Opportunities and Plans for Improvement

5.5. Having recently rolled out a new refuse and recycling collection service, introduced a chargeable garden waste service district-wide and replaced our entire fleet, there are no large scale changes proposed at present.

5.6. A different charging structure for bulky collections, which offers subsidised rather than free collections to residents on means-tested benefits has been proposed, as well as reducing the number of items collected from 5 to 3. Options for charging for containers will be investigated in 2016/17 and discussed with the Environment PAG as appropriate.

6. Fees and Charges

6.1. The Budget Booklet also contains the list of proposed fees and charges. All of the proposed fee increases have been built into the draft revenue budgets.

6.2. Where fees and charges which are determined by the Council have changed other than to reflect cost increases, the rationale is as follows.

- The charge for bulky collections has changed as described above. This is to better reflect the cost of the service and to align it better with that offered by CDC for consistency.

6.3. The Portfolio Holder is asked to consider the list of fees and charges and consider whether to approve these. Income may be in some service areas an important factor in reducing expenditure.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

7.1 One of the primary purposes of the Council's budget process is to ensure that, as far as possible, resources are aligned to the corporate priorities of the Council and that any material risks are assessed.

8. Next Step

8.1 The Cabinet will consider the outcome of the PAG discussions at its February meeting when it will formulate a final draft of the overall 2016/17 budget for the Authority.

Background Papers:	None

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Appendix

South Bucks
District Council

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO
2016/17 BUDGET PROPOSALS

ENVIRONMENT
POLICY ADVISORY GROUP
8TH DECEMBER 2015

REVENUE SUMMARY - SBDC ENVIRONMENT

2014/15 ACTUALS		Cost Code(s)	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET	CHANGE	CHANGE
£			£	£	£'000	%
	ENVIRONMENT - WASTE, RECYCLING & STREET SCENE (CM)					
297,556	Waste Contract Management	3440	258,290	268,220	10	3.8%
757,529	Refuse Collection	3525,3441	733,510	714,130	(19)	-2.6%
377,620	Recycling	3443	692,040	651,400	(41)	-5.9%
1,086,932	District Cleansing	3442	653,590	639,433	(14)	-2.2%
20,028	Dropmore Road Depot	3447	27,820	27,830	0	0.0%
	ENVIRONMENT - PROPERTY & FACILITIES (CM)					
2,968	Chiltern AONB	4389	3,010	3,010		0.0%
37,499	Open Spaces	3530 etc	34,380	35,030	1	1.9%
(8,789)	Street Naming	3552	(2,700)	(2,700)		0.0%
(15,840)	Grasscutting	3559	(23,160)	(21,700)	1	-6.3%
559	Environmental Improvements	4352	1,000	1,000		0.0%
4,000	Environmental Policy	3639	6,710	6,850	0	2.1%
2,560,062	**Net Running Expenses**		**2,384,490**	**2,322,503**	(62)	-2.6%

2014/15 ACTUALS	Waste Contract Management	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
240,850	Direct Employee Expenses	247,070	250,870
53,053	Indirect Employee Expenses	3,150	3,150
	Premises Related Expenses		
4,588	Transport Related Costs	4,050	5,050
4,937	Supplies & Services	4,020	9,150
	Recharge from CDC		
	Third Party Payments		
	Transfer Payments		
303,428	Running Expenses	258,290	268,220
(5,872)	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
297,556	**Net Running Expenses**	**258,290**	**268,220**

This cost centre contains costs relating to the staff dealing with Refuse collection, Recycling and District cleansing matters.

Direct Emp Expenses: This is the cost of the SBDC waste contract team.

Indirect Emp Expenses: Creche allowances.

Transport: This budget is for mileage claims and mileage allowances.

Supplies & Services: This budget is for minor supplies & services costs.

2014/15 ACTUALS	Refuse Collection	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
2,682	Transport Related Costs	7,350	6,970
3,061	Supplies & Services	3,770	3,770
	Recharge from CDC		
827,047	Third Party Payments	781,000	773,000
	Transfer Payments		
832,790	Running Expenses	792,120	783,740
(75,261)	Fees & Charges and Other Income	(58,610)	(69,610)
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
757,529	**Net Running Expenses**	**733,510**	**714,130**

This cost centre contains costs relating to the refuse collection service.

Transport: This is the cost of the hire, repair & maintenance and fuel costs for the inspector vehicles.

Supplies & Services: This budget includes the purchase of minor items of equipment and other minor costs.

Third Party Payments: This is contract cost for the refuse service.

Income:	Bulky waste removal fees	(15,130)	(21,130)
	Hire of refuse containers.	(41,820)	(46,820)
	Other	(1,660)	(1,660)
		(58,610)	(69,610)

2014/15 ACTUALS	Recycling	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
208	Premises Related Expenses	10,000	8,000
	Transport Related Costs		
57,503	Supplies & Services	44,540	45,500
	Recharge from CDC		
888,156	Third Party Payments	1,379,500	1,359,900
	Transfer Payments		
945,867	Running Expenses	1,434,040	1,413,400
(568,247)	Fees & Charges and Other Income	(742,000)	(762,000)
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
377,620	**Net Running Expenses**	**692,040**	**651,400**

This cost centre contains costs relating to the recycling service.

Premises: This budget is for the Health & Safety annual testing and repairs to bottle banks

Supplies & Services: This budget includes the purchase of minor items of equipment and other minor costs.

Third Party Payments: This is contractual costs of the SBDC recycling services. Including the cost of the green waste service.

Income:	The income is from:		
	- Recycling credits	(329,000)	(335,000)
	- Green Waste income	(285,000)	(294,000)
	- Sale of paper	(122,000)	(130,000)
	- Income from textiles	(6,000)	(3,000)
		(128,000)	(133,000)

2014/15 ACTUALS	District Cleansing	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
2,494	Supplies & Services	2,340	2,340
	Recharge from CDC		
1,085,779	Third Party Payments	651,250	637,093
	Transfer Payments		
1,088,273	Running Expenses	653,590	639,433
(1,341)	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
1,086,932	**Net Running Expenses**	**653,590**	**639,433**

This cost centre contains costs relating to district cleansing service.

Supplies & Services: This budget is for the purchase of minor items of equipment.

Third Party Payments: This is contract costs for litter collection, abandoned cars, flytipping, sweeping, traffic management, ditch clearance etc.

Appendix

2014/15 ACTUALS	Dropmore Road Depot	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
2,386	Premises Related Expenses	2,430	2,440
	Transport Related Costs		
	Supplies & Services		
	Recharge from CDC		
18,242	Third Party Payments	26,600	26,600
	Transfer Payments		
20,628	Running Expenses	29,030	29,040
(600)	Fees & Charges and Other Income	(1,210)	(1,210)
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
20,028	**Net Running Expenses**	**27,820**	**27,830**

This cost centre contains the cost of maintaining the Dropmore Road Depot.

Premises:	This budget is for repairs and premises insurance.		
Third Party Payments:	Weighbridge Calibration	5,000	5,000
	Building repairs - recharged by Biffa	21,000	21,000
	Septic tank emptying	600	600
		26,600	26,600

2014/15 ACTUALS	Chiltern AONB	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
2,968	Supplies & Services	3,010	3,010
	Recharge from CDC		
	Third Party Payments		
	Transfer Payments		
2,968	Running Expenses	3,010	3,010
	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
2,968	**Net Running Expenses**	**3,010**	**3,010**

This cost centre contains the contribuition to the Chiltern AONB

Appendix

2014/15 ACTUALS	Open Spaces	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
9,332	Premises Related Expenses	11,000	11,000
	Transport Related Costs		
4,160	Supplies & Services	1,040	1,040
	Recharge from CDC		
24,898	Third Party Payments	25,840	26,490
	Transfer Payments		
38,390	Running Expenses	37,880	38,530
(891)	Fees & Charges and Other Income	(3,500)	(3,500)
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
37,499	**Net Running Expenses**	**34,380**	**35,030**

This cost centre contains the cost of maintaining the Council's open spaces, including

Beaconsfield Common Land
Littleworth Common
The Gore
Riverside Land, Taplow
Trumpers Field

Premises: This budget is mainly for repairs & maintenance.

Supplies & Services: Includes £1,000 for Littleworth Common.

Third Party Payments: This budget is for grass cutting costs.

Income: This budget relates to minor income relating to the open spaces.

2014/15 ACTUALS	Street Naming	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
1,887	Supplies & Services	7,500	7,500
	Recharge from CDC		
	Third Party Payments		
	Transfer Payments		
1,887	Running Expenses	7,500	7,500
(10,676)	Fees & Charges and Other Income	(10,200)	(10,200)
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
(8,789)	**Net Running Expenses**	**(2,700)**	**(2,700)**

This cost centre contains costs relating to the street naming service.

Supplies & Services: This budget is for the purchase of signs.

Income: This is income towards the costs of the new signs.

Appendix

2014/15 ACTUALS	Grasscutting	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
	Supplies & Services		
	Recharge from CDC		
(15,840)	Third Party Payments	(23,160)	(21,700)
	Transfer Payments		
(15,840)	Running Expenses	(23,160)	(21,700)
	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
(15,840)	**Net Running Expenses**	**(23,160)**	**(21,700)**

This cost centre contains costs relating to grass cutting service.

Third Party Payments:	This is the budget for the grass cutting contract net of recharges to service areas.	58,540	60,000

2014/15 ACTUALS	Environmental Improvements	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
305	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
254	Supplies & Services	1,000	1,000
	Recharge from CDC		
	Third Party Payments		
	Transfer Payments		
559	Running Expenses	1,000	1,000
	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
559	**Net Running Expenses**	**1,000**	**1,000**

This cost centre contains the cost of running the Environmental Improvements section. Cost of works are charged to Capital

Appendix

2014/15 ACTUALS	Environmental Policy	2015/16 BUDGET	2016/17 BUDGET
£		£	£
	Direct Employee Expenses		
	Indirect Employee Expenses		
	Premises Related Expenses		
	Transport Related Costs		
4,000	Supplies & Services	6,710	6,850
	Recharge from CDC		
	Third Party Payments		
	Transfer Payments		
4,000	Running Expenses	6,710	6,850
	Fees & Charges and Other Income		
	Grant Income		
	Recharge to CDC		
	Recharge to Crem		
	Recharge to Trust		
4,000	**Net Running Expenses**	**6,710**	**6,850**

This cost centre contains the cost of environmental policy matters.

Supplies & Services: This is the budget for contributions to the Biodiversity Partnership

Appendix

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO
REVISED CHARGES FROM 1 APRIL 2016

VAT Codes: (1a)=inclusive standard rated (1b)=plus standard rated (2)=zero rated (3)=outside scope, (4)=exempt

LAND CHARGES	General ledger code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
Search Fee (standard) (3) (including applications received via NLIS) Nb: Local authorities are no longer able to charge for personal land charge searches.	2316-0873	95.00	0.00

REFUSE COLLECTION	General ledger code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
Bulky Items - Up to 5 items 2015/16 or 3 items 2016/17 (3)	3441-0840	35.50	35.00
Bulky Items for residents on means tested benefits (up to 3 items) (3)	3441-0840	-	15.00
Disclaimed Vehicle (3)	3442-0854	73.00	73.00
Graffiti removal from private property per hour (1a)	3442-0937	166.00	166.00
Bin Hire per year (3)			
1100 Litre	3441-0902	131.00	136.00
660 Litre	3441-0902	80.00	83.00
340 Litre	3441-0902	42.50	44.00
Refuse Collection charge - Schedule 2 waste - 1100 ltr - yearly charge (3)	3441-0937	166.00	172.00
Refuse Collection charge - Schedule 2 waste - 240 ltr per year (3)	3441-0937	62.50	63.00
Wheelie Bin hire charge for above properties - 240 ltr per year (3)	3441-0937	27.00	20.00
Wheelie Bin replacement if lost/stolen - 240 ltr (3)	3441-0937	25.50	27.00
Sale of Black Sacks (1a) (Min of £5 if paid by debit/Credit card)	3441-0831	3.65	3.80
Sale of compostable caddy liners (roll of 40) (1a) (Min of £5 if paid by debit/Credit card)	3441-0831	2.50	2.50

MOORING FEES	General ledger code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
Per day (1a)	3530-0870	8.00	8.00

STREET NAME PLATES (1b)	General ledger code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
1 only plate	3552-0937	282.00	288.00
2 plates	3552-0937	418.00	426.00
1 plate (cul-de-sac)	3552-0937	336.00	343.00
2 plates (cul-de-sac)	3552-0937	472.00	481.00

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO
REVISED CHARGES FROM 1 APRIL 2016

VAT Codes: (1a)=inclusive standard rated (1b)=plus standard rated (2)=zero rated (3)=outside scope, (4)=exempt

STREET NAMING (1b)	General ledger code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
Existing Houses			
House name change	3552-0937	87.00	89.00
Rename of streets where requested by residents (Apportioned across number of addresses)			
Note rarely carried out.			
1 to 5 properties	3552-0937	963.00	982.00
6 to 25 properties	3552-0937	1,230.00	1,255.00
26 to 75 properties	3552-0937	1,533.00	1,564.00
76 plus Properties	3552-0937	2,106.00	2,148.00
Renumbering of streets where requested by residents (Apportioned across number of addresses)			
Note rarely carried out.			
1 to 5 properties	3552-0937	963.00	982.00
6 to 25 properties	3552-0937	1,230.00	1,255.00
26 to 75 properties	3552-0937	1,533.00	1,564.00
76 plus Properties	3552-0937	2,106.00	2,148.00
Numbering / naming of new Properties (Flat fee)			
1 to 5 properties	3552-0937	245.00	250.00
6 to 25 properties	3552-0937	322.00	328.00
26 to 75 properties	3552-0937	376.00	384.00
76 plus properties	3552-0937	457.00	466.00
100 plus properties	3552-0937	568.00	579.00
Above 150 properties - one off charge to be agreed with developer with suggested charge per property £30	3552-0937		
Additional charge where this includes naming of a street	3552-0937	390.00	398.00

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