Role of elected members in the adaptation agenda

UK experience

Joyce Lee, Policy Analyst - Local Sustainability, LGiU
UK Climate Projections

Hotter and drier summers

Warmer and wetter winters

Sea level rise

Extreme weather events

© NASA/GSFC, MODIS Rapid Response
UK adaptation programme

1. Climate Change Act 2009
2. UK Adapting to Climate Change Programme:
   - Climate Change Risk Assessment
   - Departmental Adaptation Plans
   - Local and Regional Partnership Board
3. Committee on Climate Change – Adaptation Sub-Committee
Local adaptation

Measuring performance on planning to adapt to climate change

Local adaptation strategies and action plans

Local adaptation action

- Risk assessments
- Flood risk management
- Trees and green roofs
The role of councillors

- Adaptation is fundamentally a local issue
- Championing adaptation at the local level
- Public expectations
Climate Ready Learning Network

• Funded by Defra
• councillors from different political spectrum
• Findings:
  1. Councillors’ community leadership role – communicating to the public
  2. Councillors’ decision making and scrutiny role – improving the council
Communicating to the public

1. Use simple language when talking about adapting to climate change so people can understand what it means.

2. Give people practical examples of what communities and councils can do to adapt.

“Green infrastructure”
“Retrofit”
“Build resilience”
Managing flood risk - Gloucestershire Council
Reduce water demand - Reigate and Banstead Council
Hampshire Water Festival 2009 ©

http://twitter.com/CllrTim
Improving your council

4. Present a business case to your council to take account of adaptation.

5. Support and encourage partnerships between the council and relevant organisations and businesses to deliver adaptation effectively.
Recommendations

**Solutions:** More tangible solutions to present to the public and to their councils can help councillors put together a strong business case to adapt.

**Resources:** Local councils are faced with public spending cuts in the coming years.

**Message:** Better understanding and consistency of the adaptation message needed.

**Coordination:** Better coordination between local council departments to adapt as the impacts of climate change will affect most services.
Thank you

Joyce Lee
Policy Analyst - LGiU
telephone: +44 (0)207 554 2831
email: joyce.lee@lgiu.org.uk