

Gloucestershire County Council

Carbon Reduction Commitment and Schools Draft Communications Plan

(Last updated 21st September
2009)

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First things first

This Communications plan is rated as Middle tier as there are a number of different facets to it which increases the potential for misunderstanding and therefore negativity.

Freedom of Information requests

Requests to see a communications plan must be approached on a case by case basis.

There are 5 possible exemptions that might be applied. They are:

1. Intended for future publication (section 22)
2. Prejudice effective conduct of public affairs (section 36)
3. Health and Safety (section 38)
4. Requests for personal information
5. Commercial interests (section 42)

For more information go to <http://staffnet/foi>

If in doubt, please contact Jenny Grodzicka, Corporate Information and Compliance Manager on Ext 6186 or email jenny.grodzicka@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Introduction and background

The Carbon Reduction Commitment

Starting in April 2010, the Carbon Reduction Commitment is the UK's first mandatory carbon trading scheme. The initial phase of the Carbon Reduction Commitment will be compulsory for organisations that consume over 6,000 MWh (6,000,000 kWh) of half-hourly metered electricity during the period from January 2008 to December 2008. The aim of the Carbon Reduction Commitment is to reduce the level of carbon emissions currently produced by the larger 'low energy-intensive' organisations by approximately 1.2 million tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2020. As a Climate Change Bill commitment, the scheme is aiming for a 60% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2050.

The Carbon Reduction Commitment will cover both public and private sector organisations, including Gloucestershire County Council. At present, the carbon reduction scheme is expected to affect approximately 5,000 organisations in the UK. In doing so, it is anticipated that the scheme will affect 25% of total business sector emissions within the UK.

While the scheme does not officially start until April 2010, GCC will need to make preparations before that date to ensure that they comply with all legal requirements and fully participate in the scheme.

CRC and Schools

Around 15% of public sector carbon emissions come from activities in the English school system and about one third of this is from energy use in school buildings. In order to cut emissions from schools, most state funded schools (including Foundation and Trust, Voluntary Controlled, City Technology Colleges and Academies) will be included in the

scheme and are the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council. As a result, our schools will have legal and administrative responsibilities within the CRC.

The regulations define schools as Associated Persons. This means that our schools have a statutory duty to provide reasonable assistance and gather all data that relates to their energy use and provide this each year to GCC. We will then determine qualification and define the CRC Footprint as necessary. We will also be responsible for submitting an annual report.

The emissions of each school must be covered by an allowance bought by GCC. This will be reimbursed at the end of the year with either a financial penalty or bonus according to its relative performance. We may not charge the school for allowances purchased but we can charge the schools budget (and, if appropriate, individual schools) for any losses or gains incurred as a result of performance by schools collectively.

What Schools need to do now

1. Request an annual statement from energy suppliers
2. Collate an Evidence Pack
3. Report the data
4. Read meters regularly
5. Save energy
6. Be aware that fines incurred by GCC for their school emissions, could be passed on to them

What are we trying to achieve?

Proactively inform key stakeholders of the new legislation, how this will affect them and what they will need to do on order to comply and avoid penalties.

AIM 3

Ensuring every child thrives and reaches their potential

- Improving outcomes for all children and young people

AIM 5

Managing our environment and economy

- Protecting and enhancing our built and natural environment
- Developing strategies to tackle the local effects of climate change.

How we will drive excellence

- Keeping Council Tax down
- Becoming more efficient, so that resources can be spent on the most important things
- Being well run, open, and accountable

Other objectives/deliverables aimed to achieve within the strategy ie.

- Community Leadership
- Incorporating actions contributing to reducing climate change

Timeline

Phase One

What	When
Collect data from schools (e.g. energy bills from April 08)	By end 2009
Identify a further 15 secondary schools to participate in the YEP programme	By end 2009

Phase Two

What	When
Roll out YEP programme with additional 15 schools	Jan – April 10

Phase Three

What	When
Capture and share best practice identified through YEP	June 10

Communications Objectives

Phase One

Raise awareness of the change in legislation and the direct impact that this will have on schools

Secure schools' buy-in to carbon reduction

Phase Two

Continue to raise awareness of the change in legislation and the direct impact that this will have on schools

Continue to secure schools' buy-in to carbon reduction

Persuade staff and pupils at 15 YEP schools to change their behaviours to reduce carbon emissions

Phase Three

Continue to raise awareness of the change in legislation and the direct impact that this will have on schools

Continue to secure schools' buy-in to carbon reduction

By identifying best practice from 15 YEP schools, persuade staff and pupils at schools across the county to change their behaviours to reduce carbon emissions

What are the potential sensitivities and risks around this issue and how will we mitigate these?

Phase One

Risk: That schools respond negatively to Carbon Reduction Commitment and see passing on of fines as 'buck passing'

Mitigation: Key messages should explain that this is because of a government directive and is not of GCC's choosing

Risk: That schools do not respond to this call to action and do not supply data

Mitigation: Activities schedule should include reminders for schools and make contingency for a 'phone around' if necessary

Risk: That we cannot persuade 15 additional schools to take part in YEP project

Mitigated by: Key messages should be clear that by participating in YEP schools can reduce carbon emissions which will, in turn, help them to avoid fines under CRC. In addition, where possible we should approach schools who have already expressed an interest in YEP

Phase Two

Risk: That those schools that are not part of the 15 taking part in the YEP project 'forget' about CRC

Mitigation: Activities schedule should include a constant 'dripping' of information about the good work taking place and the positive impact of this on schools in terms of CRC (e.g. avoiding fines)

Phase Three

Risk: That we are unsuccessful in identifying enough good practice from the 15 YEP schools to motivate the rest to take action

Mitigated by: Schools involved in YEP should identify best practice as they go through the project and this should be captured centrally

What are our key messages?

- The CRC provides schools with the opportunity to reduce carbon to cut costs and save the planet
- Reducing carbon is key to slowing down climate change
- GCC will be supporting schools in achieving carbon reductions and will therefore be helping them to save money
- The CRC now directly affects schools with there being financial implications if targets are not met, although we are here to help schools to avoid being penalised

- Penalties and rewards that will be applied will reflect how effective each school has been in achieving targets (although allowances will be made to reflect the phasing of the project?)
- Schools are responsible for collecting and maintaining records of carbon usage
- We want to build upon the best practice that already exists, not reinvent the wheel!
- Reducing carbon emissions is just one of the ways schools can set an example to their local community about preventing climate change

Who are the key stakeholders?

Schools

- Leadership Teams
- Staff
- Governors/Glos School Governors Association
- Pupils
- Parents
- Users of Extended Services
- Potential users of Extended Services
- GAPH
- GASH
- GASSH
- Dioceses
- University of Gloucestershire
- Colleges
- Unions
- DCSF
- PFS????
- National Strategies
- OSC???
- NCSL???
- CABE???
- HMI/Ofsted
- Becta (Davis Schofield)???
- GOSW
- Voluntary sector partners using schools premises

Gloucestershire County Council

- COMT
- Cabinet
- Other members
- Directors' group
- Extended Management team
- CYP staff
- Lifelong learning team
- Consultation team
- Communications team
- Environment directorate staff
- GCC 3rd tier managers
- Performance management

The Community

- Local Media
- National Media
- MPs
- Other political parties
- Public
- Parish Councils
- District Councillors

The Professional Community

- Other local authorities
- Severn Wye Energy Agency
- GEEP
- Wilderness Centre
- Intelligent Energy Europe

Note:

Red = High priority, action required. Amber = Medium priority, action may be required. Low priority = for information.

What tools will we be using?

Tool	Who	Why inform/involve/consult	When
Phase one			
Meetings	Schools (e.g. GAPH, GASH, GASSH, Gov Association)	Inform, consult, secure buy in, change behaviours, call to action	September & October 09
Schoolsnet	Schools	Inform, secure buy in, galvanise support, call to action	December 09 and then monthly (?) updates
Global email	Schools	Inform, secure buy in, galvanise support, call to action	End November 09 – plus follow up in December
Direct mail	Schools who have already expressed an interest in YEP	Call to action, secure participation in YEP project	November / December 09
Phase two			
Media	Schools	Raise awareness of positive work taking place, remind about CRC, continue to secure buy in	Monthly January – May 2010
Schoolsnet	Schools	Raise awareness of positive work taking place, remind about CRC, continue to secure buy in	Monthly January – May 2010
Heads Up	Schools	Raise awareness of positive work taking place, remind about CRC, continue to secure buy in	Monthly January – May 2010
What's Up Gov	Schools	Raise awareness of positive work taking place, remind about CRC, continue to secure buy in	Monthly January – May 2010
GCC Website	The Community, The Professional Community	Inform	Develop web pages by end Jan 10
This Week	Gloucestershire County Council	Inform	Monthly January – May 2010
Members Matters	Gloucestershire County Council Members	Inform, secure buy in	Monthly January – May 2010

Phase Three			
Conference	Schools	Share best practice, secure buy in to future work	June 2010
GCC Website	The Community, The Professional Community	Inform, show case best practice	June 2010
Learning Matters	Schools	Share best practice, secure buy in to future work	Summer term edition

Branding and brand values

Any marketing collateral will be GCC branded, although there is the possibility of us producing joint materials with SWEA and using campaign ideas that have already been used in schools and other local authorities.

As some collateral will need to be developed we will need the assistance of the publications team. However, due to the nature of the project, it is vital that we keep printed materials to a minimum. We should also look to see what ideas can be borrowed from GCC's corporate climate change campaign.

Budget and resources

Officer Time

- CYP Marketing and Communications Manager
- Publications Team
- Web team
- Media team

Printing costs

Event costs for Awards

Evaluation

Phase One

