

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CABINET
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	EUROPEAN COMMISSION COVENANT OF MAYORS ON CLIMATE CHANGE
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	16 OCTOBER 2012
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
Not applicable	

### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

The Covenant of Mayors is a voluntary initiative involving local authorities from across Europe to formally commit to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions beyond EU 20% targets. The initiative has now been signed by over 4000 cities throughout Europe. This report presents an outline of the commitments within the Covenant against Southampton's current and planned activity and seeks approval to sign up to the Covenant of Mayors and its commitment to meet and exceed the EU 20% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction objective through increased energy efficiency and development of renewable energy sources.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To approve the signing of the Covenant of Mayors adherence form, as set out in Appendix 2, for submission to the European Commission, as a commitment to meeting and exceeding the EU 20% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target.

### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Participating in the Covenant of Mayors initiative would allow Southampton the opportunity to exchange information with key European cities and further highlight the City's commitment to tackling climate change on the international stage.
2. Through participation in the Leadership in Energy Action and Planning (LEAP) project, the development of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for Southampton is well underway, making it an appropriate time to join the Covenant of Mayors.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

3. To proceed without the development of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan and without signing-up to the Covenant of Mayors. This would result in a missed opportunity to improve performance through access to a network of signatory cities and no clear route-map supplementing the clear targets and established management framework already in place through the Low Carbon City Strategy.

### **DETAIL**

#### **Introduction**

4. The Covenant of Mayors is a formal commitment by European cities to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions beyond existing EU 20% targets and has now been signed by over 4000 cities throughout Europe. Southampton City Council has expressed an interest but has not yet formally signed the Covenant.

5. Participating in the Covenant of Mayors initiative would allow Southampton the opportunity to exchange information with key European cities and further highlight the City's commitment to tackling climate change on the international stage. Southampton is well placed to deliver the requirements of the Covenant through the work already being undertaken to achieve the targets set out in the Low Carbon City Strategy.

## **Background**

6. Southampton City Council has been at the forefront of developing and implementing low carbon energy initiatives for many years and has established a clear policy direction for consistent monitoring and reporting of climate change related actions. In 2004, the Council formally adopted its first Climate Change Strategy. The strategy set out a 5 year plan spanning up to 2009/2010 and identified key actions to address both air quality and greenhouse gas emissions issues in the City. In July 2011, this strategy was superseded by the adoption of the Low Carbon City Strategy which established the Council's commitment to reduce City-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by at least 34 percent by 2020 against a 1990 baseline and to reduce the Council's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 40% from a 2010/2011 baseline.
7. The Low Carbon City Strategy also provides a clear vision and management framework to ensure climate change action delivers economic advantage by positioning Southampton as an investment location of choice. Cities and regions that have a commitment to a low carbon economy will have a major influence in the future investment decisions of occupiers, businesses and financial investors. This means harnessing the City's strengths to promote a positive investment environment alongside new programmes to deliver the infrastructure and services that will underpin a low carbon economy. Southampton needs to continue to demonstrate its existing low carbon credentials and seize the initiative to establish a competitive advantage for existing businesses and new investors to the City.
8. The aims of the Covenant of Mayors are consistent with those stated by the Council in the Low Carbon City Strategy. In Southampton, climate change action should be grounded in the values and objectives established in the Low Carbon City Strategy, and address climate change in pursuit of the goal of a safer, more prosperous and healthier City. Taking action on climate change will help to tackle those issues which affect the City's most deprived residents and those on lower incomes. Fuel poverty and access to local services and employment through sustainable transport infrastructure and well-designed neighbourhoods will help to address the inequalities that currently exist in parts of the City. Appendix 1 summarises the main commitments within the Covenant and Southampton's current and planned activity in each of those areas.

## **Implications**

9. In order to join the Covenant of Mayors, the Council must pass a resolution that commits the Council, amongst other things, to submit a Sustainable Energy Action Plan including a baseline emission inventory which outlines how the objectives will be reached, within one year of formally signing the Covenant. When the Council passes the resolution, the Leader of the

Council must then sign the adhesion form (Appendix 2), which will be forwarded for confirmation to the Covenant of Mayors office in Brussels.

10. Over the past 3 years the City Council has been working with the University of Southampton to develop a Carbon Emissions Inventory to make sure we can measure the progress that's being made towards delivering the City's CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets. This inventory details energy use across the entire City to aid the preparation of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP).
11. The formal commitment of Southampton City Council signing up to the Covenant of Mayors protocol is translated into concrete measures and projects through the development of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP). Supported by the EU Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) funded LEAP project Southampton's first SEAP is currently being prepared. The purpose of the SEAP is to detail the strategic City-wide energy initiatives concerning both the private and public sector operating within the geographical area of the plan to achieve the carbon reduction targets established in the Low Carbon City Strategy. Full consultation on the draft document will commence in the Autumn.
12. Signatory cities are requested to report on the progress that is made in implementing their SEAP. Signatories are also committed to allocate sufficient human resources to the implementation of their SEAP.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

13. As set out in Appendix 1 below, the commitments within the Covenant of Mayors do not represent either an increased target or resource burden.
14. There is a commitment to attend and contribute to the annual EU Conference of Mayors for a Sustainable Energy Europe. This event takes place over the course of two days and will require both a member representative and officer representative for the duration of the event plus travel and expenses.

### **Property/Other**

15. There are no direct resource implications.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

16. Participation in the Covenant of Mayors voluntary initiative can be agreed in accordance with Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The exercise of this power is subject to any pre and post commencement restrictions or prohibitions, none of which have been identified at this stage. The proposals in this report are consistent with and supported by the Community Strategy and are considered likely to improve both the economic and environmental well being of the area.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

17. SCC is duty bound to meet the government's targets on carbon dioxide emission reductions as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. There are no legal risks identified at this time

## POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

18. As set out in Appendix 1 below, the commitments within the Covenant of Mayors do not represent either an increased target or resource burden. The Low Carbon City Strategy already commits the Council to produce a Sustainable Energy Action Plan and work to satisfy the other key commitments is already underway in Southampton.
19. The Covenant of Mayors and its supplementary commitments contribute to addressing the challenges for the City identified in the Community Strategy.

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**KEY DECISION?** Yes

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	ALL
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## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

### Appendices

1.	SCC commitments to climate change
2.	Covenant of Mayors adhesion form
3.	Covenant of Mayors terms and conditions

### Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None.
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### Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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### Other Background Documents

#### Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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