

Shared Carbon Management Services

A Shared Carbon Management Service aims to save money, generate and safeguard jobs and reduce carbon emissions in line with Government targets and the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme. The service will raise the profile of locally managed carbon reduction collectively based upon both short term and longer term benefits.

DPP Sustainability, in association with economic policy consultants, has worked with a series of councils to develop a model and present the business case for sharing carbon management services across local authorities (including local authority asset management; delivered services and commissioned services), in order to achieve greater effectiveness in the design and delivery of these services.



What is a Shared Carbon Management Service?

This service aims to maximise the available options that best suit the councils' current practices, without adding additional burden to an already compromised structure. Whilst many local authorities have been collecting National Indicator carbon management data for a number of years, many are not proactively utilising the information to make plans for further savings in the council or across their region. The upshot of this is that many local carbon management plans are not providing the carbon or financial savings they hoped. Current financial strains on the public sector are also limiting opportunities for some local authorities to implement wider reaching and more ambitious carbon management projects.

Process Methodology

- Identification of shared service participants and key service providers;
- Discussions with participants and key stakeholders to obtain details of current and planned:
 - carbon data collection, reporting and analysis methods;
 - carbon management programme(s) and carbon reduction projects (including achieved and projected cost savings);
 - local authority departments and other partners involved with carbon management plans.
- Gap analysis of current and proposed carbon management practices and projects to identify opportunities for shared working.
- Development of a shared services rationale, options appraisal and initial implementation plan to further develop current carbon management practices and introduce new projects to reduce carbon and save costs.

Shared working opens up the potential to generate bigger carbon management projects and benefits, such as:

- Data collection and billing management improvements/rationalisation;
- Energy generation, revenue and security;
- Supply chain management and procurement;
- Job creation and safeguarding;
- Fulfilment of existing carbon reduction plans;
- Planning for future legislative requirements;
- Identification of funding opportunities;
- Wider awareness raising campaigns to engage with businesses and the local community;
- Policy development and re-designing of services from a carbon management perspective.



Barriers to Shared Services

The project recognises that there are some key barriers to improving in this area and these include:

- a. *The uncertainty surrounding the state of public finances.* This area relates particularly to the cuts in capital budgets and the withdrawal of some funding streams that were key in many authorities' carbon reduction action plans, including the Building Schools for the Future and the Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme that has now become a straight tax. Collaborative working can identify funding streams and joint procurement opportunities to reduce this financial strain.
- b. *The lack of current detail on what new indicators the Government will adopt* to replace NI 185 for monitoring and reporting on carbon emission reductions. Standardising a robust method of carbon data collection and analysis across several local authorities will ensure that reliable data is collected to future-proof for any changes in Government requirements.
- c. *The importance of a carbon management function within local authorities* that goes beyond legislative requirements is often determined by individual council policy and strategy. Carbon management is a cross cutting service and council departments need to have a wide range of skills and technical knowledge of carbon reduction for projects to result in cost savings. Collaborative working between local authorities can enable knowledge, experience and best practice to be shared to up-skill employees and generate more extensive carbon management projects across local authority areas, with the potential for greater savings.
- d. *Wider reaching carbon management projects that could benefit the council and local community* may be overlooked. Demonstration of the carbon and cost savings resulting from associated projects will embed carbon management service into mainstream council services and work towards a council wide culture change to include carbon management in all areas.
- e. *Existing financial strains within local authorities* may be inhibiting significant capital investment for carbon management projects. The localism agenda is pushing the burden of responsibility for carbon reduction including funding and organisation onto local authorities. Collaborative working opens up opportunities for collective procurement of carbon management and reduction tools, joint funding for carbon management projects and generation of revenue from local renewable energy production. Joint working will advance engagement with both the residential and commercial community, retain revenue and provide job opportunities in the region through schemes such as the Green Deal.

By collaborating across a region, local authorities can share their experience of existing carbon data collection and management work, and utilise knowledge gained from other local authorities to highlight areas of best practise and provide support for areas of weakness to achieve reductions and savings.

For further information please contact us



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Other Key Services:

- Carbon management system improvements
- Energy and sustainability footprinting
- Independent auditing and advice
- Training



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