

## FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO THE USE OF BIOMASS SYSTEMS

### Abstract

This report seeks approval to undertake a feasibility study into the use of biomass heating systems for future capital projects as part of the ongoing energy management strategy of the council.

### RECOMMENDATION

The Resources and Central Services Committee is recommended to approve the commissioning of a feasibility study into the use of Biomass systems at an estimated cost of £4,000.

## 1 BACKGROUND

Members will be aware from previous Energy Management reports to Committee of the need for the Council to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2010 in accordance with Government targets set following recent international summits. Previous reports to Committee have indicated the progress we are making towards achieving these targets but there is still a considerable way to go. Most of the CO<sub>2</sub> production comes from heating systems powered by electricity and oil and, to a lesser extent, gas.

One of the options currently being considered for future heating schemes in major projects is the use of woodchip burning boilers. The advantage of such a system is that it is CO<sub>2</sub> neutral when timber is sourced from sustainably managed forests. This is because the CO<sub>2</sub> given off in the combustion of wood is recorded as being equal to the CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed by the trees during their life.

The Director of Property Services has considered it would be beneficial to the Council to consider adopting such a strategy for future new build projects in appropriate circumstances. A further advantage of this strategy is that it would support local wood processing industries where timber is sourced from sustainably managed forests and which could deliver the raw material as fuel that may otherwise be disposed of as waste in land fill sites.

In order to fully understand all the implications of such a strategy, including the issue of emissions, it is recommended that a feasibility study be undertaken to examine the detail of these schemes.

Members will also be aware of the success Angus Council has had in promoting energy management culminating last year in Angus Council being the first Scottish Local Authority to receive the energy efficiency accreditation award from the Energy Efficiency Office. It is proposed that we build on this success by further development of energy management techniques to lead towards achieving the required CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target by 2010.

## 2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost of a feasibility study is in the area of £4,000. There are Government grants which can help offset the capital costs of this type of heating scheme and if members agree to this proposal, and if the feasibility study results in a successful grant application for a suitable heating scheme, then the cost of the feasibility study will be recovered from the grant. If the grant application is unsuccessful, then it is proposed to fund the study from the Property Maintenance revenue fund in the meantime.

## 3 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law & Administration, Director of Finance and the Director of Planning and Transport have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights Act implications specific to this report.

## REFERENCES

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Report No</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Resources & Central Services	4/12/03	1450/03	Energy Accreditation Award

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

M G Lunny  
Director of Property Services