

SM3: Develop a strategic approach

Compiling a list of options for action

Having already set out the general vision for your climate change strategy/action plan, this step focuses on identifying and quantifying specific opportunities and actions that reflect the scope of your strategy for council services. To develop your strategy you may want to use the following mechanisms:

Organise a brainstorming workshop

You could host a workshop involving the members of your core team to consider how each service could respond to climate change at a strategic and operational level. If you are also looking at emissions from the [council estate](#) and the [wider community](#), you may wish to have a brainstorming workshop that also considers these issues and involves those within the council and other organisations who can help cut these emissions.

Suggestion schemes

When seeking to identify emissions reduction opportunities, the key is to think as widely as possible. You could initiate a creative idea generation process that involves all stakeholders and target audiences. Involving them in this way will not only deepen and widen their sense of ownership of and commitment to your local authority's climate change strategy/action plan, it can also ensure that no aspect of emissions reduction has been overlooked. This will, in turn, strengthen the quality of the strategy and help ensure it delivers the best results possible.

Prioritising options

Building on the output from brainstorming workshops, you will need to agree which opportunities from the initial list of actions are worthy of further investigation. You will need to consider:

- The feasibility of implementing each idea/action, ie will adopting such an approach be practical in relation to the service concerned.
- Whether there is support for such an option from the head of service or the council's corporate decision-making team.
- What the timescale of implementation will be. For example, if the option is to integrate greenhouse gas emission mitigation more fully into the local plan then what is the timetable for reviewing and updating that plan?
- Will there be any cost implications?
- What the wider impact will be on the service and whether there will be any drawbacks in terms of service quality.

In addition to these considerations you can also consider how any action is likely to fit with the wider context for your council, and prioritise on this basis. The following prioritisation criteria can be used:

- Best fit with established sustainability policy or other local authority objectives or priorities.
- Greatest opportunity for early and visible 'wins'.
- Best use of local authority management resources.
- Greatest opportunity for partnership working within the region.
- Best fit with other economic development or regeneration targets and areas.
- Greatest opportunity for spin-off (non-carbon) benefits.

CHECKLIST

- Have specific options been identified to integrate climate change mitigation into services?
- Have the actions been prioritised?
- Were stakeholders involved in the identification and prioritisation process?
- Have stakeholders been updated with the project's progress?

The output of this stage will be the agreement of a set of actions to help integrate greenhouse gas mitigation into council services.