

## Legislative and Policy Influences

### 1. A rapidly evolving agenda

#### 1.1. National policy:

for example.

##### a) **CLG: Housing and Sustainable Communities :**

“We want everyone to have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work.....

“Good housing can improve our social, environmental and economic well-being. It helps to create better communities that can attract investment and skilled workers. And getting the design right can also improve the environment and reduce our carbon footprint.

“Therefore the strategic housing decisions we take collectively over the next few years are critical to the life chances of the next generation”  
*(Homes for the Future: more affordable, more sustainable. CLG July 07)*

##### b) **Code for Sustainable Homes:**” Our homes account for around 27% of the UK’s carbon emissions, a major cause of climate change. .... Since May 2008 all new homes are required to have a Code rating against the Code (for Sustainable Homes) and for a Code Certificate to be included within the Home Information Pack (HIP)” *(Greener Homes for the Future CLG May 2008). See Appendix 2 for more details*

##### c) **Zero Carbon Hub:** Created in response to recommendations of Calcutt Review 2007 for government and the house-building, construction products and energy supply industry to sponsor a delivery unit to monitor, co-ordinate and guide the zero carbon programme. It will look at overlaps and gaps. Board will include representatives from the DCLG, the NHBC, the Home Builders Federation (HBF), the Construction Products Association and the Local Government Association (interim team until March 09). It will report to the 2016 zero carbon task force co-chaired by Housing Minister and HBF.

#### 1.2. Local policies, strategies and indicators:

##### Examples:

##### a) **City Council Corporate Plan:** Relevant corporate priorities include

- “Increase availability, affordability and quality of housing”, which includes a Community Housing contribution of increased sustainable approach to housing provision, and better quality housing environments.,
- “Improve efficiency and encourage involvement” which includes a Community Housing contribution of involving local residents in creating sustainable communities

- “Regenerate the city” which includes a Community Housing contribution of achieving a well-balanced housing market that will attract inward investment and create more balanced communities in a place where people want to live; raising the profile of culture in community projects and developing the community sustainability capability of residents and partner organisations.
- “Cleaner and Greener city”, which includes a Community Housing contribution of supporting a more environmentally sustainable approach to housing provision and asset management, building on community involvement in sustainability practices

### **1.3 National Indicators on the local authorities’ performance on environmental sustainability:**

#### **a) NI 185 CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from Local Authority operations PSA 27**

**Rationale:** The aim of this indicator is to measure the progress of local authorities to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the relevant buildings and transport used to deliver its functions and to encourage them to demonstrate leadership on tackling climate change.

#### **Definition**

Percentage CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from LA operations:

The indicator being assessed will be a year on year measured reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. First year data to be reported in 2009, will be for Jan-Dec 2008.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: is the total amount of direct and indirect CO<sub>2</sub> emitted as a result of LA operations.

- Direct emissions are emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the local authority e.g. emissions from the combustion in owned or controlled boilers and vehicles.
- Indirect emissions are emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the local authority, but occur at sources owned or controlled by another entity e.g. emissions from consumption of purchased electricity or heat, transport-related activities in vehicles not owned or controlled by the local authority and outsourced activities.

LA Operations: The delivery of the relevant functions of a Local Authority which result (either directly or indirectly) in the emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. Functions of an authority covers all their own operations and outsourced services. Even if the services are being provided by an external body (e.g. a private company) they remain the function of the authority. This is to include schools, but exclude social housing.

## **b) NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the LA area PSA 27**

**Rationale:** Action by local authorities is likely to be critical to the achievement of Government's climate change objectives. Local authorities are uniquely placed to provide vision and leadership to local communities by raising awareness and to influence behaviours. In addition, through their powers and responsibilities (housing, planning, local transport and powers to promote well-being) and by working with their Local Strategic Partnership they can have significant influence over emissions in their local areas.

### **Definition**

**Percentage reduction of the per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Local Authority Area:** The indicator being assessed will comprise of an annual amount of end user CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across an agreed set of sectors (housing, road transport and business) measured as a percentage reduction (or increase) of the per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emission from the 2005 baseline year.

**End user:** calculations allocate emissions from fuel producers to fuel users. The end user calculation therefore allows estimates to be made of emissions for a consumer of fuel, which also include the emissions from producing the fuel the consumer has used.

**Domestic Housing:** All housing in the local authority area, including Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMOs), privately owned and leased housing

**Business:** Industry and commercial emissions, including public sector, but not those included in the EU Emissions trading scheme

**Road Traffic:** All road traffic, (but excluding motorways)

## **c) NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty – % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating Defra DSO**

**Rationale:** To measure progress in tackling fuel poverty through the improved energy efficiency of households inhabited by people claiming income based benefits.

### **Definition**

The indicator measures the proportion of households on income related benefits for whom an energy assessment of their housing has been carried out, living in homes with: i) Low energy efficiency (ii) High energy efficiency

The energy efficiency of a house can be measured using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). The procedure calculates a number between 1 and 100, low numbers generally indicate a house that has low levels of insulation and an inefficient heating system whereas numbers closer to 100

indicate a very energy efficient house. SAP is the Government's recommended system for energy rating of dwellings.

## **2. Influential National Initiatives and Debates**

**2.1 English Partnerships Carbon Challenge Initiative.** Set up in 2007 to promote the creation of zero carbon or carbon neutral new housing by 2016. These housing schemes aim to address sustainability in its broadest and most integrated sense and will be used to increase understanding of issues and to overcome barriers to delivery.

### **2.2 Egan Review 2004 (Skills for Sustainable Communities”).**

Definition “Sustainable Communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity”.

8 components:

Governance--Transport-- Connectivity/Services-- Environmental-- Equity-- Economy—Housing/the Built Environment-- Social/Culture

Issues identified:

- too many professionals working in isolation
- gaps in the skills/knowledge/understanding which make partnerships work
- good practice examples not identified or shared
- lack of enough people across professions
- lack of people with generic skills e.g. communications, project management, community engagement

### **2.3 Academy for Sustainable Communities. (ASC).**

Definition: “Most people want to live in a place where they know their neighbours and feel safe. A place with good homes, local shops, lots of jobs and opportunities for young people to get a good education”.

“Housing is at the core of local government with strong links to almost all local government dominated professions.....It also has links to key initiatives implemented through local government and its partners.....Many of these plans also involve Local strategic Partnerships, Regional Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies. The specific and emerging issues are very substantial in this sector” (from “Promoting Sustainable Communities and Community Cohesion”...report for ASC by Institute of Community Cohesion 2007)

**HH 09/07/08**