



**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 20th September 2006

**DEPARTMENT:** Department of Corporate Policy and Improvement

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director (CPI)

**SUBJECT:** **CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**  
***NOTICE OF MOTION – FULL COUNCIL***  
**19<sup>th</sup> JULY 2006**

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**1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 At Full Council on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006 a Notice of Motion was moved and seconded relating to the Council corporate priorities and returned to Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.2 At the Cabinet meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006 Cabinet sought a report on how to take the Notice of Motion forward.
- 1.3 This report sets out a suggested approach for Cabinet to address the Notice of Motion.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-
  - 2.1.1 support the approach set out in the report.
  - 2.1.2 that this approach be reported back to Council at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**3.0 RECOMMENDED REASONS FOR DECISION**

- 3.1 To ensure a consistent and coherent link between the corporate priorities and actions set out in the Council Strategic Plan.

**4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REGISTRATION**

- 4.1 Not to take any action regarding the Notice of Motion which would not be

appropriate given the agreed corporate planning process.

## 5.0 THE REPORT

### Background Information

5.1 As part of the 2005 corporate restructure, the Council agreed to revise its corporate planning process and focus on two key documents:-

Strategic Plan	“Realising the Potential” – which sets out a clear direction and focus for the Council for 2005/2008 to deliver its long term vision for the Harrogate District
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Corporate Improvement Plan	“Unleashing the Potential” – which sets out how the Council will improve the way it works and develops as an organisation
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5.2 In developing these documents, the Council reviewed its long term vision and corporate priorities and agreed 7 corporate priorities in October 2005. These were:-

- Affordable Housing
- Traffic and Transport
- Keeping the District Safe
- Caring for the Environment
- Supporting our Local Economy
- First Class Public Services
- Organisational Improvement

5.3 The Strategic Plan sets out 12 strategic actions as part of the Council’s corporate focus to deliver the seven corporate priorities. The Plan was subject to detailed consultation both internally and externally.

5.4 The final Strategic Plan was approved by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006 to operate through to March 2008.

5.5 As part of the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan it was agreed there would be a regular corporate review to ensure that the Strategic Plan is aligned with local priorities (as identified by the local community) and with the wider national priorities for Local Government.

5.6 It was also agreed that this corporate review would be undertaken by Cabinet and Corporate Management Team, subject to challenge by the Overview and Scrutiny Commissions and that the Plan would also be subject to public consultation.

5.7 At the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006 Council Meeting, a Notice of Motion from Councillors Cooper and Jones was moved and seconded which stated that:-

“In May 2006 the Administration established a new portfolio for the Environment.

Caring for the Environment is one of the Council’s corporate priorities but, recognising public concern over the sustainability of our natural resources and the need to decrease carbon emissions to prevent global warming, the Council now makes Caring for the Environment its top priority.

Further, the Council will work towards:

- Improving the energy and water efficiency of its own buildings.
- Work with local businesses to encourage them to do the same.
- Implement renewable energy and cleaner fuel technologies in Council buildings including Council housing.
- Use procurement policy to support environmentally-friendly initiatives.
- Raise awareness of climate change and the simple actions that all in our community can take to help tackle this issue.

To support this policy, sustainable initiatives will be given a high priority when determining financial commitments in the Council’s budgeting process.”

5.8 Following the Notice of Motion being considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006 it agreed the following recommendation:

“That Cabinet supports the principles set out in the Notice of Motion and calls for a report from the Executive Director (Corporate Policy & Improvement) to Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2006 on how such principles can be enshrined in the existing corporate objectives for 2006/2007 and the remainder of the Strategic Plan for 2005-2008.”

## **6.0 PROPOSED APPROACH**

6.1 The Notice of Motion proposes that Caring for the Environment will be the Council’s top priority and that “sustainability” and “environmentally-friendly initiatives” will be given a high priority when the Council allocates its resources on actions to deliver any of its corporate priorities.

6.2 The Council has already agreed its priority actions and budget allocation for 2006/2007 and the Notice of Motion is intended to impact on them as follows:-

- resource re-allocation
- consultation
- current action plans
- forward planning.

6.3 It is therefore proposed that the following approach be implemented in 2006/2007 to ensure that the intended impact of the Notice of Motion is achieved:-

(1) **Resource Re-allocation** – The Council has already established the Environment Initiatives Fund (EIF) from underspends to support the Caring for the Environment corporate priority. In addition, future resource re-allocation proposals, both revenue and capital, will include an environmental assessment against the principles set out in the Notice of Motion.

(2) **Consultation** – future consultations, whether at a corporate or service level, will include reference to the principles set out in the Notice of Motion and to caring for the environment being the Council's top priority.

(3) **Current Action Plans** – Officers will assess the impact of adopting Caring for the Environment as the Council's top priority on its current service and corporate actions. Officers will need to undertake an "environmental assessment" of their proposed 2006/2007 actions and consider the outcomes of that assessment before making their final decisions to implement the actions in the remainder of this financial year.

(4) **Forward Planning for 2007/2008** – The Council will begin its Corporate and Service Planning Process in September/October 2006 and, following consideration of the Notice of Motion at the October 2006 Council meeting, the decision will be reflected in the corporate and service planning process for future years.

6.4 This proposed approach will ensure that the existing corporate objectives set out in the Strategic Plan 2005-2008 enshrine the principles set out in the Notice of Motion and that the Council's future corporate and service planning process implement the principles relating to Caring for the Environment when planning and resourcing all seven of the Council's corporate priorities.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The Council has agreed, as part of its Corporate Planning process, its seven Corporate Priorities up to the end of 2007/2008.

7.2 The Notice of Motion will make "Caring for the Environment" its top priority and ensure that sustainability and environmentally-friendly initiatives will impact on the Council's resource allocation and the prioritisation of its actions and plans.

7.3 The proposed approach ensures that the principles in the Notice of Motion are taken into account in the remainder of the current financial year as well as feeding into the corporate and service planning process for 2007/2008 and beyond.

**OFFICER CONTACT:** Please contact Kevin Douglas if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at the Department of Corporate Policy & Improvement, Council Offices, Crescent Gardens, Harrogate, by telephone on 01423 556705 or by email - [kevin.douglas@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.douglas@harrogate.gov.uk)

## SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT/POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

		Implications are		
		Positive	Neutral	Negative
A.	Economy		✓	
B.	Environment		✓	
C.	Social Equity		✓	
(i)	General			
(ii)	Customer Care/People with Disabilities			
(iii)	Health Implications			
D.	Crime and Disorder Implications		✓	

If all comments lie within the shaded areas, the proposal is sustainable.