

Public Document Pack

11 November 2008

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the Council will be held in the **Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Thursday, 20th November, 2008 at 6.00 pm**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Templeman', written over a light grey rectangular background.

R TEMPLEMAN

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the Meeting held 18 September 2008 (Pages 1 - 12)
3. To confirm the minutes of the Special Meeting held 30 September 2008 (Pages 13 - 18)
4. Public Speaking
5. To receive declarations of interest from Members
6. NHS County Durham, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust - 'Seizing the Future' - Public Consultation
Details to follow

7. Report from the Leader of the Council
8. Reports from Portfolio Holders
 - a) Neighbourhood Services
 - b) Community Engagement and Partnerships
 - c) Regeneration and Strategic Planning
 - d) Resources and Value for Money
9. Questions to Leader and Executive Members
10. To accept the report of the Audit Committee held 16 September 2008 (Pages 19 - 20)
11. To accept the report of the Special Meeting of the Audit Committee held 17 October 2008 (Pages 21 - 24)
12. Amendments to the Schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations (Pages 25 - 30)
13. Holiday Arrangements - Christmas and New Year 2008/2009 (Pages 31 - 36)
14. A Climate Change Strategy for Chester-le-Street (Pages 37 - 70)
15. Correspondence
16. Conferences
17. Common Seal

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Thursday, 18 September 2008 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor D Thompson (Chairman)

Councillors

G Armstrong	D M Holding
S Barr	W Laverick
J W Barrett	M D May
R Court	P H May
G K Davidson	J M Proud
L Ebbatson	M Sekowski
M Gollan	J Shiell
S Greatwich	T J Smith
T H Harland	S C L Westrip
R Harrison	A Willis
A K Holden	

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), I Forster (Director of Corporate Services), T Galloway (Director of Development Services), N Tzamarias (Assistant Director of Development Services), C Potter (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), G MacCallam (Environmental Services Manager), S Reed (Development and Building Control Manager) and C Turnbull (Democratic Services Officer)

There was one member of the public present.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors LEW Brown, SA Henig, A Humes, CJ Jukes, P Nathan, K Potts, M Potts, D Robson, A Turner, and F Wilkinson.

44. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 24 JULY 2008

The minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the District Council held on 24 July 2008 copies of which had previously been circulated, were submitted.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the minutes be confirmed as a correct record.”

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

45. PUBLIC SPEAKING

No requests had been received from members of the public to speak at the meeting in accordance with the Council's agreed policy.

46. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillors AK Holden and SCL Westrip declared personal interests in item no. 8 on the agenda regarding the appointment of a representative to serve on the Board of Cestria Community Housing Association.

47. REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader, Councillor L Ebbatson advised that there were no key decisions in August and two in September and details had been circulated to Members.

Members were asked to note a Special Council Meeting would be held on 30 September 2008 to receive the audited accounts. Additional agenda items would include an update on Local Government Reorganisation and responses to the current Boundary Committee consultation on the size of the new authority.

The Leader then introduced a debate on the current Policing green paper 'From the Neighbourhood to the National' produced by the Home Office. A briefing paper had been circulated with the Council agenda papers.

The ensuing discussion indicated that, while there was much to recommend the green paper, such as the proposals relating to performance management, Members of the Council were concerned about those proposals that affected the delivery of neighbourhood policing and accountability.

- There was no support for directly elected representatives to the CDRP. It was felt that this would undermine the vital role of locally elected Councillors to represent and act as advocates for local people on crime and disorder issues that were important to them (the local community). In addition the proposal threatened successful partnership working, built up over many years, whereby the Council and police act together to resolve local issues.
- Concerns were also expressed about the maintenance of links between communities and the CDRPs if they were too large. In an authority the size of County Durham (almost 500,000 people with proposed 14 Area Action Partnerships specifically designed to address local issues and two Basic Command Units) there was a real fear of dislocation between the impetus for the police to deal with community safety issues at a neighbourhood level, for example, and the impetus to deal with those issues which had a higher national media profile.

Combining the resources of the Basic Command Unit and the Community Safety Fund would potentially exacerbate this problem.

- In terms of neighbourhood policing, Councillors wanted to see the current gap between strategic policy and local delivery addressed more effectively. It was felt the proposals did not address this (see above). The continuing support for PCSOs and the link to locally agreed standards was welcomed. However this should not be to the detriment of the role of the PC who had a vital role to play in building strong and confident communities.
- Community cohesion was an important aspect of the work of local Councillors and Councils. The Council would welcome more positive action from the government on integration. Education about people who might be vulnerable to exclusion as a result of non-criminal activities e.g. mental health issues, should be explicitly stated as a priority for the police.

Traffic-related issues ranked high in local Councillors' case-work. The current arrangements and green paper proposals, with the focus on CDRPs, effectively excluded traffic divisions. It was felt that traffic-related crime should be brought into neighbourhood policing arrangements with particular relevance to the 'national pledge to guarantee to the public key service standards'.

A response to the green paper, incorporating the issues raised, would be sent to the Home Office by the deadline of 10 October 2008.

48. REPORTS FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

a. Neighbourhood Services

Councillor SCL Westrip reported on the following items: -

Leisure Services

A grant of £200,000 from the Big Lottery Fund had been received and the contract to install five ball courts across the District awarded to Wicksteed Playscapes. The official 'removal of the first soils' ceremony would be held at Moorfoot Avenue Play area on Monday 22 September 2008 at 2.00pm and all five ball courts should be completed by the end on 2008. The ball courts would be located at: -

Edmondsley Play Ground
The Brooms, Ouston
Millennium Green, Great Lumley
Kimbleworth and Nettlesworth
Moorfoot Avenue, Chester-le-Street

The Riverside site received Northumbria in Bloom Gold Awards for The Riverside Park and for the Best Conservation Project for the wildlife area and meadow. To gain a gold award required a score of 85% or over so credit was due to staff involved from the Leisure Services and the Environmental Services teams.

The driving range at Roseberry Grange Golf Complex had been badly damaged by fire but staff managed to re-open half of the bays following a safety inspection.

Environmental Services

The Council's Cleaner Safer Greener agenda recognised that the quality of people's experience of public spaces had a major impact on their quality of life, and the Council's aim was to ensure that green spaces were developed and managed to the highest possible standard in partnership with the communities. Success in achieving two Green Flags coupled with successes in Northumbria in Bloom clearly demonstrated that the Council's green spaces were improving year on year.

The Northumbria in Bloom successes were:

- Two Gold Medal Awards for Riverside Park for overall quality and innovative wildlife conservation projects, and a Gold Medal Award to Newker Junior School for the innovation and high quality improvements and learning opportunities to pupils using the school grounds.
- Two Silver Medal Awards for the overall environmental quality and standards across the whole of the District. A Silver Medal Award also went to Waldrige Parish Council for the contribution of local people in improving their local area using creative designs in front gardens and high quality overall standards.
- A Bronze Medal Award went to the village of Ouston for the partnership work that had been undertaken by local schools, residents, a local conservation group, the Parish Council and the District Council.

Planning Services

The Annual Member District Tour of high profile development sites that had been before the Planning Committee was held the previous evening.

Amended proposals had been submitted by Persimmon Homes for the proposed development at Newfield Farm that included a reduction in the number of homes together with a suite of improved community offers that would be addressed by a Section 106 Agreement. A public consultation event on the amended proposals would be arranged in the village.

Arrangements were being made with the Mobile Phone Operators Association to host their annual future roll-out plan meeting in Chester-le-Street. All Members would be invited to attend the meeting.

b. Community Engagement and Partnerships

Councillor M Sekowski reported on the following: -

Youth Council

Steady progress was being made. Visits were to be made to the Heads of all four Comprehensive Schools to seek their support and approaches would be made to various youth organisations such as Youth groups, Connexions and the Youth Engagement Service. Nomination forms would be sought from the school pupils and youths.

Once the level of interest was established, a presentation would be given to schools. The SPICE Team from Derwentside would assist and would help generate more interest among pupils and youth groups. An incentive package such as an outward bound weekend would be offered to attract youngsters into the project.

As well as help from the Derwentside team, additional help from a Youth Worker had been organised and she would commence the following week. The aim was to engage young people and encourage them to put forward their own ideas.

Partnership For Futures

The overarching objective of the Partnership was to harness and extend the collective efforts of the District's business and educational communities to ensure that local people are matched with local jobs.

Some of the core aims included:

- Connecting employers, various support agencies, prospective employees and trainees.
- Improving links between employers and educational establishments, in order to influence the curriculum to match the needs of local employers.
- Formulating innovative projects to respond to the needs of employers.
- Helping employers to maximise the effectiveness of their workforces by improving recruitment methods.

Councillor Sekowski was pleased to report there was an excellent spirit of co-operation between the members of the Group that consisted of representatives from:

Chester-le-Street and Durham Enterprise Agency
Beamish Museum
New College, Durham
The Hermitage School

Durham County Cricket Club
Ambic Ltd.

The blend of expertise was fast developing into a very positive force towards providing the area with a sound, sustainable, competitive economic base.

The Partnership would play a vital part in planning the workforce of the area by assessing and implementing specific training projects to meet the needs of employers.

It would ensure that the future workforce was able to meet the skills required by local employers. This was particularly vital in the context of global economic difficulties where survival of the fittest economies would depend on flexible and skilled workforces able to meet ever changing market demands.

The Partnership was in the process of appointing an Executive Director to lead the initiative forward. A first round of interviews had been held from which four candidates would receive final interviews on 25 September.

Given the core aims, the qualities required for the job included:

- A strategic overview and vision and a hands on approach at a practical level.
- A knowledge and experience of engaging with business organisations.
- An ability to develop workforce development planning.
- Experience in engaging and co-operating with a variety of partners such as educational establishments.

An exciting development was a formal link between The Hermitage and Park View Schools, New College Durham and AMBIC Ltd.

The role of the schools would be:

- To select between 10 and 15 students from each school to access the study programmes on offer.
- To ensure that the pupils selected had the correct entry requirements to work in an industry based placement.

For their part, New College would:

- Deliver the training and qualifications
- The potential courses would include:

NVQ level 1 and 2 in partnership with Ambic Ltd covering electrical, mechanical and manufacturing modules. (14-16 year olds).

Young Apprenticeship in Engineering, in association with the Engineering Employers Federation. Also for 14-16 year olds and would include 50 days of work placement over 2 years. Students would spend half a day a week at New College.

Diploma in Engineering for 14-19 year olds.

Ambic Ltd would provide industry based workshops for students to learn manufacturing skills. Offer 20-30 placements of 14-16 year old pupils from the two schools. Provide potential employment opportunities for students from the schools and the college.

Hanlon Skills Register

A software package designed to help organisations match jobseekers with specific skills to vacancies and training opportunities. The Register was used across the internet and allowed organisations to manage a virtual labour market that linked together jobseekers, employers, training providers and funders.

A number of organisations in the District had expressed an interest in the scheme and a Hanlon Skills Register Group had been set up. The Economic Development and Tourism Officer was the Council's representative on the Group.

The scheme was managed by the Tyne and Wear City Region Employment Consortium who allocated £13,000 to the District to support the purchase of software licences and any hardware and administration costs. A consultant from the Consortium would visit interested organisations to explain the benefits of the system.

c. Regeneration and Strategic Planning

There was no report from Councillor CJ Jukes.

d. Resources and Value for Money

There was no report from Councillor L Armstrong.

49. QUESTIONS TO LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Councillor PH May asked whether the Council had introduced any regulations or taken any action to prevent a re-occurrence of the incident at Riverside Park.

The Director of Development Services advised having arranged a meeting with the Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water, Police and County Council. Staff were looking at protocols that would allow for quicker response and for closing the park.

Prior to consideration of the following item Councillor AK Holden left the meeting.

50. CESTRIA BOARD - COUNCIL REPRESENTATION TO THE BOARD

Councillor L Ebbatson advised that a replacement was required for Councillor D Robson who had resigned as a representative of the Council on the Board of Cestria Community Housing Association.

Councillor Ebbatson proposed, seconded by Councillor S Barr, that Councillor D Thompson be appointed.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That Councillor D Thompson be appointed to replace Councillor D Robson as a representative of the Council on the Board of Cestria Community Housing Association.”

Councillors R Court and A Willis voted against the motion.

Councillor AK Holden returned to the meeting.

51. REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD 3 JULY 2008

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the report of the meeting of the Audit Committee held 3 July 2008 copies of which had previously been circulated, be accepted.”

Councillor R Court abstained from voting.

52. PROPOSAL TO CHARGE FOR DISCHARGE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Development Services advising of new powers contained in the Town and Country Planning (Applications and Deemed Applications) Fees (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2008 and to seeking adoption of those powers.

Councillor SCL Westrip introduced the report.

Development and Building Control Manager spoke to the report and advised that in the interests of customer care, Officers had consulted with members of the Planning Services Team’s Development Forum and comments received were attached as an appendix to the report.

Councillor SCL Westrip proposed, seconded by Councillor R Harrison, that the recommendation in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the advice contained in the Town and Country Planning (Applications and Deemed Applications) Fees (Amendment) Regulations 2008 be adopted and the nationally applicable fee of £25 for conditions attached to a domestic (householder) application and £85 for conditions attached to all other forms of planning consent, be introduced.”

53. EARLY INTEGRATION OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FUNCTION

Consideration was given to a report from the Regeneration and Strategic Planning Manager regarding the early integration of the Local Development Framework function.

The Chief Executive introduced the report.

Councillor R Harrison proposed, seconded by Councillor TH Harland, that the recommendations in the report be agreed.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That work cease on the production of the Chester-le-Street Local Development Framework.

2. That the early integration of the Local Development Framework function, the creation of an Interim Team and the interim appointment of a Strategic Planning Manager be noted and supported.”

54. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICIES

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Development Services seeking approval to the introduction of a suite of Children and Young People policies and related guidance.

Councillor SCL Westrip introduced the report and the Assistant Director of Development Services spoke on the contents of the report.

Councillor L Ebbatson requested that Section 4.5 of the Safeguarding Children Policy include a proviso that only Council owned equipment be used when photographs and video recordings of children are taken.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That the suite of Children and Youth People policies and related guidance with the inclusion of the addition to Section 4.5 of the Safeguarding Children Policy to ensure that only Council owned equipment is used when photographs and video recordings of children are taken, be approved.

2. That the Assistant Director of Development Services be designated as the officer for Safeguarding Children within the District, to be the primary point of contact and advice in any Child Protection matters pertaining to the Council and its activities.”

55. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

56. CONFERENCES

There were no invitations to attend conferences.

57. COMMON SEAL

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the action of the Officer in affixing the Common Seal of the Council to the following documents be confirmed: -

Transfer in duplicate relating to land at Fleece Terrace, Edmondsley.

Form DS1 in relation to 14 Gray Avenue, Chester-le-Street.

Transfer in duplicate relating to land at the rear of 52 Holly Crescent, Sacriston

Deed in respect of the Deed of Trust in duplicate between the County Council of Durham and Chester-le-Street District Council in relation to Park View Community School.

Form DS1 in relation to 97 The Oval, Ouston.”

58. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS. TO RESOLVE:

The Council RESOLVED:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

At this point, Councillors R Harrison, J Shiell and T Smith left the meeting.

59. OFFICE OF SURVEILLANCE COMMISSIONERS INSPECTION REPORT OF 2008 AND COUNCIL POLICY ON COVERT SURVEILLANCE AND COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES.

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services appending a statutory report issued by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners and seeking approval to a policy on Covert Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services spoke to the report.

Councillor TH Harland proposed, seconded by Councillor AK Holden, that the recommendations in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That the statutory report from the Office of Surveillance Commissioners be noted and the recommendations contained therein be accepted and implemented.

2. That the policy on Covert Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources be approved.”

Prior to consideration of the following item the Chief Executive left the meeting.

60. PROPOSED EARLY RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE.

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Corporate Services setting out a business case for the early retirement and voluntary redundancy of the Chief Executive.

The Director of Corporate Services spoke in detail to the report. He advised that the Performance Committee had initially considered and supported the recommendations in the appendix to the report subject to consultations with the District Auditor and the County Council and the seeking of independent professional advice on the contents of the report. He reported that the consultations had been undertaken and the contents of the report had been amended to reflect the outcome of the consultations and negotiations.

At this point the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Development Services left the meeting.

The Leader, Councillor L Ebbatson, thanked the Director of Corporate Services for his conscientiousness, negotiating skills and diligence to details. She stated that performance of the Chief Executive had been excellent. In terms of value for money the recommendations in the report represented a favourable agreement and minimised the risks to the Council.

Councillor SCL Westrip supported the comments of the Leader and advised that the recommendations contained the best possible outcome for the Chief Executive and the taxpayers of the District.

Councillor S Barr paid tribute to the Chief Executive for his loyalty to the Council.

Councillor GK Davidson proposed, seconded by Councillor S Barr, that the recommendations in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That the voluntary redundancy and associated early retirement of the Chief Executive on 27 March 2009, the costs of which were detailed in the appendix to the report, be approved.

2. That the basis of the early retirement and voluntary redundancy on 27 March 2009 be the harmonised County Policy approved by the District Council on 24 July 2008 with a statutory redundancy payment and the discretionary addition of 5 added years of pensionable service in accordance with the sliding scale detailed within that Policy.

3. That the terms be subject to a compromise agreement in order to protect the new authority from potential challenges in the future.

4. That at the Council Meeting prior to 27 March 2009 a decision be made on the appointment of Head of Paid Service for the period 27 March 2009 to 31 March 2009.”

Councillors R Court and A Willis voted against the motion.

The Director of Corporate Services returned to the meeting.

61. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised there would be a Special Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 30 September 2008 and reminded Members of the following forthcoming events:

- River Cruise at Durham on Sunday 21 September 2008
- Fancy Dress Pub Rally on Thursday 25 September 2008.

The meeting terminated at 7.52 pm

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the Special Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Tuesday, 30 September 2008 at 6.15 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor D Thompson (Chairman)

Councillors

G Armstrong	A Humes
L Armstrong	C J Jukes
S Barr	M D May
J W Barrett	P B Nathan
G K Davidson	M Sekowski
L Ebbatson	J Shiell
S Greatwich	T J Smith
A K Holden	S C L Westrip

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), I Forster (Director of Corporate Services), N Tzamarias (Assistant Director of Development Services), I Herberon (Head of Corporate Finance), C Potter (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), S High (Leisure Services Manager) and C Turnbull (Democratic Services Officer)

There were two members of the public present.

62. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors LEW Brown, R Court, M Gollan, R Harrison, SA Henig, DM Holding, W Laverick, PH May, K Potts, M Potts, JM Proud, DL Robson, A Turner, F Wilkinson and A Willis.

63. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

64. LEADER'S UPDATE

Local Government Review Update

Councillor L Ebbatson, Leader of the Council, gave an overview of the current position in relation to the actions being taken and decisions being made in relation to the formation of the Unitary Council, with particular reference to the following areas: -

- Political involvement in the process

- The work of the Joint Implementation Team and Workstreams
- Officer appointments and process for recruitment
- The Council 'Blueprint'
- Next stages

Councillor Ebbatson advised that the principle issues for the Council over the following 5 months would be: -

- Maintaining service standards within the District
- Delivery of People and Places priority actions
- Supporting staff at a time of significant change
- Preparing the 'handing over the baton' work to convey best practice in the work with our community, their priorities and aspirations for the future.

Councillor P Nathan asked whether any decision had been made on the future operation of the planning service.

The Leader advised that the Strategic Team had already amalgamated.

The Chief Executive advised that development control would remain with Districts until vesting day. Pre work on standard formats and consistency of approach was being undertaken. Consideration of devolution of planning decisions and other key decisions was yet to be made by the Cabinet of the County Council.

The Leader accepted that the local element of planning was a concern and advised that the Executive Assistant was investigating with other unitary authorities as to how they dealt with devolution of planning.

Councillor SCL Westrip commented that in the absence of Area Action Partnerships local Parish Councils would be able to submit comments on planning applications.

Councillor Nathan expressed his concern that decisions had not been taken by the County Council.

The Chief Executive stated that the timing of decisions by the County Council was for the Chief Executive and Cabinet to decide. He advised that the County Council had a list of 'must have' key decisions to be made by vesting day. Progress was being made on software consolidation, uniform charging policies and strategies.

Councillor Westrip referred to the document circulated containing the results of public consultation about Area Action Partnerships and expressed concern that the Partnerships would not follow District boundaries.

The Leader indicated she would be happy to include any comments in a response to the political leaders of the County Council.

Councillor Nathan enquired whether the County Council's budgetary proposals were available and whether they reflected the savings indicated in the bid.

The Chief Executive advised that the County Council was collating all of the information from the Districts on budgets and balances. He confirmed that the County Treasurer had reassured Leaders that the savings were achievable.

Councillor M May enquired whether the Council Tax would be decided before vesting day.

The Chief Executive advised that information and consultation on the budget would be the responsibility of the County Council.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council would continue to provide services up to vesting day. He advised that additional workloads because of local government review was putting a strain on staff but confirmed that services would continue to be provided to the public.

New Council Size

Councillor Westrip advised that the Boundary Committee had indicated it would not welcome any proposals for new Town or Parish Councils whilst it was undertaking a review of electoral boundaries for the Unitary Council. Currently there were 126 County Councillors but the Boundary Committee would prefer a lesser number. He advised that the Boundary Committee had indicated it would accept multi Member wards. He confirmed that there was cross party support at the County Council for a membership of not less than 126.

65. USE OF EARMARKED RESERVES 2007/2008

This item was withdrawn.

66. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008

This item was withdrawn.

67. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

This item was withdrawn.

68. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/2008

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Corporate Finance advising that the audit of the 2007/2008 accounts was still ongoing and proposing an amended timetable and way forward for approval of the accounts.

The Head of Corporate Finance explained in detail the reasons for the delay in the audit as outlined in the report.

The Leader advised having met with the District Auditor on the matter and confirmed that the Auditor was comfortable with the revised timetable and that there would be no legal implications to the Council. She stressed that it was important the revised timetable was adhered to.

The Leader thanked the Head of Corporate Finance and his staff for their work on the audit.

Councillor SCL Westrip proposed, seconded by Councillor GK Davidson, that the draft resolution circulated be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That, notwithstanding the Scheme of Delegation to Other Committees in Part 3D and notwithstanding the Financial Regulations in Part 4F of the Council’s Constitution, the Audit Committee be delegated, under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, the responsibility and the power to consider and to determine whether or not to formally accept and approve, with or without amendment, the Council’s accounts for the year 2007/2008 and be delegated any incidental powers relating thereto.

2. That the Chairman of the Audit Committee in the event of any such approval shall sign and date the said accounts and duly complete the letter of representation.

3. That any resulting decision made by the Audit Committee be reported back to the Council for information at the next suitable meeting of the Council.”

Councillor P Nathan abstained from voting on the motion.

The Leader advised that the Audit Committee would meet during week ending 17 October 2008 and would be open for all Members to attend. Agenda papers for the Audit Committee meeting would be sent to all Members of the Council.

Councillor A Humes left the meeting at 7.10pm

69. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services regarding the payment of a special responsibility allowance to the Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the report.

Councillor G Armstrong advised that the Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was leading a Task and Finish Group and continuing his role previously undertaken as Chairman of a Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor G Armstrong proposed, seconded by Councillor JW Barrett, that the recommendation in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That the responsibilities and/or duties being asked of and undertaken by the Vice Chairman of the new enlarged single Overview and Scrutiny Committee are such as to attract the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance.

2. That the Vice Chairman, Councillor D Holding, be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance of £2,173.57 per annum for so long as he discharges those responsibilities and/or duties, with immediate effect.”

The meeting terminated at 7.13 pm

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THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the meeting of the Audit Committee held in Conference Room No 3, Civic Centre, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 16 September 2008 at 3.00pm

Members Present: Councillors G Armstrong (Chairman), R Harrison, JM Proud and J Shiell.

Officers Present: J Elder (Acting Head of Resources), M Welsh (Acting Head of Internal Audit) and C Turnbull (Democratic Services Officer).

Also in Attendance: Rodney Walker (Audit Manager).

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

14. MI NUTES OF MEETING HELD 3 JULY 2008

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the Committee held 3 July 2008 copies of which had previously been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

16. AUDIT AND INSPECTION PLAN 2008/2009

The Chairman welcomed Rodney Walker, Audit Manager, to the meeting.

Mr Walker thanked the Chairman for the welcome and apologised for the late issue of the Audit and Inspection Plan. He advised that closure of the 2008/2009 accounts would be the responsibility of the District Council. The Audit Plan set out the audit and inspection work that was proposed to be undertaken for the 2008/2009 financial year, based on the Audit Commission's risk-based approach to audit planning and the requirements of moving towards Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Referring specifically to the Plan, Mr Walker made the following observations:

- Fees - The Data Quality approach had changed and although the planned total audit fee would increase there would be reductions in the Inspection Fee and for Certification of Claims and Returns.

- Financial Statements – A Risk Assessment had still to be undertaken and would be carried out after completion of the Final Audit that was scheduled for the following week.
- Key Risks – The Key Risks identified in the Plan were highlighted and Mr Walker advised that a Direction of Travel Assessment would be required although it might not be a scored assessment. This was planned for February 2009. A Sustainable Communities Inspection would also be required and although it would not be scored it would be published around May 2009.
- Planned Outputs – Annual Audit and Inspection Letters would be produced for the seven District Authorities.
- Certification of Grant Claims and Returns - The figure of £100,000 below which claims would not be subject to certification, was a nationally set figure.

The Acting Head of Resources advised that the County Council Bid included a resource for closure of District Council Accounts. He stated that the Annual Governance Statement would be submitted to the Audit Committee in March 2009.

In response to a question from a Member, Mr Walker confirmed that should anything be identified as a problem due to lack of staff numbers, it would be reported on with recommendations for resolving the situation.

17. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUDITORS AND OF AUDITED BODIES

Mr Walker advised that the Statement was an update of the 2005 version and referred to what the Audit Commission expects from Councils and what Councils can expect from the Audit Commission.

With regard to the 2007/2008 accounts Mr Walker advised that Actuarial valuations had to be reissued and had resulted in delay in completion of the audit.

Mr Walker advised that auditors were specifically required to review arrangements for monitoring and reviewing performance, including arrangements to ensure data quality, as well as having wide-ranging rights of access to documents and information held in electronic form. He confirmed that auditors had powers to inspect records held by Cestria Community Housing Association.

The meeting terminated at 3.40pm

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the Special Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street on Friday 17 October 2008 at 2.00pm.

Members present: Councillors G Armstrong (Chairman), J Shiell, R Harrison, and J Proud.

Officers present: R Templeman (Chief Executive), I Herberson (Head of Corporate Finance), J Elder (Acting Head of Resources), H Jones (Interim Support from PSC), M Welsh (Acting Head of Internal Audit), K Roberts (Principal Internal Auditor) and D Humble (Democratic Services Assistant)

Also in attendance: Councillor L Armstrong, R Walker (Audit Manager), C Waddell (District Auditor) and C Eddowes (Principal Auditor)

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

19 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 16 SEPTEMBER 2008

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the Committee held 16 September 2008 copies of which had previously been circulated, be confirmed as being a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

21 USE OF EARMARKED RESERVES 2007/2008

The Head of Corporate Finance gave a background to the report and highlighted the level and nature of the earmarked reserves held by the Council and the implications of the settlement as set out in the report for both 2007/2008 and 2008/2009.

He advised of the action taken by officers to rectify the settlement costs, which were outlined in section 1.2 of the report. The Chief Executive spoke on the Local Government Reorganisation Implications and advised that if any potential resource issues did arise that were not included in the Authority's budgets for 2008/09 then consultation would take place with the County Treasurer.

RESOLVED: “That the actions taken by officers to finance the settlement costs highlighted in section 1.2 of the report be noted and the resulting use of earmarked reserves in 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 be approved.”

22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008

Consideration was given to the Annual Treasury Report, which covered the treasury activity for 2007/08 and the actual prudential indicators for 2007/08.

RESOLVED:

“1. That the actual 2007/08 prudential indicators detailed in the report be approved.

2. That the Treasury Management stewardship report for 2007/08 be noted.”

23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

Consideration was given to the Annual Governance Report. The District Auditor summarised the findings from the 2007/08 audit and identified the key issues to be considered.

He referred in particular to the key areas of judgement and audit risk and highlighted the following issues:

- Stock transfer issues
- Financial guarantees
- Pension issues
- Deeds and Land Registry Title (proof of assets)
- Strengthening of Quality control

Particular mention was made in relation to internal control and the fact that there was a good knowledge base. The Chief Executive advised that this would be an area that would need to be monitored in light of the Local Government Review. The Chief Executive also spoke in relation to compatibility of financial management systems and dealing with the close down of the accounts.

The District Auditors gave thanks to all the Officers who had supported them through the audit particularly Ian Herberson and Henry Jones for all their hard work and support. The Chairman also gave thanks to all the Officers and the District Auditors on behalf of the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED:

“1. That the matters raised in the report be considered before approving the revised financial statements.

2. That adjustments be made to the financial statements as set out in the recommendations.
3. That the representation letter be approved on behalf of the Council prior to issue of the Auditor's opinion, conclusion and certificate.
4. That the proposed action plan be agreed."

24 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/2008

Consideration was given to a report on the Statement of Accounts for 2007/2008 that had now been completed.

The Head of Corporate Finance spoke on the report and highlighted the key adjustments, which were listed in Section 5.3 of the report. He thanked the Chief Executive for the work he had undertaken on future years impact and regulations on proof of ownership.

RESOLVED: "That the 2007/08 Statement of Accounts following audit, be approved."

25 INTERNAL AUDIT WORK COMPLETED

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Internal Audit giving an update of the findings of Internal Audit work completed within the first half of the 2008/09 financial year. The report contained summaries of audits on Leisure Vending Machines, Accounts Receivable and Treasury Management.

Leisure Vending Machines

The Principal Internal Auditor spoke to the report and advised of the key findings. He advised that recommendations to address the current issues and further improve the arrangements had been agreed with the Leisure Services Manager and Assistant Operations Manager.

Accounts Receivable

The Principal Internal Auditor spoke to the report and advised of the key findings. He advised that recommendations to address the current issues and further improve the arrangements had been agreed with the relevant Managers.

It was suggested that in light of the Local Government Review there would be a need to re-issue guidance for the debtor system to be considered across the District. The Acting Head of Internal Audit agreed to raise this at the next meeting of Chief Auditors.

Treasury Management

The Principal Internal Auditor spoke to the report and advised of the key findings. He advised that no recommendations were made as part of this audit.

RESOLVED: "That the reports on completed audit assignments and progress on the implementation of recommendations be noted."

26 INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Internal Audit on the activity and performance of Internal Audit for the first half of the financial year 2008/09.

The Chairman made reference to the good sickness performance within the section.

The Acting Head of Resources gave thanks to the Officers in the Audit Team for their support and also to the Members.

RESOLVED: "That the information contained in the report be noted."

The Meeting terminated at 3.15pm.



Chester-le-Street District Council

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting: 20 November 2008

Report from: Chief Executive

Title of Report: Amendments to the Schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Agenda Item Number:

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 The Council is required to produce each year lists of Parliamentary and Local Government electors and these are published on the 1 December in the form of the Register of Electors. Currently each of the seven district authorities in the County publishes their own Electoral Register. As a consequence of local government reorganisation, with effect from 1 April 2009 there will be only one Electoral Register covering the whole of the County Council area.
- 1.2 Currently each of the seven district authorities is responsible for identifying their own Polling District letters that make up their Register of Electors. With the need to amalgamate all of the Registers on 1 April 2009 it will be necessary to revise all of the Polling District letters in order to avoid duplication of the letters.
- 1.3 This exercise has been undertaken by the Electoral Officers Workstream when the opportunity was also taken to make the Polling District letters more identifiable with Parliamentary Constituencies.
- 1.4 It is proposed that the revised Polling District letters be implemented by each district authority in the County for the Registers of Electors to be published on 1 December 2008, thus avoiding the need for a new Register to be published for the County area on 1 April 2009.
- 1.5 At its meeting on 29 November 2007 the Council agreed to a revised schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations, following a review and it will be necessary to formally amend this schedule to reflect the new Polling District letters.

1.6 A schedule listing the current and revised Polling District letters is appended to this report.

1.7 It is recommended:

That the schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations agreed at the Council Meeting on 29 November 2007 be amended to reflect the new Polling District letters detailed on the appendix to the report.

2. Consultation

2.1 The matter has been raised with and the suggested course of action agreed with representatives of the Electoral Commission and Durham County Council.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

3.1 No implications

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

There are no financial implications.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Issues

With effect from 1 April 2009 there will be one Register of Electors for the County Council area. By reviewing the Polling District letters at this time it will avoid the need to republish the Register of Electors on 1 April 2009.

4.3 Legal

There is a legal requirement for the Council to produce annual lists of Parliamentary and Local Government electors. This requirement is met by publication of the Register of Electors.

4.4 Personnel

There are no personnel implications directly associated with this report. The action proposed is, however, the first step towards amalgamating the electoral services sections across the County.

4.5 Other Services

There are no implications to other services.

4.6 Diversity

There are no diversity issues.

4.7 Risk

Failure to review the Polling District letters at this time will result in a review having to be undertaken immediately after 1 April 2009 and the publication of a revised Register of Electors for the whole County area.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other implications.

5. **Recommendations**

5.1 It is recommended:

That the schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations agreed at the Council Meeting on 29 November 2007 be amended to reflect the new Polling District letters detailed on the appendix to the report.

6. **Background Papers/ Documents referred to**

6.1 Schedule of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

AUTHOR NAME
DESIGNATION
DATE OF REPORT
VERSION NUMBER

Colin Turnbull
Democratic Services Officer
7 November 2008
1

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Schedule of Polling Districts

<u>District Ward</u>	<u>Current Polling District Letters</u>	<u>Revised Polling District Letters</u>
Bournmoor	AD	NDA1
	AE	NDA2
Lumley	AF	NDB1
	AG	NDB2
Chester East	D	NDC1
	C	NDC2
	Z	NDC3
Kibblesworth & Plawsworth	W	NDD1
	X	NDD2
	Y	NDD3
Sacriston	U	NDE1
	V	NDE2
Edmonsley & Waldrige	AA	NDF1
	AB	NDF2
	AC	NDF3
	AS	NDF4
Grange Villa & West Pelton	AK	NDG1
	AL	NDG2
	AM	NDG3
	S	NDG4
Pelton Fell	L	NDH1
	M	NDH2
Chester West	I	NDI1
	J	NDI2
	K	NDI3
Chester South	H	NDJ1
Chester Central	F	NDK1
	G	NDK2
Chester North	A	NDL1
	B	NDL2
	C	NDL3
North Lodge	AP	NDM1
	AR	NDM2

<u>District Ward</u>	<u>Current Polling District Letters</u>	<u>Revised Polling District Letters</u>
Pelton	AH	NDN1
	AI	NDN2
	AJ	NDN3
	AO	NDN4
	AQ	NDN5
Ouston	N	NDO1
	O	NDO2
	P	NDO3
Urpeth	AN	NDP1
	Q	NDP2
	R	NDP3
	T	NDP4



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting: 20 November 2008

Report from: Director of Corporate Services

Title of Report: Holiday Arrangements – Christmas and New Year 2008/09

Agenda Item Number:

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to approve arrangements for the Christmas and New Year period 2008/2009.
- 1.2 It is usual practice for the council to award concessionary days to staff to facilitate the close down of most council services over the Christmas period. This year it is proposed to close such services between lunchtime on the 24 December 2008 and reopen on 2nd January 2008. The report proposes that members agree to approve statutory and concessionary holidays during that period.
- 1.3 Members are recommended to
1. Approve the extra statutory and concessionary Christmas Holidays
 2. Agree that employees who are required to work on extra statutory holidays and concessionary days will be given time in lieu to be taken at a later date in consultation with the appropriate Service Team Manager

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The Authority does not have any specific policy on Christmas and New Year holiday arrangements. Traditionally the two extra statutory days available to employees have been allocated between Christmas and New Year following employee consultation a number of years ago. Consultation has been undertaken with corporate management team.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

- 3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven

priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.

3.3 The links to the Council's previous Corporate Plan are in respect of customer excellence in that where services are of a nature that they are required to continue during the Christmas period, arrangements will be made to accommodate this.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

It is not considered that there are any implications to Local Government Reorganisation

4.2 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Personnel

Employees in service areas who are required to work during the "close down" period, during the Christmas and New Year break, are entitled to leave at a later date in lieu of the extra statutory and approved concessionary holiday(s) subject to local management approval.

4.5 Other Services

There are no specific issues to raise in respect of this report recommendations.

4.6 Diversity

The Council recognises that there are diversity implications in relation to religion, as not all employees will celebrate the Christmas religious festival. The Council will if possible honour other religious festivals and where there are employees who wish to take their extra statutory holidays at an alternative time of the year, alternative provisions will be made wherever possible.

4.7 Risk

The risks associated with not approving this report are that the Council could be deemed to be breaching employee's contracts of employment, as it is an

implied term for a large proportion of employees that they are entitled to take their two extra statutory holidays between Christmas and New Year.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no known implications for Crime and Disorder.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate valid, reliable, timely, relevant and comprehensive. The Council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other known implications as a result of this report

5. Background, position Statement and options appraisal.

5.1 In previous years Members have agreed holiday arrangements between Christmas and New Year. This report outlines the proposals for this current year. Generally the result is to close down most Council services between Christmas and New Year using extra statutory holidays and awarding one concessionary day.

5.2 Public Holidays are fixed as follows:

Thursday 25 December 2008	Christmas Day
Friday 26 December 2008	Boxing Day
Thursday 1 January 2009	New Year's Day

5.3 Employees have an entitlement to two extra statutory days leave which traditionally have been allocated to working days between 27 December and 1 January to extend the holiday period for employees.

5.4 Members have regularly agreed one concessionary day to help achieve a complete close down of administrative centres.

5.5 This year the Christmas and New Year period is over two weeks and for the Council to close for the entire period following Christmas day, a total of two additional concessionary days would be required. These would be used on Wednesday 31 December 2008 and Friday 2 January 2009.

5.6 The Council's Corporate Management team have considered the different arrangements being made by the other Districts within the County, during this period and concluded that for the Council to close from Thursday 25 December 2008 until Monday 5 January 2009, would not be in the best interests of public service.

- 5.7 In order for the Council to provide an acceptable level of customer service throughout this period, Corporate Management team recommend that the Council opens as a normal working day on Friday 2 January 2009. It is proposed that each Service Team Manager considers their minimum staffing requirements for this day and authorises any requests for annual leave accordingly.
- 5.8 Christmas Eve is usually a relatively quiet day for the Council and during the afternoon period especially there is little contact from the public. Therefore it is recommended that the Council opens for the morning and Members approve an additional half a day (3.42 hours) on a concessionary basis for the afternoon and the Council closes.
- 5.9 Many direct services continue to operate during the period e.g. Refuse collection, Leisure Centre, Golf Course etc. The employees who are required to attend work are able to take additional leave at a later date.
- 5.10 Detailed below are the proposed Christmas and New Year holiday arrangements for 2008/2009.

Wednesday 24 December 2008	Normal Working morning / concessionary half day - afternoon
Thursday 25 December 2008	Christmas Day
Friday 26 December 2008	Boxing Day
Monday 29 December 2008	Extra Statutory Day
Tuesday 30 December 2008	Extra Statutory Day
Wednesday 31 December 2008	Concessionary Day
Thursday 1 January 2009	New Year's Day
Friday 2 January 2009	Official return to work day

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to

1. Approve the extra statutory and concessionary Christmas Holidays
2. Agree that employees who are required to work on extra statutory holidays / Concessionary days will be given time in lieu to be taken at a later date in consultation with the appropriate Service Team Manager

7. Background papers

**7.1 Christmas and New Year Holiday File
Human Resources**

**Ian Forster
Director of Corporate Services
20 November 2008
VERS 1.0**

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to: Full Council

Date of Meeting: November 2008

Report from: Senior Sustainability Officer

Title of Report: A Climate Change Strategy for Chester-le-Street

Agenda Item Number:

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to Full Council for approval the climate change strategy for Chester-le-Street.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultation process for this strategy has included elected members, service teams across the council including planning, regeneration, environmental services and leisure services.
- 2.2 External consultation has also taken place through the Environmental, Housing and Planning sub-group of the LSP, The Federation of Environmental Groups, Durham County Council and individual members of the public.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The strategy contributes to Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan – regenerating the District, Chester-le-Street's regeneration strategy by ensuring low carbon solutions are included in regeneration projects, the benefits of which are felt by our communities. The strategy also helps to ensure compliance with National Indicators NI185, 186 and 188, the latter two of which are both included in the Local Area Agreement Chester-le-Street District Council also committed itself to writing a climate change strategy after signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on climate change in July 2007

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial & Value for Money

There is no financial implications for Chester-le-Street DC, though the New Unitary Authority for Durham will need to invest in both adaptation measures to

lower the impact of severe weather events caused by climate change such as flooding or excessive heat and mitigation measures such as installation of cavity wall and loft insulations, low carbon technologies such as biomass and renewable technologies and advice provision.

4.2 Legal

This report does not raise any specific legal implications.

4.3 Personnel

A successful Climate Change Strategy will require resources to implement it and these are fully detailed in the action plan, however these are currently being included in the development of a Low Carbon Strategy for County Durham. .

4.4 Other services

Climate Change impacts on the Council ability to deliver its statutory functions including grounds maintenance, refuse collection, access to services etc.

4.5 Diversity

The Strategy has no implicit Diversity implications as it is a cross-cutting issue

4.5 Risk

The strategy is an important step in assessing the long-term risks Climate Change will have on Chester-le-Street. By having a strategy going into the new authority, the requirements of Chester-le-street will receive significant input into it's priority areas as opposed to those areas without a strategy.

4.6 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications in this strategy

4.7 Other implications

There are no other implications arising from this report.

4.8 Data Quality assurance

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

5. BACKGROUND. POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL.

- 5.1 In July 2007, Chester-le-Street District Council became a signatory on the Nottingham Declaration on climate change. The signing of this document committed the Council to developing a climate change strategy.
- 5.2 In April 2008, three new indicators specific to carbon management and climate change were included in the National Indicator performance set; NI185, The CO₂ emissions for Local Authority Operations, NI186, The CO₂ emissions per capita across the Local Authority Area, and NI188 Adaptation to Climate Change. Of these three indicators, NI186 and NI188 are both included in the Local Area Agreement for County Durham and NI186 is currently being introduced into the Multi Area Agreement for the Tyne and Wear City Region which encompasses Chester-le-Street.
- 5.3 With the Introduction of these indicators into the LAA, it was agreed that a County Wide approach was required to addressing Climate Change to ensure performance on these indicators and Chester-le-Streets Senior Sustainability Officer has become the lead for this co-ordination under the LGR process. However, due to the diverse nature of County Durham, it has also been agreed that each area needs to have its own action plan to address those issues that are specific only to that area. The development of this Chester-le-Street strategy will ensure that the specific needs of the Chester-le-Street community will be taken into account.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that Council approves the strategy and adopts it on behalf of Chester-le-Street district.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

Andy Stephenson
Senior Sustainability Officer
Tel 0191 387 2158

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DRAFT COPY

Chester-le-Street District Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Contents

A Short Tale

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Context**
- 3. Local Effects of Climate Change**
- 4. Actions Already Taken**
- 5. Carbon Emissions baseline and progress for Chester-le-Street**
- 6. Key priority areas**
- 7. Action Plan**
- 8. References**
- 9. Appendices**
 - i. List of Policies and Legislation*
 - ii. List of Acronyms*
 - iii. Useful Numbers and Contacts*

A Short Tale

A normal day in 2037 is unbelievably different to a normal day in 2007. You cannot walk along the street without seeing overflowing recycling boxes. Everybody is mad about recycling now, when my mam and dad were young, nobody was really that bothered about it. They would recycle glass and tins and paper but still some people just put them in the bin.

Mam and Dad used to get the car or the bus to school. When they told me that, I didn't have a clue what a car was! The only way of transport now is by boat, as the flooding is that bad. In our house every single light bulb is an energy efficient light bulb. Mam and Dad used to change their light bulb every few months. Every where you look now all you see is windturbines. There's no such thing as fossil fuels and power stations now. We don't have a outside tap either, we have water butts to collect the rain water and we use that to water the garden. Not that we have to water the garden very often because it rains that much.

We Grow our own vegetables in our own gardens as getting to the shop isn't as easy as it used to be. Everybody has compost bins in their gardens and everybody uses them. We also have solar panels on our roof and we are prosecuted if we don't unplug our phone chargers or if we leave anything on stand-by.

I still cannot believe that my Mam and Dad didn't try and do anything to help. They never thought about us. It didn't matter when they were my age. They never thought about their future. The planet has been ruined. They never realised how lucky they were.

By Lauren Moss.
Fyndoune Community College.

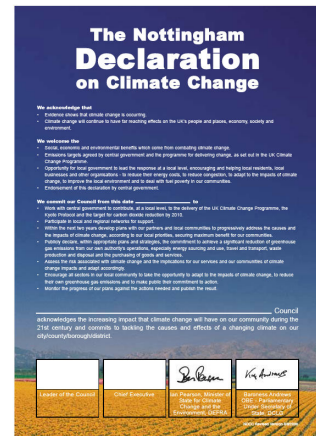
Executive Summary

“Our actions over the coming decades could create risks of major disruption to economic and social activity, later in this century, on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the 20th century”

HM TREASURY (2006), The Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change, Cambridge University Press

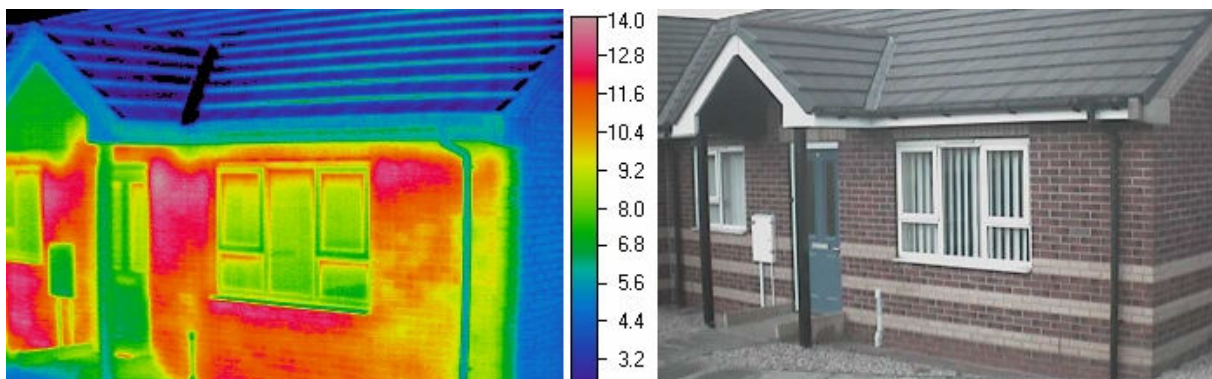
In signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, Chester-le-Street District Council made a commitment to help tackle the threat of climate change. The aim of this Climate Change Strategy and accompanying Action Plan is to make a significant contribution to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions across the district and develop adaptation plans to counteract the effects that Climate Change will have.

As the District Council, Chester-le-Street District Council is in a position to lead by example in its actions to combat Climate Change. The Council has over the past 12 years shown this by carrying out schemes and awareness raising projects across the District which has led to it having the lowest Carbon Footprint per Capita in the North East. This Figure currently stands at 5.83 tonnes of CO₂ per person, where the National Average is 7.5 Tonnes of CO₂ per person.



The actions of this strategy will result in direct benefits to local communities, local businesses and council operations. Communities will benefit from warmer healthier homes, lower energy bills, increased employment opportunities and a more sustainable environment. While reduced operational costs for local business could increase profits encouraging growth which in turn helps to increase local employment with subsequent benefits to the local economy.

This Climate Change Strategy sets out an Action Plan detailing proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the district. It highlights the opportunities for local actions and the opportunities for local communities and local businesses to save energy.



Thermal Image of a Bungalow in Chester-le-Street – the Red indicates high heat loss through the walls. This can be cured by installing cavity wall Insulation

1. Introduction

Climate change has the potential to cause human suffering on an unparalleled scale. If left unchecked, climate change is predicted to disrupt food supplies, cause conflict over energy and water and devastate efforts to eradicate world poverty. Recent flooding in parts of the UK (Including Chester-le-Street) and the heat wave in central Europe in 2003, which killed an estimated 27,000 people, demonstrates how vulnerable we are to extreme weather events.



Flooding at the River Cong in 2000

Some changes to the climate are now inevitable. This strategy sets out how we can adapt to these changes and details measures to reduce the impacts in our district. The case for action is extremely pressing. The majority of scientists agree that if emissions are not substantially reduced immediately, many more billions of tonnes of greenhouse gasses could be released into the atmosphere from permafrost, rainforests and the world's oceans, greatly accelerating the rate of global warming. Many identify this level as a 2°C rise in average world temperatures.

Tackling Climate Change requires a two-pronged approach to help tackle the issues surrounding climate change by attending to:

Mitigation – Action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council services and activities. This is required to help limit the most severe impacts of climate change.

Adaptation – Action to minimise the adverse impacts of climate change and to take advantage of the opportunities that it might present.

Chester-le-Street DC will play a fundamental role in Implementing these actions due to its:

- **Direct connections with local communities and businesses;**
- **Opportunities to stimulate and support local communities, organisations and businesses to make the changes necessary to benefit themselves and the local economy;**
- **Ability to make national issues become locally relevant ;**

The Climate Change Action Plan sets out actions and targets to maximise reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Context

In signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, Chester-le-Street committed itself to developing a Climate Change Strategy to take the agenda forward across the District. This however is not the sole reason for developing the strategy and there are many obligations placed upon Local Authorities and this strategy provides the framework to bring together the Council's aspirations with statutory obligations

To aid local authorities in developing climate change programmes, a number of policies and agreements have been developed at an international, national and local level (Appendix 2). These policies and strategies have one main aim:

- **To reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses.**

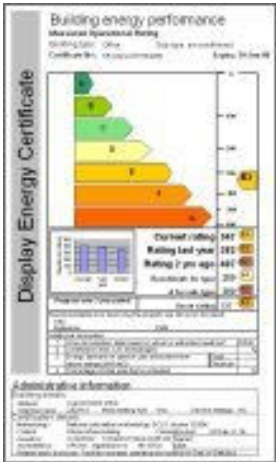
The main context for this is the Government's 'Energy White Paper' published in 2003 and updated in 2007, which states that a cut of 60% in CO2 emissions, by 2050 (using 1990 as the baseline) should be enough to avoid 'catastrophic' climate change (involving a temperature change of above 2°C).

The majority of Council Services are influenced by climate and weather patterns. Planning for change now will avoid unnecessary costs and damage in the future. Local authorities have a responsibility to 'lead the way' in terms of reducing emissions and planning for adaptation. We need to ensure that buildings and infrastructure are sustainable in a changing climate so that services can continue to be provided at reasonable costs and that communities are able to adapt to change.

In 2006, the Local Government White Paper detailed the urgent need for local authorities to act on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and drive local action through strong visible leadership.

The recent changes by Government have led to a large scale push on Carbon Reduction programmes including changes to the Planning System, e.g. the Introduction of the Code for Sustainable Homes to ensure that new developments implement measures so by 2016 all new developments will be Zero carbon.

The introduction of Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) as part of the Home Information Pack (HIP), while controversial are designed to encourage home owners to take up energy efficiency measures in helping to raise the value of their property. Social Landlords, which include Cestria Community Housing, have an obligation to carry out an EPC once a property becomes void from October 1st 2008 and make it available to any prospective tenants. This is designed to give more choice and an understanding of what the energy bills are likely to be.



Also from 1st October 2008, Local Authorities have an obligation on Public buildings over 1000m² to produce a Display Energy Certificate which has to be renewed on an annual basis. These Certificates are to demonstrate to the public how energy efficient the building, is the amount of CO2 emitted and what improvements have been made over time. Chester-le-Street DC has four Buildings that require these certificates. These are the Civic Centre, the Leisure Centre, the Riverside Sports pavilion and the Donald Owen Clarke Centre.

A new national set of indicators that local authorities have to report to Government on includes 4 related to Energy and Climate Change. These are:

National Indicator 185 – The public sector is in a key position to lead on efforts to reduce CO2 emissions by setting a behavioural and strategic example to the private sector and the communities they serve. The way in which the local authority delivers its functions can achieve CO2 emissions reductions. Measurement against this indicator requires each local authority to calculate its CO2 emissions from analysis of the energy and fuel use in their relevant buildings and transport, including where these services have been outsourced.

National Indicator 186 – Local authorities are uniquely placed to provide vision and leadership to local communities by raising awareness and to influence behaviour change. In addition, through their powers and responsibilities (housing, planning, local transport and powers to promote well-being) and by working with their Local Strategic Partnership, LAs can have significant influence over emissions in their local areas. The indicator relies on centrally produced statistics to measure end user CO2 emissions in the Local Area from:

- Business and Public Sector,
- Domestic housing, and
- Road transport

The percentage reduction in CO2 per capita in each LA will be reported annually. The statistics for 2005, the most recent data available, will be used as the baseline from which performance improvements will be measured.

National Indicator 187 – NI187 measures progress in tackling fuel poverty through the improved energy efficiency of households inhabited by people claiming income related benefits

National Indicator 188 – The aim of this indicator is to embed the management of climate risks and opportunities across the all levels of services, plans and estates. It is a process indicator which gauges progress of an LA to:

- Assess the risks and opportunities comprehensively across the area;
- Take action in any identified priority areas;
- Develop an adaptation strategy and action plan setting out the risk assessment, where the priority areas are – where necessary in consultation & exhibiting leadership of local partners - what action is being taken to address these, and how risks will be continually assessed and monitored in the future; and
- Implement, assess and monitor the actions on an ongoing basis.

Chester-le-Street has always been pro-active in its approach to Climate Change. First detailed in the Local Action 21 Plan in 1999 with regard to “*our careless use of energy and the high emissions of CO₂*”, it was adopted as a key priority by the Sustainable Community Strategy in 2003 and as a partner Chester-le-Street DC played a major part in the development of the County Durham Climate Change Strategy published in 2006. The Leader of Chester-le-Street DC, Linda Ebbatson has also played a leading role in the Association of North East Councils (ANEC) task and finish group report on Climate Change which was published in 2007 and the adoption of the actions that have come from that group. This report proved so successful that every Authority in the North East has now signed up to the Declaration – only the second region to achieve this.

Also on a Regional Basis the development of the Climate Change Adaptation on the Wear strategy in 2006 carried out by the Environment Agency and the Northumbria Regional Flood Defence Committee has given a greater insight into what the future effects are likely to be across the catchment area of the River Wear and its tributaries and what measures need to be put into place to minimise these effects. This study proved to be so effective, it led to the North East Adaptation study covering the whole of the region being published in 2008.

On a local, regional and national basis the issue of Climate Change and Carbon management has become more and more high profile. Government firmly sees Local Authorities as one of the key people in tackling the issues and delivering projects in partnerships to reduce the Carbon emissions across the Country. While Chester-le-Street DC has played a major part already in tackling Climate Change, it has a long way to go to make the significant cuts required to hit the Governments Targets.

3. Local effects of Climate Change

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Wear highlighted that the predicted climate changes by the 2050s will not necessarily lead to any single catastrophic impact, risk or disaster in the area. However, when assessing the risks posed by the predicted changes, the two greatest impacts appear likely to be:

- 1) The effects of extreme hot temperatures and increasing number of heatwaves on vulnerable populations, such as babies and the elderly; and
- 2) The impacts of increased sea levels and winter rainfall on flood risk from rivers, streams, and the sea and drainage systems.

Of these, the risks from flooding are presently being addressed in a pro-active manner by the Environment Agency, Local Authorities and Northumbrian Water, involving:

- Flood warnings;
- Land use planning and development control;
- Long term and strategic planning;
- Capital investment in schemes;
- Maintenance of existing structures;
- Research and development into the effects of climate change.

Consideration of both climate changes and management approaches, such as flood storage areas and sustainable drainage systems (Suds), is now common-place and therefore future risks are being identified and planned for

The effect of heatwaves on vulnerable populations is of greater concern. This primarily is because not only are extreme temperatures and the number of heatwaves set to increase notably by the 2050s but predicted demographic changes mean that there will be more people within vulnerable age classes by this time.

During the heatwave in August 2003, the number of deaths in the population over the age of 75 years increased by 22% overall in the UK, During times of high temperatures, increased demand is placed on cooling and refrigeration systems in turn demanding more energy and thereby increasing the very greenhouse gas emissions that are largely causing man-made climate change

There will be also be a number of others impacts experienced across the district by the 2050s. Whilst many of these appear at the present time small in magnitude, they should not be underestimated. This principally is because such impacts will lead to increased maintenance commitments for infrastructure and buildings and, unless these maintenance needs are adequately met, there will be progressive deterioration in engineering condition. When combined with an increase in a particular weather aspect, the full impact could become manifest through a gradual deterioration over time, rather than a single sudden event, but nonetheless may ultimately be equally damaging.

These impacts will affect the ability of the Local Authority to deliver its services. Key impacts on Service Delivery include:

- Higher risk of flooding / erosion of developments in floodplains;
- Increased risk of severe weather events causing disruption;
- Higher risk of subsidence as soils shrink in hotter drier summers;
- Changing design parameters, in response to new climatic conditions.

- Temperature increases will affect thermal comfort of buildings;
 - Increase in air conditioning costs;
 - Extreme weather events causing damage to building infrastructure;
 - Wetter winters causing damp, condensation and mould problems;
 - Higher average temperatures will reduce the need for space heating.
-
- Increase in excess summer deaths, decrease in excess winter deaths, but sudden cold spells have greater impact;
 - Higher risk of skin cancer / sun burn;
 - Increase in heat stress cases, especially amongst vulnerable people;
 - Higher levels of dust in the air leading to an increase in respiratory problems;
 - Greater potential for outdoor activities may improve the health and fitness of residents.

Other potential issues locally include

- Higher temperatures could increase the cases of food poisoning;
- More frequent flooding from foul and surface water drainage systems.
- Increase in grass growth rate leading to year round maintenance;
- Loss of native plant and animal species;
- Increased rainfall intensity causing local flooding;
- Increased risk of grassland and forest fires.
- Rubbish will decay more rapidly in higher summer temperatures.
- Increased potential for tourism as the region warms;
- Greater potential for businesses to relocate from the south of the country as water resources become scarce;
- Increase in insurance claims and premiums due to extreme weather events.

4. Actions already taken

Over the past 12 years Chester-le-Street has primarily focussed its efforts in tackling Climate Change on measures in the domestic sector with energy conservation and fuel poverty programmes. The Warm and Healthy Homes scheme launched in 2003 and the COSY grant provided energy saving advice and grants to householders across Chester-le-Street District.



**Warm and
Healthy Homes**

This period of time has seen over £6million invested in Social and Private sector housing through the Council, Utility Companies and support agencies. It has resulted in Insulation measures and new high efficiency boilers being installed to over 16,000 homes – approximately 65% of all housing across the District. The Big Successes include Sacriston where 99% of dwellings have had measures fitted and 95% all dwellings in Grange Villa.



People attending a Warm and Healthy Homes roadshow at Bullion Hall

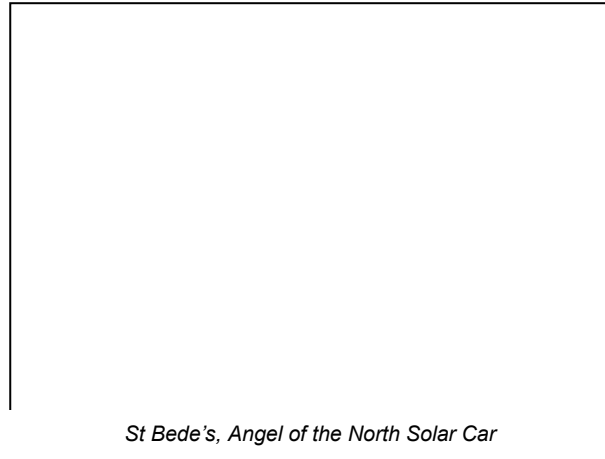
Between 2003 and 2006 The Council carried out a series of road shows to residents in conjunction with partner agencies including the Fire Service, The Energy Savings Trust, Warm Front, The Pensions Service and Citizens Advice; helping to advise people on grants and assistance that is available to keep warm, reduce energy bills, become more energy efficient and keep safe in their own homes. The road shows proved very popular with over 50 events and over 8000 people attended over this period. The events have also featured at Flu-Jab days in doctor's surgeries and given talks to community groups and other organisations.

Targeting and identifying those areas that need most assistance is always a difficult task and in 2004 with partnership funding, the Council commissioned an Aerial Thermal Infra-Red imaging survey of the area. The results of the survey highlighted areas across the district with high heat loss in housing and these were effectively targeted over the next few years significantly helping to reduce the Carbon Emissions across the area

Thermal Image picture of Area

Awareness Raising schemes have taken place in conjunction with schools and through events in the Town Centre

In 2005, Chester-le-Street took part in the Regional Solar Car Challenge, where primary schools built and designed a solar car to take part in a race. Heats were held at the Riverside Stadium and the three winners chosen represented the District at the Regional Final held at

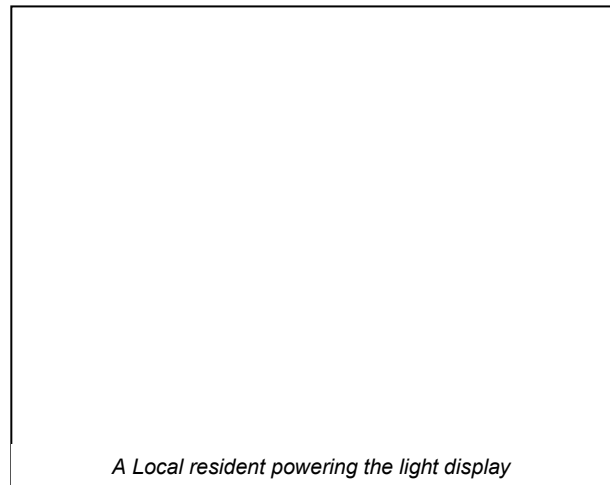


St Bede's, Angel of the North Solar Car

Nissan in Washington. The three schools that entered the finals were Roseberry Primary School, Red Rose Primary School and St Bede's School. Red Rose and Roseberry primary school qualified for the final race in the speed category. Both schools had an excellent race, coming second and third respectively. Red Rose also managed to gain second place in the design category. The Solar Car project gave the children a chance to learn about and use a renewable energy technology in a fun and interesting way.

In 2007 another awareness raising campaign took place in conjunction with the local schools around the future of Chester-le-Street District and what it may look like in 30 years time Focusing on how we will live and travel, talks took place to around 20 schools and over 1000 pupils on what effect Climate Change was having on the District and how weather had changed dramatically over the past 20 years. Over 500 entries were received into a competition organised by Chester-le-Street DC ranging from articles by children in secondary schools to drawing of transport and homes from pupils in primary schools. The winners were selected by Trai Anfield of BBC Look North and were used in a newspaper that was sent as a wraparound in the Chester-le-Street Advertiser in November of that year. The winning entry was by Lauren Moss and her article appears as the short story at the beginning of this strategy

The Christmas Lights in Chester-le-Street have recently been changed from standard light fittings to LED. These reduced the energy consumption by over 94% and 540 kW of energy in the first year of its operation alone. To give a practical demonstration of how energy efficient the Christmas lights were, Chester-le-Street developed an energy bike that was used light up a Christmas Display at the switch-on of the Christmas Lights in December. The Bike was connected up to a generator that used human power to generate the energy to light the display. Supported by Npower, The principle behind the display was to demonstrate how little energy the Christmas Lights were using in comparison to previous years by actually being lit from Pedal Power. The event proved to be very successful and attracted local and regional media attention.



A Local resident powering the light display

There have also been many other successful approaches and innovative ways of tackling climate change from the use of hand held thermal imaging cameras on properties to working

in partnership with De-Montfort University in developing methods to encourage the uptake of low carbon technologies across the area.

The production of this Strategy develops the plans for mitigation of climate change through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions beyond the domestic side and will also encompass the following activities:

- **Council operations, changes in practices could result in significant reductions in utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. council buildings energy consumption, planning policy, waste management, transport);**
- **Sectors outside direct council control where local partners can influence change (i.e. business energy consumption, local communities and individual choice).**

Carbon Neutral Edmondsley

An ambitious scheme to reduce the carbon emissions of Edmondsley has been instigated by the Council in partnership with several organisations including the village itself. A feasibility study was carried out in 2004, which identified that the village's energy demand could be met by renewable technology. This could be carried out through an embedded energy system with district heating. The plan is to develop a centralised energy plant that will generate heat and electricity for the village. The heat in turn would be distributed to each dwelling who joins the scheme via an underground pipework network. The electricity generated in turn would be fed into the national grid, but used to subsidise the village's needs.

While the concept itself, is fairly simple, there are many issues and areas that need to be developed before the schemes can be undertaken. This includes gaining full support of the village, ensuring that the proposed technology is acceptable to the residents and the infrastructure is put into place to support the scheme.

There has already been a considerable amount of work carried out in the village, This includes improvements to insulation, heating systems, and general building repairs as well as carrying out a comprehensive thermal imaging study of the village. This has allowed for the first time a greater understanding of weakness occurring in the fabric of the buildings and the routes through which heat escapes the properties and what work can be carried out to prevent this from occurring.

5. Carbon Dioxide Emissions Baseline and progress for Chester-le-Street

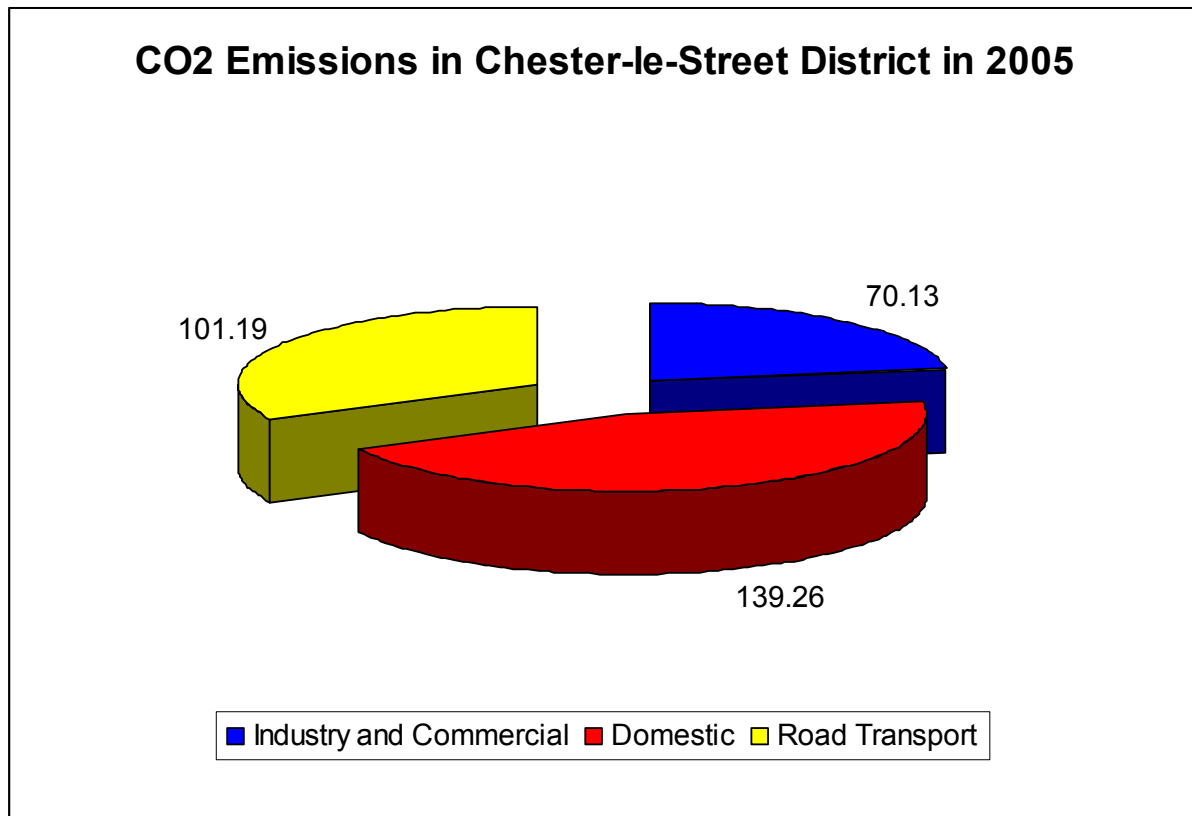
Using energy data collected by DEFRA for national use, In 2005* Carbon dioxide emissions for the district were measured as 326,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum. The diagram below identifies emissions from the following sectors:

- Domestic Sector
- Local Industry/Business
- Local Road Transport

By setting this emissions baseline it will enable the impacts of future greenhouse gas reduction activities to be assessed.

**The 2005 Data used is the agreed Baseline figures set by Government*

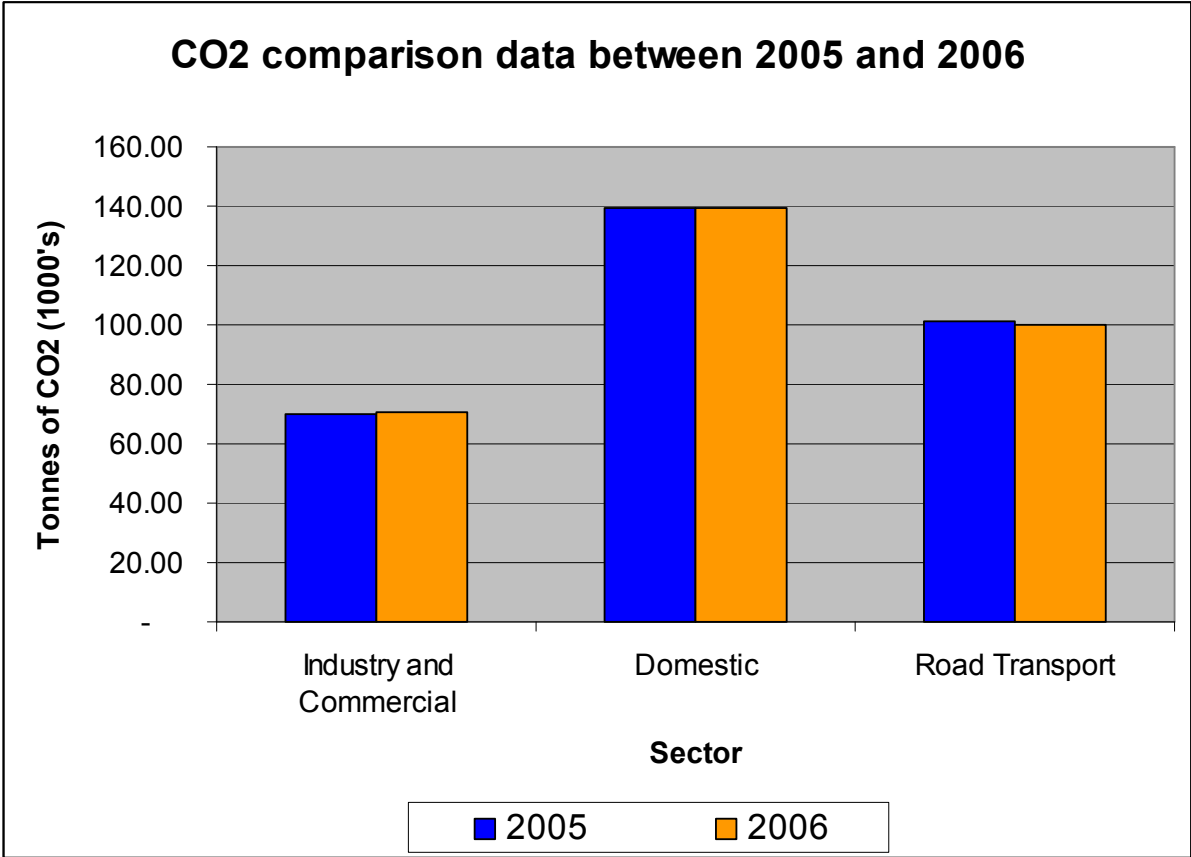
Figure 1
Carbon Dioxide Emissions Baseline for Chester-le-Street District (total approx 310,450 tonnes)



The above chart shows that by far the biggest contributor to CO₂ emissions in Chester-le-street is Domestic Housing followed By Transport. As the District is primarily a commuting Town, this is to be expected and also highlights where the key areas the action plan will be directed towards.

Recently the 2006 figures were released for the district. These have shown a slight decrease in carbon emissions across the district. CO2 has gone down from 310,450 tonnes to 310,130 tonnes. However not all energy consumption was reduced. While reductions have been made in the use of gas, solid fuel and oil, especially in housing, there have been large rises in the consumption of electricity in business and housing. This is mainly due to the rise of plasma and LCD technology in home entertainment, increased sales of portable air conditioning systems (as 2006 had a particularly hot summer) and the increased purchases of IT equipment. The result of this increased usage is that Chester-le-Street has effectively “stood still” in effectively reducing carbon. It also shows that one of the key priorities for this strategy is awareness raising to ensure people understand how to use energy efficiently and effectively at home and at work e.g. switch it off!

Figure 2
Carbon Dioxide Emissions comparison for Chester-le-Street District between 2005 and 2006



6. Key Priority Areas

The overall aims of the Climate Change Strategy are to:

- Highlight the benefits of reducing energy use and carbon emissions to local communities and business sectors
- Set realistic targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the District
- Ensure appropriate stakeholders/partners participate in the strategy with appropriate responsibility for delivery of actions
- Establish a methodology and mechanisms for monitoring progress

These aims will be highlighted in each of 5 key areas for action:

- 1) Domestic
- 2) Commercial and Public
- 3) Transport
- 4) Zero and Low Carbon Technologies
- 5) Awareness Raising

While each of these areas is important to ensuring Climate Change is effectively tackled many of the issues are cross-cutting

7. Climate Change Action Plan

1) Actions for CO₂ savings in the Domestic Sector

Existing Performance

Chester-le-Street District Council is already involved with a significant number of initiatives to improve the quality and energy efficiency of the housing in the district including:

- Warm and Healthy Homes Campaign assists households and fuel poor to claim the range of grants available to improve the energy efficiency of their homes
- In partnership with the Go-Warm Area based Scheme in County Durham and Warm Front, there exist a variety of free or discounted home insulation schemes
- High priority of eliminating fuel poverty
- CLS Senior Sustainability Officer is Chair of the North East Domestic Energy Forum
- Sustainable Community Strategy states that it will “Promote sustainability and energy efficiency in residential dwellings to achieve affordable warmth”
- Annual Reporting on the Home Energy Conservation Act has highlighted significant improvements across the District
- Cestria Community Housing have proactively Insulated their housing stock and have an on-going replacement programme of double glazing and the installation of high efficiency boilers

Table 1: Actions for CO₂ savings - Domestic Sector

Task	Ref:	Actions to reduce Climate Change	Delivery Partners	Resources	Outputs
Continue to Promote Energy Efficiency Schemes	D1	<p>Insulation schemes are being delivered in Partnership with Go-Warm. This scheme will continue until 2010.</p> <p>Grants for High Efficiency Boilers are available through Warm Front to people in receipt of set benefits or over the age of 70.</p> <p>Ensure that these schemes maintain a high profile across the district</p>	<p>CLS EST Eaga Go_Warm, Fuel Utilities</p>	<p>No additional funding or staff resources required</p>	<p>Home Energy Conservation Act requires a 2% cut in energy consumption per annum</p> <p>A 3% commitment is achievable</p>
Existing Dwelling Fuel Poverty Target	D2	<p>Establish a minimum energy efficiency target for all existing domestic properties will greatly assist in achieving long fuel poverty reduction targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min energy performance of SAP 65 for all existing properties • Comply with Warm and Healthy Homes Strategy and Energy Conservation Act targets to eliminate fuel poverty by 2016 	<p>EST Eaga NEA LSP LAA EEC Fuel Utilities</p>	<p>Funding for measures to achieve SAP 65 is available for certain criteria</p> <p>No additional funding or staff resources required</p>	<p>Eradication of fuel poverty across the District</p>
New Dwellings Building Regs and renewables enforcement	D3A D3B	<p>Ensure compliance and enforcement with Part L of Building Regulations is a priority focus for new build developers</p> <p>Enforce the Merton Rule – 10% of all energy must be generated from renewable sources</p>	<p>Planning Policy team Building Control Senior Sustainability Officer</p>	<p>Officer time required from planning policy team and building control</p>	<p>New housing built to high energy efficiency standards</p>

CO2 reduction in New Dwellings	D4	Set Local Development Framework (LDF) escalating target to reduce carbon emissions in new housing developments Consult on and adopt Minimum Standards from the Code For Sustainable Homes to reduce CO2 emissions from New properties	Planning Policy team Senior Sustainability Officer	Development of LDF is currently ongoing with planning policy team	New housing developers must include renewable energy measures within new developments
Develop targets for CO ₂ reductions in Existing Dwellings	D5	Carry out a scoping study with research support into opportunities and areas to continue making carbon reductions from existing dwelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include areas on reducing fuel poverty and improving health 	Senior Sustainability Officer NEA EEC Fuel Utilities	Funding required, to be sourced	Long-term targets set to allow significant CO2 reductions to occur

2) Actions for CO₂ savings in the Commercial and Public Sector Buildings

Existing Actions

Chester-le-Street is responsible for the administration of approx 70 buildings which have energy usage. The operation and maintenance of these buildings fall under the responsibility of the service team whose responsibility they are. Many of the buildings under the management of CLS are small and use very little energy such as changing rooms and communal rooms, however a few building are large and require careful management. The Main and largest buildings that require close energy management are the Civic Centre, the Leisure Centre and the Riverside Stadium. While no action plan or strategy is in place to tackle these buildings directly, work has been carried out to identify potential savings along with careful management practices that have reduced CO₂ emissions.

In the commercial sector, many energy improvements are driven through economic savings, however while this is true in larger businesses, many smaller businesses cannot afford either the time or fees to develop energy strategies. It is well known that currently there is a gap in the provision of energy advice to small and medium business enterprises (SMEs), though Grants are available to help businesses

The following are some of the actions that have been undertaken:

- A Carbon Trust Energy Audit has been conducted against the 5 largest buildings owned by the Council
- Re-roofing of the Civic Centre has taken place, with higher levels of insulation to reduce emissions and heat gains
- Procurement – sustainability is a strong theme in procurement strategy / members of the North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) to ensure best value when purchasing energy with green credentials.

Performance Improvements for Additional CO₂ savings

The Governments 2006 Climate Change Programme suggests an additional 0.2Million tonnes of carbon dioxide could be saved in the commercial sector by 2010 by simply providing energy advice and support to Small to Medium size businesses.

The proposed additional measures relate to the following:

- Rolling out the Governments Energy Efficiency Loans scheme for SMEs
- Introducing measures under the Governments Action Energy Programme to encourage SMEs to take up free energy saving opportunities
- Provision of a free specialist advice and site survey service from the Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust to show businesses how to save energy

Success in delivering these measures is likely to depend crucially on effective engagement at a local level with the business sector to encourage action and take up of the free advice and support services. Therefore, the assumption is made that if the actions set out below on providing more effective advice are put into effect, they will yield a 3.5% reduction in emissions by 2010.

Table 2: Actions for CO₂ Savings –Commercial and Public Buildings

Task	Ref:	Actions to reduce Climate Change	Delivery Partners	Resources	Outputs
Establish an Energy Management Strategy for Public Buildings	P1	<p>Develop an energy management strategy to provide value for money in utility accounts including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate monitoring of elec, gas and water usage along with detailed energy performance data to allow monitoring of targets • Record and financially manage all utility accounts • Achieve best value • Compliance with environmental and procurement policies • Compliance with current and future legislation • Reduction of energy use and carbon dioxide emissions <p>Participate in the Local Authority carbon management programme run by the Carbon Trust</p>	EST Carbon Trust Action Energy NEPO	Ensure effective management of building is embedded into the new Authority to help reduce emissions	<p>Reduced Utility accounts</p> <p>Best value achieved in utility accounts</p> <p>Energy usage and carbon dioxide emissions reduced</p>
Existing Public Buildings Refurbishment Schemes	P2	<p>Set high energy efficiency standards for all refurbishment schemes and consider the use of renewable energy systems</p> <p>Funding may also be available through the next round of the treasury's Invest-to-Save programme</p>	Senior Sustainability Officer Carbon Trust One North East	No additional staff resources required energy efficiency improvement measures to be costed in works carried out	<p>Sustainable energy systems provide percentage of renewable energy</p> <p>Energy usage reduced</p>

<p>Assist Local Businesses to Save Energy and reduce carbon emissions</p>	<p>P3</p>	<p>Develop a promotional strategy to inform the local business sector that government grants and support are available to assist them to reduce energy bills and energy consumption to meet climate change emission targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify employers with Durham County Council Development Agency and Business Forum • Approach business energy managers to introduce the free help and support available external agencies <p>Encourage reinvestment of financial savings into business using energy efficient practices</p>	<p>Senior Sustainability Officer Carbon Trust One North East EST Carbon Trust</p>	<p>No additional funding required Senior Sustainability Officer to work with LSP and business forums</p>	<p>Reduction of business energy usage and carbon dioxide emissions</p>
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3) Actions for CO₂ savings in the Transport Sector

Existing Council Transport Actions

Chester-le-Street District Council is carrying out the following actions to reduce energy use and emissions from its own travel and transport activities:

- 100% of the fleet use biodiesel (5% mix)
- Continuously Regenerating Traps fitted to 2% of vehicles – a device for capturing particulates from diesel engine exhausts
- Vehicle trackers fitted to 27% of the fleet, reducing private mileage and speeding problems can also be monitored
- Commitment to write a green fleet management plan
- Commitment to introduce a vehicle replacement policy to take advantage of new technology (EU4)

Existing General Road Transport Emissions Activities

- The Environment, Housing and Planning sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has recently established a transport sub-group
- Local Transport Plan (responsibility of Durham County Council) has set a non-mandatory target to constrain growth in CO₂ emissions from road transport to 1% per annum to 2010.
- Chester-le-Street Local Development Framework (LDF) aims to incorporate more proactive and positive statements on parking and accessibility guidelines for new developments to reduce transport emissions

Additional CO₂ savings from concerted local actions

Encourage the development of Green Travels Plans for Businesses and for the District and utilise the development of the LDF to ensure new developments seek to reduce vehicle travel through home working, proximity to work, access to public transport routes

Table 3: Actions for CO₂ savings - Road Transport Sector

Task	Ref	Actions to Reduce Climate Change	Delivery Partners	Resources	Outputs
Local Travel Plan	T1	<p>Develop a travel plan to look at commuting and business travel, with targets for energy/ CO₂ reduction. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting car sharing schemes • Improving facilities for walking and cycling • Staff awareness to encourage reduced car usage 	<p>CLS DCC LSP Transport sub-group EST Sustrans</p>	<p>Officer time required for the development of a full travel plan</p>	<p>Greater awareness of climate change impacts of car usage leading to reduction of car usage</p>
Fleet management	T2	<p>Encourage development of a fleet management plan leading to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of green fleet management plan • Clear targets for reducing carbon emissions • Driver training and use of incentives for improvements • Trial of clean fuel vehicles in the council fleet i.e. electric cars; dual fuel cars 	<p>EST LSP Transport sub-group</p>	<p>EST Programme offer free fleet consultancy Officer time required</p>	<p>Reduced emissions from Council fleet operations</p>
Planning policies	T3	<p>Develop LDF policies on encouraging new developments to be closer to work places and accessible to public transport hubs</p>	<p>LSP Transport sub-group Carbon Trust</p>	<p>Local Authority Carbon Management Programme contains information on sustainable transport schemes</p>	<p>Decreased use of cars and increased use of other forms of transport</p>

4 Actions for CO₂ savings – Zero and Low Carbon Technologies

Existing local actions

Chester-le-street is carrying out the following actions in this sector:

- Aims to encourage the use of renewable energy and low carbon technologies within regeneration schemes
- Aims to enforce use of sustainable energy measures as part of the master planning stage via planning policy
- The Council are looking into an exemplar project in the district containing different energy saving features to be showcased.

Additional CO₂ savings from concerted local action

Power generated by domestic renewable energy would have the effect of reducing greenhouse gas and electricity energy demand and consequently:

- Save energy
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Reduce domestic energy bills

The installation of renewable technologies into domestic housing will also help to alleviate the problem of Fuel Poverty across the area.

Integrating renewable energy technologies into either new build or retrofit will produce energy savings to contribute to the additional savings for concerted local action set out for the sectors above.

Table 4 Actions for CO₂ savings – Zero and Low Carbon Technologies

Task	Ref	Actions to Reduce Climate Change	Delivery Partners	Resources	Outputs
Renewable Energy Strategy	R1	<p>Develop a renewable energy policy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify council sites that may be appropriate for renewable technologies • Consider use of renewable energy systems as part of refurbishment schemes to council operational buildings • Consider use of renewable energy systems as part of new council buildings • Consider use of renewable energy systems in Council domestic schemes • Work with partners to encourage showcase schemes i.e. Eco Schools Programme 	<p>Carbon Trust</p> <p>EST</p> <p>DCC</p> <p>CLS</p> <p>LSP</p>	<p>Senior Sustainability Officer to progress with partners</p>	<p>Strategy will allow renewable energy technologies to be used in council projects</p>
Local Development Framework	R2	<p>LDF to set a target of at least 10% energy use from on-site renewables in new developments</p> <p>LDF could require new developments, particularly major retail, commercial and residential, to have embedded within them a minimum of 10% energy supply from renewable sources</p>	<p>Planning Strategy</p>	<p>LDF is already being progressed by Planning Team</p>	<p>New developments will employ renewable energy technologies to meet statutory requirements</p>
Promotion of Renewable Energy Grants	R3	<p>Develop promotional campaign to highlight the availability of government grants for renewable energy measures</p>	<p>CLS</p> <p>EST</p> <p>DCC</p>	<p>No additional funding required</p>	<p>Greater awareness of renewable energy and uptake in domestic and commercial projects</p>

5 Actions for CO₂ savings –Awareness of Climate Change for Public, Staff and Local Businesses

The Governments Climate Change Programme produced in 2006 suggests significant reductions in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions will be achieved by providing relevant advice, support and training on how to save energy and minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

A key part of achieving these reductions is through a change in the way we use and think about our energy. This can only be done through a series of awareness raising programmes and training to professionals to help embed new thinking into people's consciousness

The table on the following page sets out actions for achieving energy savings by raising awareness and providing practical help and support.

Table 5: Actions for CO₂ savings – Training and Awareness

Task	Ref	Actions to Reduce Climate Change	Delivery Partners	Resources	Outputs
Community awareness and publicity campaign	TA1	Partner on the Act on CO2 Campaign to provide clear advice to encourage local public to make lifestyle and behaviour changes in favour of saving energy and reducing climate change	CLS EST LSP LAA	No additional funding required	Encourage lifestyle changes necessary for sustained reductions in energy use and emissions
Community Training Events	TA2	Carry out rolling programme of training events in all settlements 2006 - 2008 to produce a community energy network district wide to develop community involvement in reducing greenhouse gas emissions	CLS EST NEA LSP	No additional funding required	Move towards sustainable communities
Travel Awareness	TA3	Expand awareness on alternatives to car travel, provide information to residents and businesses Work with agencies to provide information to local public	DCC LSP EST	No additional funding required Free advice and information available from the EST	District wide awareness raising leading to lifestyle changes and actions
Renewable Energy training for Planning Officers and key staff	TA4	Provide training on planning issues relating to renewable energy technologies and climate change issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planners, Building Control, internal key staff, Housing officers Engage planning service and others in training to encourage understanding and support to increase the uptake of low carbon technologies	NEDEF EST CSE EEBPP	No additional funding required Free external training available	Training on Planning Issues around renewable energy Enhanced understanding of renewable technologies

School Education	TA5	Work in conjunction with schools to continue to raise awareness through innovative schemes	CLS DCC Climate Change teacher	No additional funding required Free external training available	Children can influence adults to make the lifestyle changes necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
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8. References