

**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee for Looking After the Environment** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Monday 12 December 2005** at **10.00 a.m.**

**COUNCILLOR CARROLL** in the Chair

**Members:**

Councillors Barker, Carr, Douthwaite, Gray, Henderson, Lethbridge, Ord, Tennant Trippett and Young

**Co-opted:**

M Jones

**Other Members:**

Councillors Fenwick, Iveson, Meir, Myers and Priestley

Apologies were received from Councillor Armstrong.

**A1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2005 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**A2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**A3 Performance Update – Half Year 2005/06**

The Sub-Committee considered report of the Head of Corporate Policy providing a half-year performance update for Best Value Performance Indicators (for reports see file of minutes).

In relation BV178 Footpaths Easy to Use, it was suggested that it might be helpful to use a larger sample of rights of way. This is an issue which could be discussed by the Access to the Countryside Working Group.

With reference to BV84b Household Waste, Members sought assurance that the County Council would be able to meet its future targets. It was explained that the County Council would be able to meet long-term targets for household waste.

The Sub Committee also expressed concern about future landfill capacity in the County and the importation of waste from outside of the County. It was explained that Members will be able raise their concerns together with other issues when a presentation about the Municipal Household Waste Strategy for

County Durham given at a special meeting of the Sub Committee on 5 January 2006.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted and that further progress reports be submitted in due course.

**A4 Creating Excellent Buildings – Draft Strategy**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Acting Head of Environment and Planning together with a presentation from Rodd Lugg (Acting Head of Environment) about a proposed strategy to incorporate high quality design and sustainable development into all County Council buildings (for copy see file of Minutes)

Responding to questions about recently constructed schools, Rodd Lugg acknowledged that they did not meet recent standards for energy efficiency. For future projects such as 'Building Schools for the Future', sustainability will be included at the design stage. All new buildings will in future have to be constructed to at least a 'very good' standard. Members were concerned that good design, landscaping and sustainability features could be omitted from PFI projects.

Following additional questions about the features to be included in new schools, it was explained that in accordance with County Council policy, sprinklers would be installed. In addition new schools would also meet the criteria of the 'Secured by Design' initiative. Consideration is also to be given to the installation of locker systems within the new schools. Members stressed the importance of ensuring that buildings are well maintained.

In response to questions about the design of new schools it was agreed that Members of the Sub Committee would have opportunity to examine the design and plans for the new Durham Johnston School at a future meeting once they had been prepared.

**Resolved**

That draft strategy together with above comments be submitted to Cabinet.

**A5 Forward Plan**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny on the Forward Plan (for copy see file of minutes).

Members were reminded that the review of the municipal waste management strategy would be considered at a special meeting of the Sub Committee on 5 January 2006.

**Resolved**

That the report be noted.

## **A6 Work Programme**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny on the current work programme for the Sub-Committee (for copy see file of minutes).

It was explained that the review of Fly Tipping project would now be dealt with early in 2006.

### **Resolved**

That the current work programme be noted.