

The Relevance and Legitimacy of Offsetting in Local Government

Stephen Cirell
Lead Associate APSE Energy



Introduction

- Offsetting is now an area of considerable focus
- But what is offsetting?
- The purpose of the new report



Context

- Climate Emergency Declarations
- Calculation of carbon footprints
- Climate Emergency Action Plans
- Achieving Net Zero Carbon



Offsetting

“In simple terms, carbon offsetting is a mechanism used to compensate for corporate or individual carbon footprints through the purchase of carbon credits issued by accreditation standards to projects that remove greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere or avoid generating the emissions in the first place. Each credit is equal to one tonne of CO₂(e) that has not been emitted. Once purchased, the credit is then retired through an internationally recognised and publicly viewable registry.”



The Hierarchy

- Calculate
- Avoid
- Reduce
- Offset



The Options

- International action
- National action
- Local action
- Which shall we choose?



Direct Action

- Renewable energy projects eg solar farms
- Example Cornwall's solar farm
- Also nature based solutions
- Tree planting, wildflower meadows or peat restoration



Indirect Action

- Procurement
- Power Purchase Agreements
- Town & Country Planning



Governance

- No rules for voluntary markets
- The Taskforce on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets
- Core carbon principles developed



Problem Areas

- Credibility and verification
- permanence
- additionality
- leakage
- Double counting
- No harm



Conclusions

- Its that simple!
- Climate change requires behaviour change
- Timing of offsetting
- Start thinking about it now



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