



Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Monday 9 March 2020
Time 9.30 am
Venue Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's
agreement.**

1. Apologies
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 8 January 2020, 24 January 2020 and 3 February 2020 (Pages 3 - 36)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Any Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties
6. Media Relations - Verbal Update from Overview and Scrutiny Officer
7. Fuel Poverty
 - a) Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services (Pages 37 - 42)
 - b) Presentation by Housing Regeneration Project Manager (Pages 43 - 54)
8. External Low Carbon Funding - Report of the Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services (Pages 55 - 60)
9. Leisure Centres
 - a) Report of the Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services (Pages 61 - 64)

- b) Presentation by the Interim Head of Culture and Sport (Pages 65 - 74)
- 10. Gala Theatre
 - a) Report of the Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services (Pages 75 - 80)
 - b) Presentation by the Strategic Manager for Culture (Pages 81 - 98)
- 11. County Durham Enterprise Partnership Board Minutes (Pages 99 - 120)
- 12. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Helen Lynch
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
28 February 2020

To: **The Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor E Adam (Chair)
Councillor O Milburn (Vice-Chair)

Councillors B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, L Brown, J Carr, B Coult, R Crute, S Dunn, A Gardner, K Hawley, J Higgins, P Howell, C Kay, L Maddison, R Manchester, I McLean, A Simpson, P Sexton and M Wilson

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bolton and Mrs P Holding

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 8 January 2020 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor E Adam (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors O Milburn, A Batey, D Bell, L Brown, B Coult, R Crute, S Dunn, J Higgins, R Manchester, I McLean, P Sexton, M Wilson and M Wilkes

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bolton and Mrs P Holding

Also Present:

Councillors J Clare, S Iveson, J Maitland, T Tucker and Mrs R Morris

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Hawley and A Simpson.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor M Wilkes substituted for Councillor A Simpson.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4 Any Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

5 Management of Durham County Council's Fleet

The Committee considered the joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services that provided members with an overview of how Durham County Council's fleet was managed

including details of work being undertaken to reduce emissions by Durham County Council's fleet to help achieve the Council's targets as stated in Durham County Council's Climate Change Emergency Declaration (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

Members were provided with a presentation that highlighted the following points:

- Fleet profile
- Sites where fleet is located
- Current fleet management arrangements
- Why fleet was managed in this way
- Plans to change how the fleet was managed in the future and any challenges
- Work undertaken to reduce emission from the fleet and contribution to 60% reduction by 2030
- Future plans and steps

Following the presentation, the Chairman thanked the officer and invited questions from members.

Councillor McLean asked if the procurement process considered CO₂ emissions created by the manufacture and transportation of vehicles as part of the purchasing procedure. He continued that if vehicles were purchased in the UK this could produce a carbon footprint saving and contribute to employment.

Mr M Toas, County Fleet Manager responded that it was a valid point that he would raise with procurement but very few of the specialised vehicles and associated equipment are solely produced in the UK.

Mr S McDonald, Principal Officer: Climate Change and Sustainability advised members that CO₂ emissions from manufacturing were calculated and accounted for in the country of manufacture however in relation to CO₂ emissions from transporting vehicles, this was a grey area. Procurement were looking at how the procurement process can be more sustainable in the future.

Councillor Tucker referred to leased arrangements with vehicles and asked if the authority had maintenance agreements for these vehicles.

The Officer responded that currently no maintenance agreements were in place, vehicles are maintained at Durham County Council workshops, any maintenance agreements would be with the dealer and not the council workshop, this could impact on a timely return of the vehicle into service. In relation to operator licenced vehicles the authority has a legal requirement to ensure the vehicles are maintained to the Authorities Operator Licence requirements.

Councillor Tucker referred to pool cars and asked if there was a saving in relation to the cost of the car pool when compared to the cost of personal mileage claims.

The Officer responded that the car pool scheme was introduced for a number of reasons, including that it cost less than personal car mileage rate (5p under personal car mileage rate) rate but one of the main drivers for the scheme was employees not wanting to use their own vehicles for council business for security reasons.

In response to a question from Councillor Brown asking for clarification on the role of the ULEV working group, officers advised that consideration of the Council's fleet and how to reduce its carbon emissions in the future was just a small element of the work of the ULEV working group. It was confirmed that the group was headed up by Adrian White, Head of Transport and Contract Services.

Councillor Brown asked on behalf of Councillor Coult what were the timescales for switching over as many vehicles as possible in the fleet to electric and did they intend to purchase more gully cleaning vehicles.

The Officer responded that the timescale was 5 years and that Durham County Council gully cleaning vehicles are on a 5 year replacement plan. There is currently no additional gully cleaning vehicles included in the replacement plan, any additional requirements for gully cleaning vehicles would be at the request of Technical Services and advised that the service sometimes hired in these vehicles during peak times.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised Members that detail on the role and activities of the ULEV work stream had been presented to the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September and Members of Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend this meeting.

On the 27 February 2020 a report and presentation on regional and local transport, which would include detail of activity undertaken by the ULEV working group would be presented to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be invited to attend this meeting.

The officer responded that members may want to visit the biogas facility at Newton Aycliffe as the authority was also looking at vehicles powered by alternative fuels.

Councillor Sexton referred to the replacing of machinery that was currently working for electric alternatives to be greener. He asked whether the authority by replacing items that did not need replacing was causing an impact on carbon emissions and was the resulting increase in electricity accounted for in these calculations.

The Officer responded that machinery was replaced when it was scheduled to be renewed. He also commented that battery operated machinery was not producing

fumes, fuel was not transported and the vibration was a lot lower so there was also health and safety benefits.

Councillor Sexton responded that we needed to justify these changes, and needed to be able to show carbon emissions from electricity usage with all this technology and compare to previous emissions, hopefully it would be negative.

Mr McDonald confirmed that carbon renewables usage was at the highest level ever and indicated that on some days there were zero carbon energy depending on the wind. He continued that the difference between diesel/petrol versus electricity was significant and a lot more carbon friendly.

Councillor Adam commented that electricity was a key feature in reducing carbon emissions however the charging infrastructure had to be in place to handle the increased demand.

Councillor Dunn thanked officers for the work and research they had undertaken and continued that the report demonstrated that Durham County Council and County Durham were not fully in control to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles as there was a lack of investment from government that had resulted on dependency of commercial organisations to develop the necessary technology for vehicles so that they were available for purchase at a competitive cost. The targets to be achieved by 2021 would give a potential carbon reduction of 53 tonnes out of 10,000 tonnes produced on vehicle admissions. Half of the vehicles and vans were to be replaced over a 5 year period, needed to be setting targets to replace vehicles more quickly with an example of at least 100 vehicles to be replaced this year. The replacement of 26 pool vehicles was a good start but much more was needed to be done this year and next year. He stated that if the introduction of charging points at employees' homes where Durham County Council vehicles were parked was key to reducing carbon emissions then this needed expediting as a matter of urgency. In addition, 52 weeks to procure vehicles was too long and asked that in year 1 and year 2, much more progress needed to be made.

The Officer responded that it was a massive challenge and that the biggest fuel users were HGV vehicles, however the vehicles needed to be available with the necessary technology at a competitive price. He continued that an evaluation of the depots needs to be undertaken to ensure that the charging infrastructure was in place to meet growing demand, so infrastructure was the key.

Councillor Dunn responded that this needed to be done extremely quickly.

The Chair indicated that progress was being made but however there was need for greater government support and funding in terms of the development of the technology and infrastructure.

Councillor Wilkes referred to the replacing of 26 vehicles out of 1017 vehicles and commented that more vehicles need to be replaced. He then commented that members needed sight of the figures to replace say 50 vehicles, 100 vehicles and so on together with the cost of installing charging points. He continued by asking what else Durham County Council's procurement was doing to put pressure on manufacturers to develop the technology quicker.

The Chair responded that these were areas being looked at by the ULEV working Group and that the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not have that detail, but a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Mr Bolton referred to the development of vehicles and commented that a great deal of development had been made with small vehicles. He referred to the ULEV working group and asked if the authority were working with regional partners looking at procurement from a regional perspective and taking advantage of economies of scale.

The Officer responded that vehicles were procured with TPPL through NEPO which was a national procurement framework, so economies of scale were captured. There was however a huge difference in the cost of electric vehicles. They would look to procure the electric vehicles for 8 years as opposed to 5 years but at the moment the battery life deteriorated over the years with vehicles at 7 years having only 70% battery life. Mercedes were 2 years away from delivering a fully electric HGV vehicle with HGV electric RCV's vehicles currently costing in the region of £450,000. Whole life costs would have to be reviewed to establish the number of years with which the EV vehicles would be operated over.

Mrs Morris referred to the 60% carbon reduction target and commented that it may be helpful to publish some information on the various stages and activities identified by Durham County Council to tackle carbon emissions by the fleet, to get local communities involved.

The Officer responded that the 60% target was a Durham County Council target and not solely fleet. They had already delivered 2 roadshows providing an opportunity to view ULEV's and the idea was that more roadshows would be held in the future.

The Chair advised that the Climate Emergency Response Plan would be presented to this committee on the 16 March 2020, this plan would include detail of the measures proposed to meet the 60% reduction in carbon emissions.

The Chair then asked Members if they wished to visit the Biogas Plant in Newton Aycliffe in the near future.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That arrangements be made for the Committee to visit the Biogas Plant in Newton Aycliffe as part of the future work programme via an electric bus if possible.

6 Air Quality Management in County Durham

The Committee considered the joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services that provided Members with background information on the progress made on the Durham City air quality action plan measures, the air quality elsewhere across the County and traffic improvement in Durham City (for copy of reports, see file of minutes).

Ms D Holman (Pollution Control Manager), Mr D Gribben (Senior Air Quality Officer) and Mr D Wafer (Strategic Traffic Manager) were in attendance to deliver a presentation that highlighted the following points:

- Update on air quality in Chester-le-Street and Durham City over the previous 12 months.
- Monitoring in Chester-le-Street
- Monitoring in Durham City
- Progress on the implementation of the Air Quality Action Measures
- A review of the Durham City Air Quality Action Plan
- Tasks to be completed during the next 12 months
- Traffic volumes on Leazes Road, Sep to Nov 2019
- Before and after photographs of Leazes Bowl Roundabout and Gilesgate Roundabout
- Urban Traffic Management and Control Information
- Transforming Cities Fund – Durham City Proposals

Following the presentation, the Chair thanked officers for a very informative presentation and asked members for their questions.

Councillor Brown referred to the air quality action plan and commented that it did not seem to be making progress and highlighted that she had a number of questions from residents that she would e-mail direct to the officer following the meeting. She then asked when SCOOT had been implemented as she was under the impression it had not yet been switched on.

Mr D Wafer responded that the SCOOT system had been there from day one and was implemented when traffic issues are out of the ordinary, He continued that there had been an ongoing comms issue with the SCOOT system, but that had been resolved and the system had been stable for the last couple of months.

Councillor Wilkes commented that a plan had first been asked for in 2009, the air quality management area declared in 2011 with the plan taking 5 years to be put in place. The pollution area had been extended in 2014 and now it had been further extended again to include Church Street where a lot of young people lived and there

was also a school. The failure to address air quality had been a failing of the unitary authority who had failed to act quickly enough to tackle this issue. The implementation of the plan had been delayed due to funding; pollution was a problem that was killing people across the country. An urgent education campaign was required and more funding needed to address this issue. Residents were calling for no car days and one should be held this Spring and every month going forward. This Council removed electric buses from the cathedral route, electric buses were needed on the park and ride routes. He referred to action measure 6 and commented that the biggest employers in the city did not have travel plans and suggested that these companies needed to be listed on the council's website with questions asked about their travel plans. He then asked how many employees in Durham County Council knew what was contained in Durham County Council's travel plan and continued that 1000 cars are parked at County Hall with no parking charges for employees or members however nurses and NHS staff were paying to park at the Hospital and that the council's solution was to have the council headquarters in the city centre which was going to cause further problems.

In response, the Chair indicated that there was an air quality action plan in place, so progress had been made. SCOOT was also in place but the impact of a reduction in funding had made it difficult to fund measures to reduce carbon emissions, but things were improving.

Mr Wafer referred to the monitoring of sites that were exceeding the annual mean national air quality objective and commented that most areas were below the threshold. He then referred to Church Street and confirmed that it was the pinch point that was being monitored and not the area where the school was located. There was a canyon effect on that road but the air quality in the city was generally improving but still had hot spots.

Ms Holman indicated that they had to update DEFRA every year on progress, so Durham County Council was scrutinised by DEFRA. The air quality action plan was being reviewed as part of the refresh of the plan. It was unfair to say nothing had been done however funding issues had hampered progress.

Councillor Wilkes asked for the current annual means concentrations for Highgate.

Officers responded that Highgate was now below $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and that the area was still included in the air quality management area.

Councillor Wilkes responded that Highgate had been over the $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ annual mean air quality objective during previous years.

Ms Holman responded that the strategy was in draft, but there was an approval process to go through before implementation.

Councillor Sexton referred to the revoking of the Air Quality Management Area at Menceforth Cottages and commented that he believed that the junction was contributing to the levels and asked if the monitoring devices would remain in place following revocation.

Ms Holman responded that the monitoring devices would be kept in place for 12 months.

Councillor Sexton indicated that the initiatives had worked and asked if they had any other initiatives such as filters on vehicles and at bus stops.

Mr Wafer responded that Durham County Council was looking at options to increase the green infrastructure using plants, trees etc., but more work needed to be done including identifying physical space to put them.

Councillor Dunn indicated that the issue was too many people trying to get through the city centre. It was not true to say that nothing had been done as improvements had been made, it was just unfortunate that more and more vehicles wanted and needed to get through the city centre. The solution to these issues was the proposed relief roads taking vehicles around the city together with a move towards a 4 day working week and home working.

Mrs Holding indicated that the report concentrated on Durham City Centre and Chester-le-Street and asked about other villages in the County.

Officers responded that these were the declared areas, but they did receive requests to look at other areas in the county, but no other areas had been identified as requiring a management area, but network monitoring did extend to other areas.

Mrs Holding then asked about cyclists being encouraged to use these busy routes and was concerned about the possible impact of pollution on cyclists using these routes.

Mr Wafer referred to some recent research that found that you got more pollution sitting in the car than you did from cycling along the road.

Councillor Batey referred to Menceforth Cottages, Chester-le-Street and commented that she was concerned about the revocation and asked if consideration had been given to the new housing development at Pelton Fell as this could potentially have an impact with more vehicles passing by Menceforth Cottages and asked that the monitoring equipment be kept in place.

Mr Spencer, a member of the public commented that change towards electric vehicles was small and there was no clear definition of the goal that Government were trying to achieve. Defra accepted a 10% reduction in emissions however there was no clear indication that this was going to be achieved in the near future. The

SCOOT system had been given the maximum score for its ability to reduce pollution in Durham City, an equivalent score was given to limiting and stopping diesel vehicles from going through the City but this was totally rejected in favour of the SCOOT scheme with no evidence given for reason for rejection of this option. If the SCOOT system had been shown to have failed in its goal to reduce pollution, if that major factor in the pollution plan had failed was there any consideration being given at the moment to consider some form of reduction of diesel vehicle use in the city, not just voluntary but imposed as had been done in other cities.

The Chair indicated that York were looking into proposals to ban cars in the City Centre. Newcastle had gone through a consultation proposing a Clean Air Charge on diesel vehicles.

Mr Wafer indicated that air pollution was not the only reason for the introduction of the SCOOT system. Some authorities were pushed by central government such as Newcastle to do more measures like the introduction of charges because the government were forecasting that they would not be able to meet air pollution targets however DEFRA was not saying this in relation to Durham, we are not in the same category as Newcastle as having such major pollution issues by way of a comparison. He highlighted that Durham County Council's fleet was taking measures to reduce its carbon emissions and he continued that not everyone was going to have an electric car tomorrow however when you buy a car currently the engine size would be smaller than in the past.

Mr Spencer asked the timescales for Durham City.

Ms Holman responded that the plan would be updated by 2021 that would refresh the plan and introduce any new control measures necessary. Monitoring results at Menceforth Cottages were below $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ but were hovering at 35/36 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. DEFRA's advice was if the Council could show that levels are 10% below $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for over 3 years then the plan could be revoked if not then the Council would have had to introduce an air quality action plan. They were looking to refresh, update and amend the air quality action plan for the Durham city and were hoping to have some steer from the local plan.

In response to Mr Spencer, Mr Wafer referred to the measures being introduced to combat both congestion by getting people to travel by alternative means which was an ongoing process. The plan and strategy were important but a lot of actions that underpin were ongoing.

The Chair asked if there were any targets in place to reduce air pollution.

Officers responded that it was difficult to set targets as the monitoring involved only small numbers of properties with a lot of variables that can influence the annual

mean results and therefore trends are looked at. He continued that the aim is to get below 40 µg/m³ in those areas.

The Chair referred to performance indicators which the committee received on a quarterly basis across a range of Durham County Council services, was there nothing that could be introduced in the form of an indicator and the recording of what action was to be taken in terms of performance to meet those targets. If put relief roads in should be able to estimate how many vehicles would be removed from the city centre as a result of the relief roads and therefore emissions should come down to a certain level in a certain time period.

Mr Wafer responded that they could not rely on that modelling to be definite, they knew how many vehicles a relief road would take out and air quality assessments had been carried out that were shown on the council's website.

Councillor Wilkes indicated that he appreciated the modelling that the service carried out, and the belief that the relief road would solve pollution issues. The problems with new roads will always result in more traffic regardless of whether you build new houses. There were proposals to build 1000's of new houses on green belt land around the city, green infrastructure, trees etc. absorbs carbon, there may not be a specific localised issue in a particular areas afterwards, but if you removed 400 hectares of green infrastructure around the city and build new houses with more cars this did not stack up and highlighted that he was concerned that the Council did not have targets, concerned that there was a plan but no targets or dates for progress and to resolve air quality issues in the city.

He then referred to some things that had not been done such as the bus lane on Gilesgate bank that could have been extended but businesses complained, and the authority needed to look at extending this bus lane and continued if it was not quicker on the bus, then people would continue to use their cars. He then referred to smaller buses on the route from Bowburn and commented that he failed to see why the council had not worked with Arriva to get in place electric buses on some of the routes where smaller buses were used. The Council should be assisting Arriva in putting this in place if possible.

Mr Wafer responded that bus priority measures were part of the city bid and that Gilesgate was to be looked at. In terms of buses generally the Council would assist operators in applying for grants, but the council could not provide direct funding. The council was currently looking at the park and ride buses and potentially replacing with electric vehicles.

Councillor Sexton referred to taxis in the city centre and asked if the council had any leverage such as incentives for operators to change to hybrid vehicles, could Durham County Council offer a reduction on the licence as an incentive.

Ms Holman responded that she had undertaken a study focusing on Durham taxis looking at the percentage of pollution Durham taxis contributed. She continued that Durham County Council's licensing team only had information about the taxis they granted licences to and therefore the study did not include taxis that may come into the city from other areas. She continued that there were incentives in other areas, but unless it could be demonstrated that there were massive issues with Durham taxis, they were unable to introduce incentives at this stage.

Councillor Sexton responded that it was not only about money it was about the environment and initiatives.

Ms Holman responded that she would like to use the evidence from the study when the review of the air quality action plan was undertaken.

Councillor Dunn indicated that taxis were a frustration particular those that queued along High Street onto New Elvet Bridge obstructing the traffic and those who were stationary with their engines on. He stated that they could look at the most lucrative taxi zones and making those electric only.

Ms Holman advised members that the authority had signed up to the regional common emission standards for taxis which would require operators to update their vehicles so fleets in those areas would comply to euro emissions 6 standard for vehicle engines by a certain date.

The Chair asked that officers take back that members felt that things were not progressing fast enough, that more needed to be done and that there was a need to consider how targets could be developed to determine improvements in air quality.

Resolved: (i) That the report and presentation be noted.

(ii) That a further progress report on the management of air quality in County Durham be included in the work programme for 2020/21.

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 24 January 2020 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor E Adam (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors O Milburn, B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, J Carr, B Coult, S Dunn, J Higgins, L Maddison, R Manchester, A Simpson, O Temple and M Wilson

Co-opted Member:

Mrs P Holding

Also Present:

Councillors J Clare and S Iveson

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors L Brown, R Crute, K Hawley, P Sexton and Mr T Bolton.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor O Temple substituted for Councillor L Brown.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings that were held 4 November 2019, 19 November 2019 and 16 December 2019 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Any Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

Mrs P Holding addressed the Committee to ask if she could put forward an item for scrutiny to look at on behalf of Mr T Bolton whom apologised as he could not attend in person. Mr Bolton requested that issues surrounding unadopted highways be included as part of potential review activity of highways.

Councillor Adam advised that the proposals for future review activity be put before the committee under agenda item 10.

6 Media Relations

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer (CYP) referred members to the recent prominent articles and news stories relating to the remit of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Street Works permit scheme aims to reduce disruption (DCC – 7 January 2020) related to a proposed permit scheme that could be introduced by Durham County Council's Highway Team to reduce disruption caused by street works. The permit scheme would manage the number and duration of works taking place on the County's roads at any onetime to minimise disruption to support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions.

County Durham energy saving work shown off to Swedes (DCC – 13 January 2020) related to a Scandinavian delegation that had visited sites that were owned and managed by Durham County Council to learn about innovative software that was employed to reduce energy. The pioneering energy saving techniques monitored online usage of utilities like water, electricity and gas across its facilities to allow waste to be identified to save money in energy bills.

National Award for a County Durham Cemetery (DCC – 16 January 2020) related to Durham County Council's Castleside Cemetery being awarded silver in the National Cemetery of the Year ceremony for offering a beautiful place of rest that was safe and welcoming for those visiting their loved ones which complied with current legislation.

Climate Emergency: 2019 was the second hottest year on record (The Guardian – 17 January 2020) related to the year 2019 being the second hottest on record for the planets research that revealed the scale of the climate crisis that is bringing increasingly severe storms, floods, droughts and wildfires.

Councillor Maddison felt that taps in the bathrooms of Durham County Council's Leisure Centre's wasted water as they ran long after someone had finished using them. She wondered if sensors could be fitted that would make them shut off quicker to save money and water.

Resolved: That the verbal report be noted.

7 Business Energy Efficiency Project 2

The Committee considered the joint report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local services and the Corporate Director of Resources that provided Members with information on the Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP2) (for copy see file of minutes)

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager was in attendance to deliver a presentation on BEEP2 that included a brief overview of what it was. BEEP's first phase was completed in 2019 that had offered fully funded bespoke energy audits and grants and advice to SME's (small and medium sized enterprises). She added that following an assessment, the project was found to have hit all its targets and had some unintended outcomes that lead to additional projects being developed. She gave 'BEST' as an example of a project that had helped inspire other local authorities such as Sunderland, Gateshead and South Tyneside to establish their own projects based on the BEEP model.

Although the local authority referred to the new project as BEEP2, to businesses it was a seamless delivery of the project.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager informed the committee that the success of BEEP aspired further funding to be granted to establish BEEP2. The biggest differences between the two projects were that BEEP2 had steeper targets to meet to match the larger grant pot, work was undertaken around transport, heating and diverse waste of water that were huge issues to be addressed. BEEP2 was hoped to create more collaboration with external organisations and be more proactive in reaching out to more people.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager notified the committee that the budget for BEEP2 would be complete in 2022. She added that there would be no further European funding for a potential BEEP3 project and to take the project further things would have to alter and done in different ways.

The committee was advised that lowering the temperature of a thermostat by a small amount could provide savings and that businesses were often approached by brokers offering reductions in their energy bills but businesses appreciated the impartiality of the BEEP team.

Councillor Temple wanted to know if third sector organisations including religious bodies were included in the project's criteria for funding as he had heard that the Church of England intended to be carbon neutral by 2050.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager responded that the funding that had been secured had strict definitions of SME's. She added that some charities fell within the definition like village halls and community centres. Work had been

carried out with such entities within County Durham and had also helped link them into other funding opportunities. She noted that it was more difficult and complicated with churches. She informed the committee that she was working in such a situation at present with a church which was causing some difficulty. The church in question had a separate building that they were concentrating on in the first instance. She felt that if there was enough demand from churches then it would need to be looked at to include them.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager responded to Councillor Temples question of what charities could be referred to BEEP2 that it would depend on the charities legal structure as to whether they would qualify.

Councillor Adam asked how BEEP2 was promoted to organisations.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager informed the committee that they worked with Durham Community Action Group who made referrals for organisations that they thought required help. She added that referrals were also received from Durham County Council staff who were involved with organisations. She noted that the biggest and best type of advertisement for the service was from word of mouth.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager explained that there were difficulties in obtaining data on where the energy demographic was in the County to target the project. She was keen to hit organisations in rural areas that still used oil and diesel as a source of energy. She added that in addition to their routine work Officers did target these organisations in rural areas whilst they were in the vicinity.

Councillor Dunn commended the fantastic programme of works within the BEEP2 project but was concerned that SME's would not address their carbon footprint unless it was pointed out to them. He felt that if it did cross their minds they would not know where to start to look for information on doing so. He wondered if there was a data base that organisations could access to see what their needs were including information on how to address them. He added if this was not available could a system be developed.

Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager notified the committee that data was being collected. BEEP2 was linked with Business Durham to target organisations. Further collaborations were being carried out with the GIS team within Durham County Council to add additional layers to the mapping system to provide information. She added that work was ongoing with businesses to reduce energy bills with one company paying 25p per kilowatt an hour compared to Durham County Council who only paid 14p per kilowatt an hour. She was apprehensive that there were so many opportunities for people to be exploited into paying too much for their energy.

Councillor Milburn wondered if it would be possible to run seminars alongside Durham Action Group for community groups to highlight what could potentially be done for them.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager stated that in theory this could be done but BEEP2 funding was not meant as an educational facility. She noted that Business Durham were collaborating with the wider low carbon emissions team to do this type of endeavour as it warranted Durham County Council to raise awareness.

Councillor Coult asked if Sport England and the Cricket League had been contacted as they may have potential markets to tap into with sports clubs.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager explained that the only work that had been carried out with Sport England was when clubs had been encouraged to approach the organisation for match funding. She thought contacting Sport England and the Cricket League would be a good avenue to explore on a strategic level.

Councillor Temple wished to know if an article had been submitted to the County News that was produced by Durham County Council's Media Team. He explained that the magazine reached all households in County Durham and would create good exposure.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager had hoped to get an article in the Spring 2018 edition but there was strong competition to place articles in the magazine. She now hoped she would get an article in the Spring 2020 issue. She added that she was working with the Media Team to explore other channels of promoting the project. She noted that the best form of exposure was through word of mouth which Councillors could help with.

Councillor Temple wondered if the Committee could persuade the Media Team to include an article in the County News magazine. The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager appreciated the gesture.

Councillor Adam agreed to contact the Media Team to include an article in the next edition.

The Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager informed the Committee that BEEP2 had received support from Durham County Council's Business Rates Team who had provided contact details for businesses to approach the Team.

Councillor Adam thought that BEEP2 could be promoted on Durham County Council's website. He noted that the Committee was sometimes attended by members of the press who could get the word out.

Councillor Clare wanted to know how many network meetings the BEEP2 had been presented to.

Business Energy Efficiency Project Manager responded that she had attended all network meetings except for Chester le Street and Consett which were difficult to get into. She added that she didn't attend all events but was going to a meeting on Drum Industrial Estate next week.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That an update report be presented at a future meeting.

8 Budget Outturn Quarter 2 2019/2020

Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services that presented members with details of the forecast outturn budget for this service area that highlighted major variances in comparison with budget based on the position to the end of Quarter 2 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Finance Manager was in attendance to deliver a presentation on the budget outturn for quarter 2 2019/2020 for Regeneration and Local Services that fell under the remit of this Committee. He noted that figures shown in the report were from April 2019 to September 2019 that highlighted a forecasted revenue overspend of £1.765 million against a revised budget of £73,650 million.

The Finance Manager explained that there were reasons for under and overspending against relevant budget heads that included such things as overspends on waste contracts as tonnage of waste had increased, business rates had been revaluated on premises, staff regrading had increased spending, reduced income from the Gala Theatre and staff TUPE over from Leisure works that was now under Durham County Council's control had cost money. He noted that there was money in the reserves that could be drawn down for overspent budgets as sometimes overspends were outside the control of the service. He added that money would go into the budget next year that would rein back the one off overspends in 2021 to make the situation better.

The Finance Manager informed the group that details of Quarter three would be brought to the next meeting.

Councillor Adam asked if the identified large overspend in Quarter two would still be as large by Quarter three and Quarter four or would it be recovered in 2021.

The Finance Manager hoped that the overspend would be recovered in 2021 as there were plans in place to alleviate the overspend within each service.

The Finance Manager informed the Committee that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services had left the authority and the service was to be split in two. He added that this change would improve the performance of the budget.

Councillor Maddison queried how climate change would impact the budget as hot weather would increase the growth of weeds in gutters that would put pressure on services to remove them. She wanted to know if this was taken into consideration within the budget.

The Finance Manager responded that additional investment through the budget was included for Climate Change over a period of time as some services did come under pressure. He noted that the service would then realign resources across the board. He added that work continued around climate change and a report was to be presented at a full council meeting in the near future.

Mrs Holden asked how overspend within Highways was managed and how repairs were prioritised.

The Finance Manager was aware that there was a backlog within Highways both nationally and within Durham County Council. Highways were keen to develop priority two repairs but resources were limited as to how much could be spent.

Councillor Higgins was concerned regarding the quality of materials used to maintain highways. He noted that no sooner a repair was carried out it needed to be repaired again as the materials just broke up.

Councillor Adam highlighted that it was not the remit of the Finance Manager to answer questions on the quality of materials purchased by departments. He added that an item on Highways was scheduled to come to the Committee's April meeting.

Councillor Coult was surprised at the overspend that had been created with the Gala Theatre to make it more environmentally friendly.

The Finance Manager responded that there were steps in place around the budget for the Gala Theatre. He noted that the budget would be increased to factor in the competitive market in which it sat with other cinemas operating in the area. He noted that the budget should even itself out for next year.

Councillor Adam stated that a lot of work had been carried out with the Gala Theatre due to the competitive market. This could be discussed at the next meeting where questions could be asked.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

9 Performance Management Quarter 2 2019/2020

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources that presented Members with progress on achieving those key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework aligned to the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategy Team Leader was in attendance to present the report. She noted that the performance framework was being recast and realigned towards the Durham vision 2035 that had been developed after extensive public consultation. She added that the vision had been agreed by Council and formally launched at a County Durham Partnership event on 25 October 2019 and focused on three new ambitions with a fourth being added:

- More and better jobs
- Long and Independent lives
- Connected communities
- Better Council

The Strategy Team Leader informed the committee that the ambition of Connected Communities – Sustainability was linked to the following key questions:

- How clean and tidy is my local environment?
- Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?
- How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

The Strategy Team Leader used the questions to give Members an update on performance in the related areas. In relation to how clean and tidy the local environment was she noted that the highest levels of flytipping incidents reported were within the Horden, South Moor and West Auckland areas. She added that CCTV cameras were to be deployed to try to catch the culprits but using them in residential areas created challenges with data protection. There was also an increase in the number of untidy gardens reported within the Horden and South Moor area with graffiti incidents decreasing.

The Strategy Team Leader informed the committee that in relation to the reduction of carbon emissions there had been several projects and measures put in place that had contributed to a reduction in CO2 emissions following the Climate Change emergency. She used the completion of phase 1 of the deculvert in Chester le Street as an example of just one project.

The Strategy Team Leader informed the committee that in relation to the collection and removal of waste there had been a decrease in the municipal waste that had been diverted from landfill. She added that there had been an increase in the number of contaminated recycling bins and licensing for scrapmen was being enforced with an unlicensed scrapman being successfully prosecuted.

The Chair commented that the report gave a positive picture of what was happening within the remit of the Committee and in the Community.

Mrs Holding was concerned that members of the public seemed unclear as to what was to be recycled from household waste that had resulted in high number of contaminated bins. She was unclear as to what plastics could or could not be recycled and wanted to know what rules there were on recycling that was available to residents that they could be sign posted to.

The Strategy Team Leader agreed that recycling for residents was confusing but the Strategic Waste Team had run various campaigns to ensure residents got it right. She noted that leaflets had been circulated to residents and residents who had contaminated waste had been educated on recycling. She added that there was no consistency nationally as to what plastics could or could not be recycled.

Councillor Adam commented that every effort went into advertising the benefits of recycling on Durham County Council's website. He noted that there was confusion on whether black plastic could be recycled. He added that he had been told that Durham County Council did not recycle black plastic as the sensors could not detect it when the separation process took place.

Councillor Clare reiterated Councillor Adam's comments regarding the confusion around black plastic however he had been told that the new recycling plant at Seaham could recycle black plastic as they hand sorted items and did not rely on sensors. He wanted to know if these facilities were available if a wider range of plastics could then be recycled or whether this would cause extra uncertainty in different areas.

Mrs Holden wanted to know if Durham University could follow Manchester University's example in recycling furniture, appliances and utensils for students attending a new academic year.

Councillor Clare informed the Committee that Durham University did push the recycling of these items as on the day students left items were left on the path and a separate collection was made to collect items to pass on to future students.

Councillor Adam advised of the 'Green Move out' campaign that was operated by the authority.

Mrs Holden was disappointed at the increase in the number of untidy gardens reported and thought that this may be down to the charges for bulky item disposals being too costly.

Councillor Clare responded to Mrs Holden stating that those dumping waste in gardens wouldn't pay the bulky waste fee. He noted that the increase in the number

of untidy gardens was the result of greater reporting mechanisms that were available to people. He added that untidy gardens were generally linked to empty properties and landlords with tenants leaving items behind when they moved out and then added to by neighbours in the vicinity. He notified the Committee that work was ongoing around this issue with the proposal to introduce selective licensing with regards to Landlords that may alleviate the situation.

Councillor Dunn was concerned that information was difficult for people to find in relation to recycling. He suggested that a QR code could be introduced that linked to a video that showed what could or could not be recycled. He added that recycling at Durham University should be advertised more widely to prevent first time students buying items unnecessarily. He thought the Reuse shop at Stainton Grove recycling centre was a good use of recycling and should be rolled out further.

The Strategy Team Leader agreed to discuss this with the service manager.

Councillor Maddison stated that there were a lot of untidy gardens and back yards in her area. She felt it happened more when people left the property leaving excess rubbish behind. She thought that more pressure should be placed on the landlord to check properties when tenants left to ensure items were removed and not create costs for the Council.

Councillor Maddison also thought that pressure should be placed on manufacturers to identify on their packaging what could be recycled as she was confused as to whether bottle caps on milk bottles could be recycled.

The Strategy Team Leader responded that the introduction of selective licensing may address the issues of untidy gardens that would issue notices that landlords would need to respond to.

In relation to manufacturers the Strategy Team Leader notified the committee that due to there being no consistency nationally on what plastics should be recycled it made it difficult for manufacturers to add anything to their packaging. She mentioned disposable wipes as a prime example as some were decomposable and others were not.

Councillor Adam informed the committee that the Council had established a private landlord scheme that worked closely with Neighbourhood Wardens to tackle untidy gardens within the County.

Councillor Batey noted that within her area disposable wipes were the main culprit that caused toilet blockages. She suggested that work should be carried out with Northumbrian Water and manufacturers of wipes to ensure that there were sufficient warnings on packages to ensure they were not flushed down toilets.

The Strategy Team Leader reiterated her concerns that clarity should be made on the packaging of disposable wipes and not advertise them as decomposable if they were not.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

10 Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

The Chair advised the Committee that there was a choice of two proposed areas of review activity. Members were reminded that all review activity needed to be complete before the elections in 2021. The proposals included the item put forward by Mr Bolton looking at Highways and also an item that would look at Durham County Councils waste and recycling.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer (CYP) advised that a review of Highways would look specifically at unclassified roads, how repairs were made, service funding and the process for adopting roads. She added that a review of waste and recycling would look at the approach to recycling, green waste, household waste, DCC's refuse and recycling policies, assisted bin collections, contaminated waste and complaints of missed bins.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that a scoping report on the chosen topic area would be brought to the committee meeting on 20 April with the review commencing in May/June 2020 and being completed by January 2021.

The Chair and Vice Chair considering the climate change emergency recommended choosing the refuse and recycling review but it was open to Members of the Committee to opt which one they preferred.

Mrs Holden reiterated Mr Bolton's request to look at Highways as it was very unclear as to whether a road was adopted or unadopted as it appeared the register was not up to date. She felt that it was important that systems were up to date for clarification in case of issues with tripping accidents.

Councillor Adam requested that included within the Highways item that was scheduled to come to committee on 20 April should be information in relation to criteria of unadopted highways.

Resolved: That the committee unanimously agreed to review the Refuse and Recycling service.

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Monday 3 February 2020 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor E Adam (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors O Milburn, B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, L Brown, J Carr, B Coult, R Crute, S Dunn, K Hawley, J Higgins, L Maddison, R Manchester, A Simpson and M Wilson

Co-opted Member:

Mr T Bolton

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs P Holding.

2 Substitute Members

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

5 Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director of Resources that provided background information on the role and responsibilities of the Environment and Sustainable Communities OSC as the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Committee for County Durham prior to receiving a presentation on the

water management policies within the County Durham Plan and presentations from the Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham (for copy of report and slides of presentations, see file of minutes).

County Durham Plan – Water Management Policies

The Committee received a presentation from the Senior Policy Officer: Regeneration and Local Services that highlighted the following points:

- County Durham Plan Update
 - Examination (Autumn/Winter 2019/20)
 - Action Points (January 2020)
 - Further Hearing Session (Feb 2020)
- County Durham Plan Next Steps
 - Inspectors Interim Report (Spring 2020)
 - Modifications Consultation (Spring/Summer)
 - Final Inspector's Report (Summer)
 - Adoption (Autumn)

The Senior Policy Officer informed the Committee that during the public examination of the County Durham Plan the Inspector had only raised one question in relation to water management. The question was around whether the Plan was informed by a strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA) and whether it applied a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development. Including taking into account current and future impacts of climate change and to ensure the development proposed in the Plan avoided areas at highest risk of flooding.

The Senior Policy Officer highlighted that the full response could be found online in the examination library but confirmed that the strategic policies of the plan had been informed by a SFRA including the allocations and flood management policies.

The response to the Inspector also made clear that the SFRA assessed the risk at the time it was prepared, as well as the increased risk from a number of factors including a changing climate and the construction of new development. The Council had requested a minor modification to the supporting text of the policy to make clear that the SFRA is an assessment of flood risk at a given point in time and that, in decision making, it is also necessary to take into account up-to-date Environment Agency flood maps and climate change allowances.

It was confirmed that a further hearing session on the plan would be held on the 6 February 2020 which would focus on questions from the inspector in relation to housing land supply and that would then conclude the hearing sessions for the examination.

Environment Agency

The Committee received a presentation from the Team Leader Partnerships and Strategic Overview, Durham and Tees Valley Environment Agency that highlighted the following points:

- The Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Investment Programme which runs from 2015 -2021, including detail of: the Northumbria wide indicative programme with the majority of the funding coming from central government and topped up by the local levy; County Durham indicative programme with 8 projects in the final year
- Allocation for 2020/21 for County Durham and Pipeline beyond 2021
- Flood Alleviation Scheme Updates – Detail of progress of Weardale Natural Flood Management Demonstrator with planned installation of 85 natural flood management features resulting in a reduction in flood risk to 150 properties and will inform the development of NFM schemes in the future.
- Spring Gardens Dam Trash Screen – will ensure the protection of 565 properties
- Community Engagement including the appointment of an officer by the Environment Agency to work with Durham and Darlington CCU
- Asset Maintenance
- The Future
 - New FCERM Strategy
 - Demonstrating new ways of working
 - Contributing to economic regeneration/growth
 - Integrated management of flood risk – Northumbria Integrated Drainages Partnership studies progressing
 - Preparing for the next investment period

The Chairman thanked the Team Leader for his presentation and asked of the 30 projects identified, how were these priorities identified and how did they know that the right resources had been put into the area.

The Team Leader responded that the prioritisation of the projects was based on the benefits the scheme could deliver in reducing flood risk. He continued that a tool was used, a partnership funding calculator that provided a cost benefit ratio for each scheme, which prioritised the various schemes for consideration with the schemes then submitted on a programme to government to be ratified. A new partnership funding calculator tool is in development which may help calculate funding available for the schemes that delivered wider benefits, that reduced flood risks but also contributed to other benefits like economic regeneration. These schemes went into the calculator and were ranked against other schemes and bids from across the country. The government would then allocate a certain level of funding to some projects, the Environment Agency would then put that onto the programme and in some circumstances would look at other external sources of funding to accelerate a project.

Councillor Avery indicated that Durham did not have the severe flooding incidents when compared to other areas of the country and commented that the introduction of various flood mitigation schemes in the county appeared to have conquered the flooding issues.

The Team Leader responded that the work carried out by the EA results in a reduction of flood risk rather than having conquered flooding however Durham had been fortunate in recent times in terms of large flooding incidents.

Councillor Millburn referred to all members having an area in their ward that were subject to flooding as a result of surface drainage and asked if this type of flooding was in the remit of the Environment Agency.

The Team Leader responded that surface water flooding was the responsibility of the local authority, but funding for surface water schemes can be administered through the Environment Agency.

Councillor Batey suggested that in relation to community engagement they should use the Area Action Partnerships and elected members.

The Team Leader responded that they had used the Area Action Partnerships in particularly in the first year of the scheme which had been very beneficial and that local members were engaged with in areas in the county where the officer was undertaking various activities. He then referred to a highlight report that the Community Engagement Officer produced every month that could be shared with members.

The Chair responded that it would be useful if this report could be shared with members of the committee.

Mr Bolton referred to coastal erosion and glacial melt and commented that in County Durham at Seaham protection measures are in place however towards Hawthorn there is a danger of the railway line being at risk from coastal erosion. He then asked if planning had taken place to look at protecting the railway line in the future.

The Team Leader responded that coastal erosion came under the same remit and that these schemes were on the same programme and managed in the same way as flood risk schemes.

The Senior Area Drainage Manager indicated that Seaham coast was defended and maintained and that the railway line would be looked at and investigated when appropriate however it was being monitored.

Drainage and Coastal Team

The Committee Received a Presentation from the Strategic Highway Manager and the Senior Area Drainage Engineer that highlighted the following points:

- Review for 2019/20
- Grant Funded Schemes for 2019/20
- Going Forward
- Medium Term Investment Plan 2019 -2027 – providing detail of various schemes
- Working Groups showing engagement between the FRMAs for County Durham
- Schemes including Lanchester and Chester-le-street
- Joint studies with NW
- Flooding examples in the county

The Chair thanked officers for their presentation and stated that some interesting work has been carried out.

Councillor Maddison indicated that last year she had raised issues with SuDS in Spennymoor, in particular the Whitworth development and had talked about protection to stop people getting access to them. She continued that there had been a problem this year with water draining off from the new estate into a channel that was very close to the new properties and next to pathways, from a planning perspective, after SuDS have been introduced, what follow up takes place with developers to ensure they are maintaining the systems in the manner they have agreed to at the pre planning stage. She was finding issues in relation to water draining from the newer estates onto the older estates down the bank.

The Senior Area Drainage Engineer responded that part of their function in the team was to check and vet planning applications for major developments. Developers were required to not increase flood risk as part of the development and reduce the flood risk wherever possible. Builders were obliged to build as designed and if there were short fallings, they have enforcement powers that could be used. They would insist on a management plan which covered the full length of the development and show that they had a plan for ongoing maintenance. The purpose of SuDS is to slow/reduce water flow down so channels could cope with the flow of water and do not increase the risk to others.

Councillor Simpson referred to Witton Gilbert village that was flooded in 2011 and with the help of Northumbrian Water and Durham County Council, a flood defence scheme was put in place however there was a lack of maintenance. The area needed cleaning and was overgrown with trees and shrubs and looked untidy. He continued that he had been informed that the design of the slope for maintenance is too steep and asked if it was a bad design, why had the scheme been agreed in the first place.

The Senior Area Drainage Engineer responded they the area may look overgrown, but it is doing what it had been designed to do, stop flooding in that particular area. When the scheme had first been designed it had been thought wildflowers would not need much maintenance, they had installed extra steps for access and the area was trimmed twice a year, but it had been taken over by weeds. The weeds had been spot treated and they would check if they needed a second treatment once the growing season started.

In response to a question, Members were advised that the clean and green team were involved in the maintenance of the scheme at Witton Gilbert.

The Chair stated that the Committee had been to this site on two occasions and they had commented on the area being overgrown and had been informed that the site was maintained.

Councillor Batey referred to a planning application in her ward at Urpeth Grange for houses to be built on a flood plain and at the planning stage it had been asked that flood mitigation measures be included involving the introduction of tanks, but there were issues with the maintenance of these tanks as a Property management company was responsible for the maintenance of the site. Councillor Batey continued that maintenance of SUDs and flood mitigation measures were not being addressed at the planning stage. The Senior Area Drainage Engineer responded that they did insist on a management plan and that this was sometimes done by management companies. He continued that Durham County Council had taken on the maintenance of SuDS and that Northumbrian Water would in the future also take on the adoption of SuDS.

The Chair asked whether government needs to be lobbied in relation to the adoption of SuDS. The Senior Area Drainage Engineer responded that this had been done and it is expected that government will issue guidance later this year.

Councillor Avery commented that flooding in his local area resulted from blocked gullies. The Strategic Highway Manager advised Members that they had a maintenance programme for gully cleaning but if there were any particular issues, if they could provide the team with the details then the team would investigate.

Councillor Coult referred to the River Browney at Langley Park where the weir had been washed away which had affected the flow of the water which had started to erode the river bank and asked if there were plans to replace the weir or if not how could she get this included in a programme.

The Team Leader Partnerships and Strategic Overview, Durham and Tees Valley Environment Agency advised Councillor Coult that he would investigate this.

The Strategic Highway Manager advised that his department were aware of the issues and some works had been carried out and monitoring was taken place, however currently this was not affecting or causing damage to the bridge and he would provide an update to Councillor Coult.

Councillor Coult referred to the issues with gullies and asked about the frequency of the cleaning.

The Strategic Highway Manager advised Members that the frequency of cleaning for gullies was different for locations some were on a 3-monthly cycle, but others were annually. He accepted that there were issues during the autumn leaf fall but if there were any particular issues, then they could review the maintenance cycle.

The Chair asked if the schemes scheduled for between 2021 and 2027 would they be complete by 2027 and how were they prioritised.

The Senior Area Drainage Engineer responded that funding each year was prioritised depending on the protection level the scheme would provide, if it was a less expensive scheme but would protect a number of properties then this scheme would be given a high priority.

Northumbrian Water

The Committee Received a Presentation from the Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager that highlighted the following points:

- Northumbria Integrated Drainage Partnership – detail of partners
- Update on Completed Sewer Network Schemes
- Update on Current Sewer Network Schemes
- Update on Planned Sewer Network Schemes
- Sewage Treatment Works Investment
- Drainage and Wastewater Plan – new to all water companies in the UK and brings drainage and waste water management in line with water supply management planning
- Adoption of SuDS – Update – from 1 April 2020 Northumbrian Water must adopt SuDS offered for adoption by developers when they meet the definition of a sewer
- Reducing Flooding from Blocked Sewers
- Community Portal

The Chair thanked the officer for her presentation and indicated that the community portal was a valuable tool. He then referred to the 'bin the wipe' campaign and commented that manufacturers state that various wipes are flushable. He then asked what work was taking place with manufacturers to help resolve the issue of wipes causing blocked sewers.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager responded that they were working with manufactures to highlight that wipes do not break down like toilet roll and this results in blockages of the sewer system.

The Chair referred to an incident in his area with wipes and how this had resulted in a major problem in his local area.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager referred to the results of a survey where it was found that 55% of people did not have a waste bin in their bathroom. This had resulted in Northumbrian Water Limited undertaking a campaign where they had given out 1400 waste bins to alleviate wipes being flushed down the toilet.

Councillor Avery asked if information about the 'bin the wipe' scheme was available on the Council's website.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager indicated that she was happy for her team to share this information with Durham County Council to promote the scheme.

Councillor Dunn commented that his local community would be happy to work with Northumbrian Water Limited and make local people aware that these wipes do not break down once in the sewer system and result in blockages. He continued that as manufactures are saying they flushable then this was misrepresentation.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager responded that some lobbying work was being carried out.

Councillor Dunn then referred to the portal and that there were no details on the Bowburn scheme for stage 2.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager provided Councillor Dunn with an update and commented that Stage 2 was near completion in the next 2 to 3 months with an update to appear on the portal.

Councillor Coult asked the officer if members could be provided with some information on the 'Bin the Wipe' scheme so that they could get the message out to their local communities.

The Strategic Studies Lead Project Manager commented that there is information available which she could share with members.

The Chair commented that the committee needs to be kept updated in relation to the various work of the FRMA's but also members can be pro-active in their local communities and support campaigns such as 'Bin the Wipe'.

Resolved: (i) That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its role as the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

Committee for County Durham note the information contained in the report and presentations.

(ii) That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its role as the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Committee for County Durham receives further presentations from the Risk Management Authorities at a future special meeting of the committee arranged for February 2021.

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**Environment and
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

9 March 2020

Fuel Poverty



**Joint Report of Geoff Paul, Interim Corporate Director of
Regeneration and Local Service and John Hewitt, Corporate
Director of Resources**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ESCOSC) with detail of the project and schemes available in the County to tackle fuel poverty.

Executive summary

- 2 The best long-term solution to tackle fuel poverty is through energy efficiency measures such as home insulation, efficient heating systems, accessing competitive energy tariffs and advice on how to save energy.
- 3 Housing Solutions coordinates the delivery of our corporate Fuel Poverty Strategy overseen by the County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership. This is a multi-agency partnership that uses countywide networks to help promote awareness and uptake of the fuel poverty grants and assistance as detailed in this report.
- 4 Latest Government figures show that fuel poverty in County Durham has reduced from 14% in 2016 to 11.8% in 2017. This is due to the promotion, awareness and delivery programmes detailed in this report which resulted in County Durham having the 4th highest uptake nationally of fuel poverty grants.

Recommendations

- 5 That Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:
 - a) Receive the report and presentation, note its content and comment accordingly.
 - b) A further progress report to be included in the committee's future work programme.

Background

- 6 ESCOSC at its meeting on 12 July 2019 agreed its work programme for the year ahead and included within the work programme was Fuel Poverty. In accordance with that decision arrangements have been made for the Housing Regeneration Project Manager to attend a meeting of the committee and share with members detail of projects and schemes available to tackle fuel poverty.
- 7 The Committee has received several reports in relation to the progress together with the detail of various projects in the county to tackle fuel poverty. The last progress report was received by the committee at its meeting on 16 November 2018 to which members of Economy and Enterprise OSC and Adults, Wellbeing and Health OSC were also invited to attend due to the cross-cutting nature of fuel poverty.
- 8 Fuel poverty is measured using the Low-Income High Cost definition and arises from a household's inability to afford the energy required to power and heat their home to a satisfactory standard necessary for good health. This standard is defined as domestic temperatures of 21°C in the primary living area (living room) and 18°C in the secondary living areas (other occupied rooms).
- 9 The Fuel Poverty Strategy for England 2015-2030 was released in March 2015. Those who live in property rated below band "E" level Energy Performance Certificate rating need to spend on average £1,000 a year more on energy to heat their home compared to a typical home. Through the Energy Act 2013, the government established a new duty to adopt a fuel poverty target. The new fuel poverty target for England sets out an ambition that as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable achieve a Band "C" energy efficiency standard by 2030 and this became law in December 2014.

Regional and Local Overview

10. The most recent fuel poverty statistics were released by the Government in 2017 as follows:

- Nationally 10.9% of households are fuel poor
- North East average fuel poverty is 11.9%
- County Durham average is 11.8% (approx. 26,668 households)

Table 1 provides an overview of fuel poverty levels in North East Local Authority areas 2017

Table 1

Local Authority	Proportion of households fuel poor (%)	Ranking
North Tyneside	9.3	1
Northumberland	11.1	2
Gateshead	10.8	3
South Tyneside	11.2	4
Stockton-on-Tees	11.3	5
County Durham	11.8	6
Redcar and Cleveland	12.1	7
Darlington	12.2	8
Hartlepool	12.6	9
Sunderland	12.6	10
Newcastle upon Tyne	13.0	11
Middlesbrough	15.4	12
Source: Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 2017		

Delivery and Monitoring

11. Co-ordination, promotion and delivery of fuel poverty and energy efficiency programmes to low income residents is a key corporate priority. To this end the County Durham Affordable Warmth Action Plan was agreed by Cabinet in 2015 and has seven key aims to maximise the assistance provided to fuel poor households in County Durham.
12. The action plan is co-ordinated by the County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty partnership. This partnership brings together a wide range of external organisations (Public Health, AgeUK, Citizens Advice, East Durham Trust, Fire Service etc.) to maximise awareness, credibility and uptake of the fuel poverty intervention programmes and assistance.

Warm Homes Campaign

13. The Warm Homes Campaign is co-ordinated by the Housing Solutions Service. It aims to raise awareness of all energy efficiency and fuel poverty programs to residents living in County Durham and provides help and support with fuel poverty. The network has over 900 local

community venues, community groups and partners who help to raise awareness and uptake of grants to assist with reducing energy bills and maximizing income.

14. In February 2020 the Warm Homes Campaign won the North East Energy Efficient Council of the Year Award for the work in the areas of domestic energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty.

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

15. Under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) all energy supply companies are required to provide grant assistance to low income and fuel poor owner occupier and private rented tenants to install domestic energy efficiency measures. The aim of ECO is to reduce energy bills and levels of fuel poverty by installing new energy efficient boilers, central heating, cavity wall insulation and loft insulation.

ECO Phase 3

16. ECO phase 3 extended the eligibility criteria to assist more households. Therefore, in addition to benefit recipients, other households not in receipt of benefit entitlements now qualify ECO grant assistance including the following categories:
 - Households with a total income less than £26,000
 - Households with a cold related illness that could be made worse by living in a cold damp home
17. Since April 2019, 742 households countywide have received an ECO grant for energy efficient gas fired heating boilers along with cavity wall and loft insulation measures. This equates to £1.39m of external funding drawn down into County Durham from the national ECO programme.

Joint Working with Clinical Commissioning Group

18. The qualifying criteria for ECO include households with a cold related illness as defined in the guidance from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).
19. Joint working has commenced with the Durham and Dales, Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group (DDES) to promote the Warm Homes Campaign to patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) or Asthma.

20. Targeted mail outs are taking place with the Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield GP surgeries. This will involve 41 GP surgeries writing to their patients to promote the assistance available and recommending that patients contact the Housing Solutions Warm Homes Campaign.
21. In January 2020 Dr Jonathan Smith received the national Heat Hero Award from the national fuel poverty charity in Westminster. This was in recognition of the work with 41 GP surgeries to promote the Warm Homes Campaign.

Managing Money Better Service

22. There are currently many competitive gas and electricity tariffs available on the open market which can be very confusing. Research has shown that this can result in households not accessing the cheapest energy tariffs leaving vulnerable residents paying high energy bills, suffering fuel debt and cold homes.
23. The Managing Money Better (MMB) is part of Housing Solutions. It provides free and impartial advice to County Durham residents to access competitive energy tariffs, help switch energy provider, fuel debt write off and energy saving advice.
24. During the period April 2019 to December 2020 MMB carried out 442 home visits to assist residents to save money on their energy bills. This resulted in a combined saving on household energy bills and Warm Homes Discount grants of over £95,000 of which £54,000 was fuel debt write off.

Conclusion

25. Housing Solutions will continue to implement the Fuel Poverty Action Plan to maximise the assistance available to fuel poor households to have warmer healthier homes with lower energy bills.

Contact: Cliff Duff

tel: 03000 265262

Alan Hunter

tel: 03000 262024

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

Homes that are energy efficient have lower carbon emissions.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

Environmental and Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

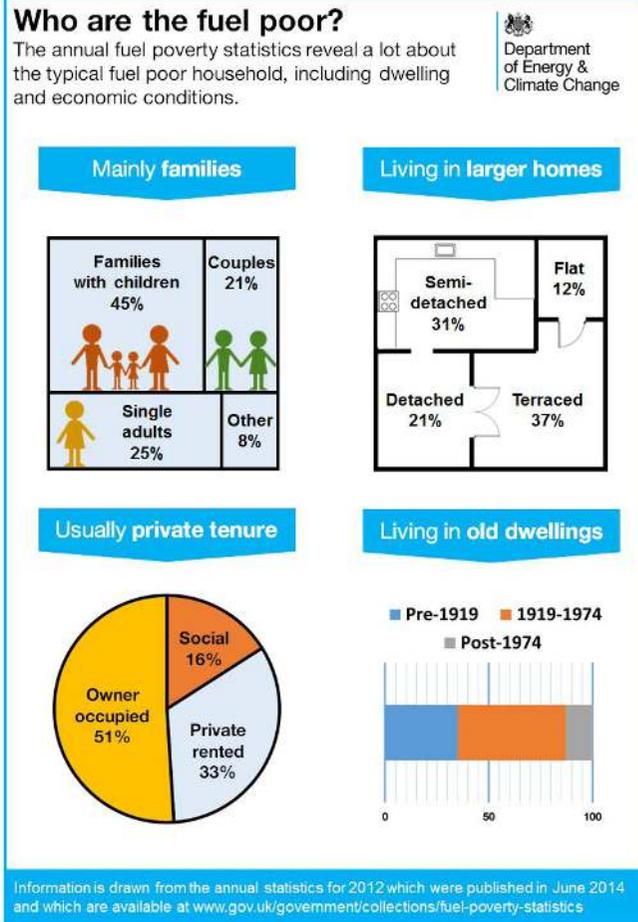
Fuel Poverty Overview

9th March 2020

Cliff Duff - Housing Project Manager



Who are the fuel poor?



National & Local Context

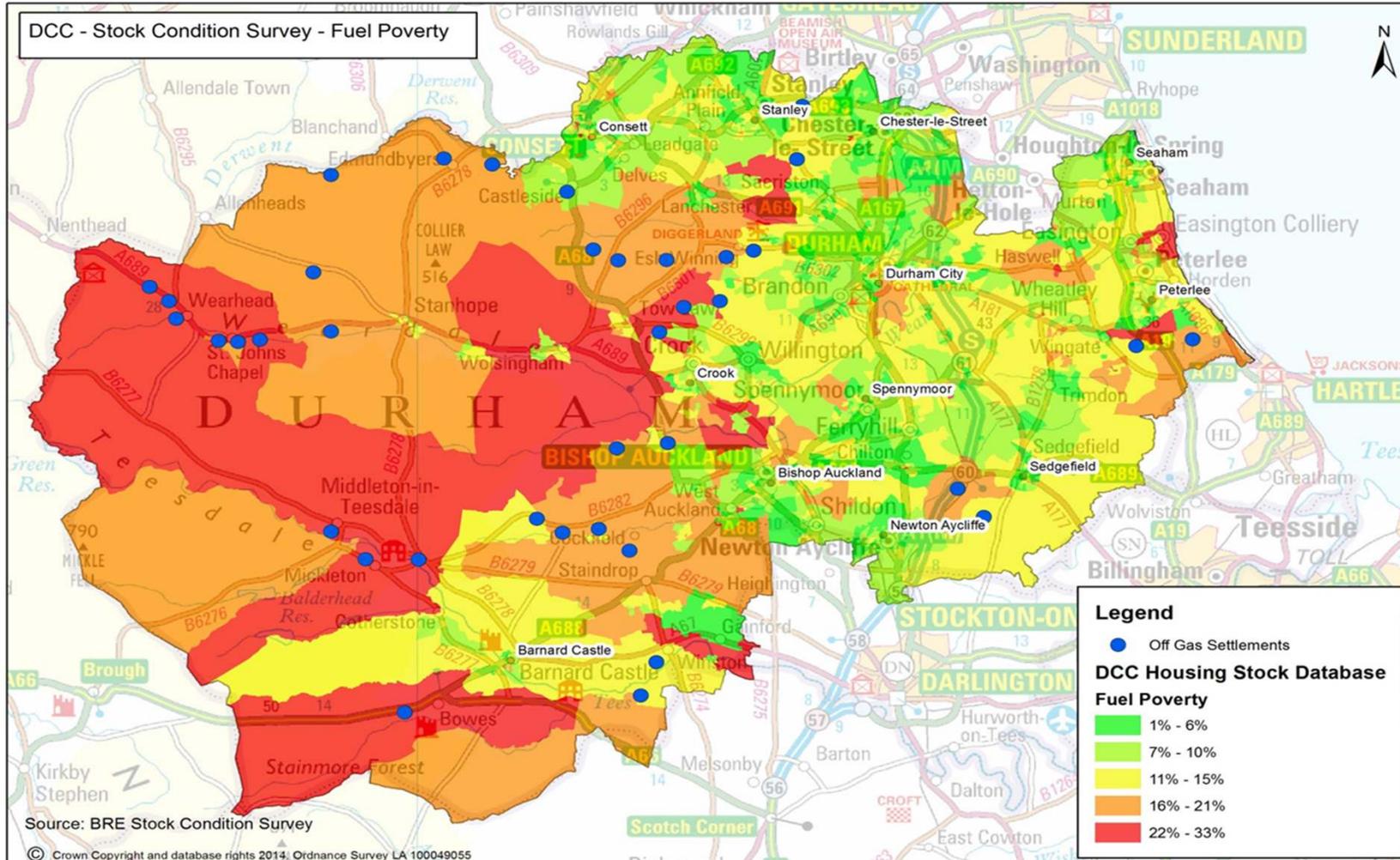
National	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Estimated % of households in fuel poverty
England	22,657,000	2,492,270	10.9%

Region	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Estimated % of households in fuel poverty
North East	1,146,083	152,429	11.9%

Local Authority	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Estimated % of households in fuel poverty
County Durham	226,940	26,668	11.8%



County Durham Fuel Poverty



Delivery and Monitoring

- Housing Strategy
- Poverty Action Plan
- County Durham Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2015-2025
- Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership



Warm Homes Campaign



- Raise awareness of fuel poverty grant progra
- Engagement and confidence is key
- Countywide promotions to encourage referrals
- 900 local community venues
- Partnership working is essential i.e. Revenues and Benefits Service
- Referrals to DCC services and external partners eg. Welfare Rights, Age UK, CAB, Fire and Rescue Service, East Durham Trust, Managing Money Better



What Help is Available?

- Energy Company Obligation Phase 3 (ECO)
- Fuel Poverty grant programmes
- We have 4th highest uptake nationally
- Grants for central heating, gas boilers, renewables, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation & party wall insulation
- 742 households received grants equating to £1.39m of funding from energy companies



Warm and Healthy Homes

- Joint working with Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health
- Mail outs from 41 GP Practices to patients
- Target audience COPD and Asthma
- Referrals come to Warm Homes Campaign
- Assistance to provide warmer healthier homes and reductions in cold related illness and excess winter deaths



Managing Money Better

- Energy Market – confusing, many tariffs
- Fuel debts, fuel poverty and high bills
- MMB provides free & impartial help and advice
- MMB home visit to:
 - Find the most competitive energy tariff
 - Switch energy supplier
 - Fuel debt assistance and fuel debt write off
- Over £95,000 saved on energy bills from 442 home visits including £54,000 debt write off



Warm Homes Fund

- Free gas central heating and connection to gas mains (>23m)
- Free air source heat pumps
- Income less than £26,000 OR ill health
- Target properties existing solid fuel or electric central heating
- Countywide promotions commencing using data from Northern Gas Networks



MMB Case Study

- MMB promoted in County News
- Very high electricity bills - £4,300 fuel debts
- MMB home visit - electric meter 126% inaccurate
- New meter installed - bill reduced to £1,300
- Reworked bill using consumption history from new meter
- Energy company wrote off the £4,300 energy debt
- Client was in credit by over £1,000





**Environment and
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

9 March 2020



External Low Carbon Funding

**Report of Geoff Paul Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration
and Local Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on External Low Carbon Funding opportunities.

Executive summary

- 2 Since the previously reporting to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2019 there has been progress in the existing, European funded low carbon projects reported there, while several new funding bids have been successful or are progressing well. These projects are outlined below, but it should be noted that the loss of all future European funding will prove a major challenge for this area of work.

Recommendations

- 3 That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
 - a) Receive the report and presentation and comment accordingly; and
 - b) a further update be brought to a future of the committee.

Background

- 4 At its meeting on 12 July 2019, Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed its work programme for

2019/2020 and included within the work programme is an overview on External Low Carbon Funding.

- 5 Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously received presentation on European funding and other funding streams for low carbon projects.
- 6 At its meeting on 5 April 2019 the Committee received its last update report on funding of low carbon projects and was given information on European funded projects BEEP (Business Energy Efficiency Project), LOCARBO and REBUS.
- 7 Arrangements have been made for the Sustainability Team Leader to attend a meeting of the committee on 9 March 2020 to provide members with information on External Low Carbon Funding.

Detail

- 8 Since the previous report in April 2019 the existing European funded low carbon projects have progressed well. In addition, a significant number of new, external funding bids have been successful or are progressing well. These are set out below:

Progress in Projects Reported in April 2019

- 9 **BEEP 1** The first BEEP project completed in September 2019. It was a three-year ERDF funded project which supported local SMEs support to reduce their energy costs. Over the three years, BEEP 1 engaged with 237 SMEs, giving out £96,231.34 in grants. Carbon savings of 774.36 tonnes were achieved. The success of the project led to the new BEEP 2 project, outlined below.
- 10 **Erasmus** In April 2019 we reported that the Council had been granted £40,000 European funding under the Erasmus programme for the one-year People Project, in partnership with Durham University. This gave us four MSc students who worked with the council to explore the experience of electric vehicle users in Durham City, including charging infrastructure. They exposed problems with exiting EV charging infrastructure which was limiting EV take-up. Using the students' findings has enabled to win significant Innovate UK funding for the SOSCI project as set out below.
- 11 **SWIi 1** The £2.5 million ERDF funded Solid Wall Insulation Innovation (SWIi) project began in September 2017 and has successfully addressed fuel poverty in 226 properties, over-performing by 10%. The project installs the latest technology in external wall cladding on older stone built houses in the former mining villages of South Moor, Ramshaw, Cockfield and

Ferryhill. The Council hopes to submit a SWli 2 project bid if a further, final national Call comes out.

- 12 **LOCARBO** This €218,557 Interreg Europe project was funded for five years, with the three-year project development phase now complete and project implementation in progress. LOCARBO funded DCC to lead a national review of SME energy efficiency projects and to develop a new project evaluation tool. The learning from this has informed the development of the successful BEEP 2 project bid. It has also proved very useful to the Government Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which has in turn funded additional business energy projects in Durham (see below).
- 13 **REBUS** The €178,114 REBUS project is also a three-year Interreg funded project which is now in its Implementation Phase. The focus of REBUS has been on energy improvements to public buildings and DCC's ECO2 Smart Schools programme and Eco Champions programmes are now being reported as examples of best practice across Europe. The implementation phase is focusing on developing a pipeline of low carbon projects across the County, which has fitted well with the development of our Climate Emergency Response Plan.

New Projects

- 14 **BEEP 2** In September 2019 BEEP's first phase concluded with a thorough review to learn lessons from the project. Building on this, a further 3 year ERDF funding application was successfully submitted for an enhanced project. BEEP 2 will draw down £1,038,010 of ERDF funding and provides a larger staff team, a broader range of support and an increased grant pot. The project aims to support 324 local SMEs and save 2632.5 tonnes of carbon. It is already extremely popular with local businesses and looks set to out-perform BEEP 1.
- 15 **SOSCI** The learning from our Erasmus project enabled us to bid successfully for Innovate UK funding to install a minimum of 100 electric vehicle charge points for people without off-street parking, especially in more rural areas. This is a consortium project which began in November 2019 and uses Vattenfall as our installation partner. The funding provides a member of staff to work with communities to identify optimal EV charging sites. No match funding is required from DCC and we will receive £250,000 in addition to free installation of the 100 charge points.
- 16 **HEET Project** The Council's bid for HEET (Homeowner Engagement in the Energy Transition) funding has been successful in the Round 1 stage

of InteregNW Europe and the Stage 2 Full Application was submitted earlier this month. If successful the project will create two new posts to deliver day to day support to assist hard to reach homeowners to retrofit their homes while influencing strategic and policy decisions regionally nationally and trans-nationally in this regard

- 17 **SME Power** This four-year European Interreg funded project began in August 2019 and will receive £159,902 in grant funding. The project will explore the ways to support smaller SMEs that do not require the full 12 hour intervention provided under ERDF. The hospitality industry is one sector likely to benefit as the project progresses.
- 18 **BEIS Funding** The success in working with BEIS, reported above, has led to the Council receiving £40,000 to undertake a study of business rates. This new project is exploring whether businesses would be interested in a Business Rates Relief scheme that could support them to install renewable energy improvements.

ERDF New Bids

- 19 In addition to the new projects already funded, a further four projects have been successful at ERDF Outline Bid stage. These are:

Durham History Centre Project Bid

- 20 DCC is bidding for £1,296,696 ERDF funding towards a total project cost of £2,161,160 to deliver a series of whole building, low carbon measures to make the new Durham History Centre as energy efficient as possible. The new public building will store and showcase five archive and heritage collections, with public exhibition space, café, ceremony rooms and classroom. It combines a modern extension with the grade II listed Mount Oswald. A 150m deep 300KW ground source heat pump will meet 89% of the building's heating demand and 60% of the cooling demand. A 945m² array of solar photovoltaics will meet 31.8% of the building's electricity requirements and a 35m² evacuated tube solar thermal collector will generate up to 57% of the History Centre's domestic hot water requirement.

Louisa Centre Mine Water Heat Project Bid

- 21 DCC is bidding for £1,881,229 ERDF funding towards a total project cost of £3,136,000 to take heat from the flooded North Durham Coal Seam under the Louisa Leisure Centre and use it to heat the swimming pool, alongside whole building energy efficiency measures (solar car ports, heat pump, new boilers and draft proofing, etc). This will save 503 tonnes CO₂

per annum and will use Durham's mining heritage to generate an innovative solution to the challenge of sustainable heat.

Zero Carbon Depot Project Bid

- 22 The Council is bidding for £4,487,064 ERDF funding towards a total project cost of £7,478,440 to make the Morrison Busty Depot one of the first truly carbon neutral depots in the UK. The site currently comprises offices, vehicle maintenance hubs and storage facilities. Much of this could be made zero carbon through the application of solar PV combined with battery storage heat pumps and a private wire which would take the generated electricity straight to the buildings on site.

Auckland Castle Deep Geothermal Project Bid

- 23 The Auckland Castle Project, supported by DCC, is bidding for £2,886,000 ERDF funding towards a total project cost of £4,810,000 to install a deep geothermal heating scheme at Auckland Castle. The Castle sits above the 'Butterknowle Fault' which holds naturally hot water at depth. Two 1500-metre-deep boreholes will be drilled in the Castle grounds to access this water and extract the heat. A district heat network sited at the Castle's energy centre will distribute heat to DCC-owned Bishop Auckland Town Hall, the Castle Visitor Centre, the Mining Art Museum, the Spanish Art Gallery and the library as well as the Castle complex itself. The geothermal system will supply an estimated 5,364 MWh of renewable heat annually, replacing gas heating, equal to a reduction of 1,030 tonnes CO2 per year.

Conclusion

- 24 The Council has continued to make significant progress in attracting external funding for its innovative work on carbon reduction and tackling the climate emergency and has built a national and international reputation for this success. The cessation of European funding, however, provides a big challenge to this work in the future. The Government has committed to creating a Shared Prosperity Fund to replace the lost funding, but no details are as yet available. We are therefore urgently seeking alternative sources of funding.

Background papers

- Climate Emergency Response Plan

Contact: Maggie Bosanquet

Tel: 03000 265549

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

Securing funding from internal and external sources helps to fund projects that will ultimately reduce carbon emissions

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

**Environment and
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

9 March 2020



Leisure Centre Transformation

**Joint Report of John Hewitt Corporate Director of Resources and
Geoff Paul, Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local
Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a progress update in relation to activity levels in County Durham and proposals for the transformation of Durham County Council's (DCC's) leisure centre offer.

Executive summary

- 2 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously received detail of the management arrangements for some of DCC's leisure centres at the meeting held on 13 July 2018.
- 3 Following consideration of this report and presentation it was decided by the Committee that they would include in their future work programme for 2019/2020 a further progress report focusing on the future management of DCC leisure centres.
- 4 A report on the transformation of leisure centres was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 January 2020. Therefore, it was considered timely for a report and presentation to be presented to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations

- 5 That Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- a) receive the report and presentation and comment accordingly; and
 - b) that the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is involved in the significant engagement and discussion in relation to the transformation of DCC leisure centre offer.

Background

- 6 At its meeting on 12 July 2019 Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed its work programme for the ensuing municipal year and included within the work programme was an item on DCC's transformation of leisure centres.
- 7 In accordance with that decision, arrangements have been made for the Interim Head of Culture, Sport & Tourism to attend a meeting of the committee on 9 March 2020 to provide a presentation on Leisure Centres. The presentation will cover the following areas:
- Current activity levels in County Durham
 - Physical activity infrastructure – what's on offer
 - Governance and accountability
 - Leisure centre transformation
 - Next steps

Conclusion

- 8 Following the presentation, Members of Environment and Sustainable Communities OSC will be aware of current activity levels, the physical activity infrastructure, governance and accountability arrangements and detail of proposals for leisure centre transformation.

Background papers

- Presentation: Physically active in County Durham; A vibrant leisure offer to increase participation.

Contact:	Ann Whitton	03000 268143
	Diane Close	03000 268141

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Council has the power under s19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to provide, and charge for, such recreational facilities as are outlined within the Cabinet report. Local leisure facilities are not generally thought to distort trade between member states and therefore there are unlikely to be any State Aid implications from this proposed investment.

Finance

Exert from January Cabinet report:

The report identifies a need for up to £62.8 million of capital investment. The capital investment is forecast to generate a net annual saving of £1.63 million. It is recommended that this sum is utilised to prudentially borrow £38 million to assist in funding the capital.

Discussions will be required with HMRC to agree to the utilisation of the seven year average dispensation on the Partial Exemption Limit.

Consultation

Local consultation events will be held with Members, service users and residents as part of the next phase of this transformation programme. Details to be agreed Spring 2020.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The investment outlined within the Cabinet report will have a positive impact on the Council equal opportunities duty. Individual Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken alongside Health Impact Assessments as and where necessary.

Human Rights

None.

Climate Change

None.

Crime and Disorder

The programme will have a positive impact upon crime and disorder as outlined within the Social Value impact of the Cabinet report.

Staffing

Increased 33.29 FTE.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

There are risks with any invest to save project, this has been mitigated by procuring the services of a leisure transformation specialist to work on this programme. The risks are further mitigated by the partner's agreement to work with the Council until the business assumptions are achieved; this would be at the partners cost and it is for this reason that the assumed figures are prudent and achievable.

Procurement

All procurement in relation to this transformation programme will be undertaken under the Council's Contract Procurement Rules.



Leisure Centre Transformation Update

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

9 March 2020

Gill O'Neill

Interim Head of Culture, Sport & Tourism

Physically active in County Durham

A vibrant leisure offer to increase participation

Content

- Current activity levels in County Durham
- Physical activity infrastructure – what's on offer
- Governance and accountability
- Leisure centre transformation
- Next steps

Current activity levels

Increased activity is good for mental, physical and social wellbeing and also impacts positively on the economic activity of a place

Chief medical officer guidelines – some is good and more is better

Encourage the inactive to be active and those who are active to maintain and/or increase

Place	Active		Fairly active		Inactive (adults/CYP)	
	Adults	CYP	Adults	CYP	Adults	CYP
County Durham	61%	42%	10%	25%	28%	34%
England	63%	47%	12%	24%	25%	29%

(Active Lives survey 2018/19)



People, Place, Policy

Governance and Accountability

Current state

- Active Durham Leadership Group

Future state (to be developed during 2020)

- County Durham Sport appointing new Chair and Managing Director
- Active Durham Strategy group
- Accountable to Health and Wellbeing Board and Sport England
- Physical activity system delivery plan embedded with Joint health and wellbeing strategy and underpinned by joint strategic needs assessment
- Will adhere to wellbeing principles

Transformation of DCC leisure centre offer

Aim

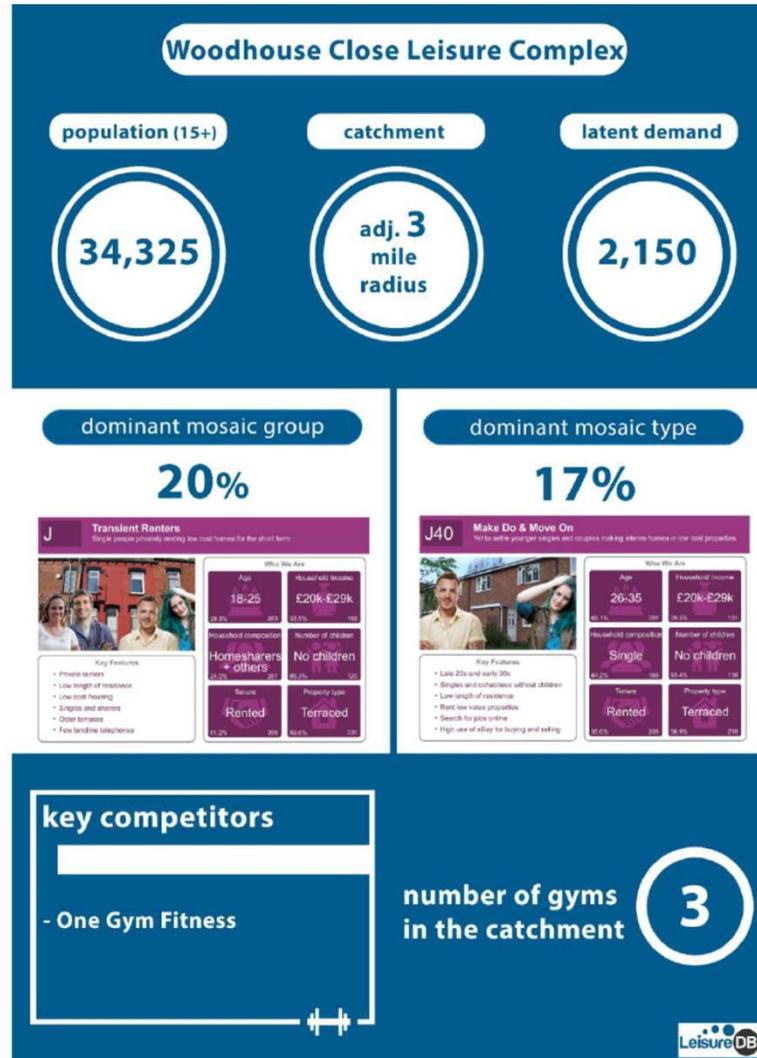
To increase residents and visitors physical, mental and social wellbeing through greater use of leisure centres as a destination for individual, group and family based activities embedded in communities and outreaching beyond their immediate vicinity.

Phase one completed

- Analysis of need in communities
- Assessment of supply and potential increased demand
- Assessment of quality of current buildings and their service offer
- Options for opportunities to increase participation / attendance

***January 2020 DCC Cabinet approved to progress to phase two for more detailed work on feasibility of implementation
~ £63 million proposed investment***

Analysis phase to lead to recommendations



Approches to transformation across the sites

Refresh the
existing offer

- Consett, Newton Aycliffe, Wolsingham, Teesdale

Refurbishment

- Abbey, Louisa Centre, Freeman's Quay, Peterlee, Spennymoor

Feasibility work
for new builds

- Woodhouse Close, Seaham, Chester le Street

Retain leisure
offer

- Meadowfield, Shildon

Next Steps

- Working up the project planning detail for every site
- Significant engagement and discussion with communities and stakeholders
- Ensure DCC leisure centre transformation is embedded into the wider physical activity offer
- This is about getting the inactive active and the active to maintain and / or increase
- To achieve this we must understand the barriers and enablers to maximise equity in access to opportunity

**Environment and Sustainable
Communities Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

9 March 2020

Gala Theatre Overview



**Joint Report of John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources and
Geoff Paul, Interim Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local
Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with background information relating to a presentation providing a follow up review of the Gala Theatre. The presentation will be provided by Helen Ross, Strategic Manager Culture.

Executive summary

- 2 At the scrutiny meeting on 8th March 2019, members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a review presentation by Gala Theatre a year after attendance at the 2019 scrutiny meeting.
- 3 The Gala Theatre was opened in 2000, as a purpose built 500 seat theatre that also includes a two screen cinema, café and meeting areas. In 2009, following local government reorganisation Durham County Council took over control of the Gala Theatre.
- 4 This report gives a general overview of the Gala Theatre that covers:
 - Programme and content;
 - Performance and impact;
 - Current pressures; and
 - Future approach and direction.

Recommendations

- 5 Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to receive this report and consider and comment on the presentation.

Background

- 6 The Gala Theatre was opened in 2000, as a purpose built 500 seat theatre that also includes a two-screen cinema, café and meeting areas. In 2009, following local government reorganisation Durham County Council took over control of the Gala Theatre.
- 7 Programme and content: The Theatre delivers a broad programme which includes comedy, music, performance, dance, opera, film, spoken word and more. The programme is curated to be a mix of both artistically challenging and commercially viable content, seeking to draw a wide audience in to the venue.
- 8 On this basis The Gala's delivery is a mix of:
- Presented Work - the best touring work in: comedy, theatre, music, dance, spoken word, live screenings, opera, film and more.
 - Produced Work - theatre productions created at Gala.
 - Hires - community groups, schools and local amateur societies, who use the venue to present their own events.
- 9 Performance and impact: In 2018/19 the Gala staged 458 live events, presented 1,985 cinema screenings and sold 187,721 tickets. In 18/19 this was achieved based on an expenditure of £1,576,278 and an income of £1,618,671
- 10 Current Pressures:
- Audience trends: UK Theatre's regional theatre data suggests a continuing decline in theatre attendance. Whilst Gala theatre sales have remain relatively strong against this trend for a number of years, a decline in audience is observable and demonstrated in reduced revenue.
 - Emerging competition: 2019 saw the opening of the new Odeon cinema in Durham City. Cinema forms a central plank in both the theatre's public offer and its financing and we have seen a considerable impact on this during the year. A reduced

ticket price brought in to remain competitive (Odeon Groupon ticket price of £5) has seen us maintain 75% of our audience, but with significantly reduced income. The new Everyman cinema will further compound this issue and a watching brief across cinema delivery is in place.

- Rising cost base: Whilst budgets continue to be reduced in times of austerity there are a number of significant costs associated with running the theatre that have risen significantly in recent years such as programme fees, pay awards, utilities and external contracts.
- As the Gala facilitates more events and festivals in support of the broader DCC offer, usually through the provision of space, revenue generating programme can often be impacted.

11 Future Approach and Direction:

- From an operational perspective, in 2019/20 expenditure has been well managed and we anticipate an expenditure level of no more than 18/19. Income (although impacted by reduced cinema income) we anticipate to increase from 18/19 by a margin of £50-80k predicted. This stabilisation provides a foundation from which new developments can be rolled out.
- Pre and post show emails are now sent to all online customers and are an opportunity to review audience feedback and preferences across service delivery and programme. This data is providing us the opportunity to gather better quality audience data, to inform our future plans, support programme development, retain loyalty, reduced lapsed attenders, increase frequency of attendance and understand how our audience likes to be communicated with.
- The 'Gala Productions' (home produced theatre) will continue to be developed facilitating not only a stronger artistic programme capable of external support but allowing income to be maximised by not sharing income with agents and promoters. The potential in this area for co-producing, fundraising and collaboration with other theatres; thereby, sharing the risk, resource and reward, will also continue to be explored.
- A new EPOS (electronic point of sale) system has been deployed at Gala. Despite initial technical teething problems, it will allow for better stock control and management, analysis of audience preferences against show types, real time analysis of income to allow staff mobility during shifts and a new app will allow purchase of catering/bar items prior to attendance and whilst at seat in the venue.

- A programme review is being carried out by our new Gala Programmer to refresh our offer, including potential to host non-seated events (which increase capacity from 500 to approaching 1000).
- The introduction of new cinema facilities in the city has demand we maintain a watching brief regarding our delivery at Gala. We are exploring a number of opportunities with partners on this front to ensure that the facility remains sustainable in the longer term.

Conclusion

12 The report and presentation provide an overview of the Gala Theatre.

Background papers

None

Contact:	Helen Ross	Tel: 03000 265480
	Ann Whitton	Tel: 03000 268143

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None, this report is for information only

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

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Gala Theatre

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 March 2020

Helen Ross
Strategic Manager Culture

Gala is....

A purpose-built venue in the heart of Durham, housing:

- A modern, 500 capacity theatre space
- Two cinema screens (134 and 82 capacity)
- A flexible Studio space hosting live events, meetings, and private functions
- A busy café space, which is also an evening theatre bar
- A small visual arts gallery space

Challenges

- Audience engagement and expectation for venue and programme
- Increase revenue generation across performance and secondary spend in competitive marketplace
- Increasing local competition for cinema offer

Last 12 Months:



Staffing:

New Strategic Manager - in Post Spring 2019

New Gala programmer - in post Autumn 2019

Gala Theatre: Technology

- New EPOS installed - better stock management and cost of sales monitoring
- Pre show emails as standard to pre-sell
- Post show surveys to collate data and promote other performances
- App to be released spring 2020 for pre sales and in venue bar/catering purchases

Gala Theatre: Audiences

- We are gathering better quality audience data, to inform our future plans.
- Through post-show surveys we are gathering audience feedback on the Programme, the Facility, and the Customer Experience
- We are using this to inform ways to - retain loyalty, reduced lapsed attenders, and increase frequency of attendance

Gala Theatre: Performance

- We are being more proactive in establishing and developing relationships with promoters, artists and theatre companies.
- We are keeping the programme vibrant and developing audiences, by avoiding reliance on the same shows returning year after year.
- Introducing more drama work into the programme, to support and develop audiences for Gala Productions.
- Taking more risks in the programme, which will broaden our programme, our audiences and our reputation

Gala Theatre: Performance

- Gala are in discussions about *Pitman Painters*, which is to be revived in a major touring production. This is high cost, but potentially high return. It will help us better define what we are, build drama audiences, and drive audiences for Gala Productions.
- 2019 was the most successful pantomime season since the venue opened with 33,541 tickets sold and income of £342,979 compared to £312,387 in 2018.

Gala Theatre: Cinema

- Odeon opened in June 2019. For the six months from July - December, Gala saw 32,150 cinema attendances, down from 40,076 for the same period last year (20% drop).
- Reduction in Gala ticket prices has helped retain a reduced audience but has impacted considerably on overall cinema revenue position
- New Everyman cinema opening will have additional negative impact

Gala: Comparison

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020 (est to Q4)
• Live events	347	458	357 (456)
• Cinema screenings	2,093	1,985	1,506 (1955)
• Tickets sold	186,183	187,721	138,398 (186,530)

Outturn Comparison: Theatre

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (predicted)
	£	£	£
Income	1,305,270	1,214,329	1,248,964
Expenditure	1,207,541	1,274,647	1,275,788
Net cost	(97,729)	60,318	26,824

Outturn Comparison: Cinema

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (predicted)
	£	£	£
Income	385,125	404,342	276,426
Expenditure	303,543	301,631	143,453
Net cost of	(81,582)	(102,711)	(132,973)

Budget Overview:

Cinema:

Static staff costs of £90,000 irrespective of reduced income

Need to provide cheaper tickets to compete therefore considerably reduced yield per screening

Under target budget by over £200k

Further implications of Everyman cinema opening 2021

Budget Overview:

Theatre:

Good management of expenditure in 19/20

Income for year showing improvement, 2020 anticipated to show stronger improvement with programme changes

Social media marketing at site has commenced in 2020 to help promote ticket sales (28% customers aware of programme via social media compared to 2% through newspapers/magazines)

With digital improvements, programme changes, audience development and analysis, staff restructure and at venue social media marketing, expect to see a further increase in revenue in 2020/21 of minimum 5%.

Moving Forward

- New Gala programmer to review current programme provision
- Present new content to build new audiences including standing audiences for comedy and music (900+ attendance potential compared to 500 seated)
- Undertaken detailed audience review and define audience development plan for venue
- Embed venue delivered social media marketing activity
- Refresh café bar and front of house to promote linger time and increase secondary spend
- Develop pre-sales function and app to promote both ticket sales and secondary spend
- Review marketing strategy and process for Gala
- Maintain watching brief for cinema provision and review quarterly

Questions?



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**County Durham Environment Partnership Board
Minutes**

**Wednesday, 19th June 2019
The Lantern Room, Town Hall, Durham**

Attendees:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Oliver Sherratt (Chair) (OS) | - | Direct Services, DCC |
| Vicky Burrell (VB) | - | Strategic Waste, DCC |
| Lyndsey Waters (LW) | - | Communications, DCC |
| Steve Bhowmick (SB) | - | Chair, Coastal, Heritage and Landscapes Group |
| Peter Samson (PS) | - | DCA/Food Durham |
| Katharine Birdsall (KB) | - | Environment Agency |
| Gordon Elliott (GE) | - | Partnerships, DCC |
| Glenn Robinson (GR) | - | Partnerships Team, DCC |
| Angela Brown (Minutes) (AB) | - | Secretariat, Partnerships, DCC |
| Maggie Bosanquet (MB) | - | Durham County Council |
| Peter Olivere (PO) | - | Spatial Policy, DCC |
| Rebecca Winlow (RW) | - | Spatial Policy, DCC |

Apologies

- | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------------------------|
| John Reed | - | Chair, Climate Change Group |
|-----------|---|-----------------------------|

Item No.	Subject	Action By	
1.	Welcome and Introductions OS welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated round table introductions.		
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising PS mentioned he was down in last actions as Food Durham DCC, AB to correct this. KB asked if page 2 could be changed to Water Environment not Wear Catchment. All other actions were agreed as a true and accurate record of the last meeting. Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GR mentioned he hadn't received anything back from partners in relation to Durham Insights. Possibly need to do more work around this. Not had much 	AB AB	

	<p>feedback maybe need to connect with leads from group to work with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision is on agenda for today's meeting. • Environment Agency Grant – DCC weren't successful one didn't reach the selection criteria and 2nd project DCC submitted was below the cut off line. Defra may have more money available if so the 2nd project could possibly be considered and will come with restrictions. Looking at scoping this out now. • Pauline Walker response to Clare's presentation Pauline was to circulate information on volunteering. This needs to be chased. • Environment Awards are on agenda for discussion today. • SUP Charter – VB mentioned at the last Board meeting that the Council had signed a pledge in March and had an event 14 organisations signed up and had official signing. Since then Matt Baker has produced an online website where you can pledge to do your bit for SUP. Since the release on Friday had another 20 organisations sign up so now upto 34. VB will circulate link for partners to encourage people to sign. VB mentioned that the Town Hall are no longer using plastic milk cartons. Beamish have signed the SUP Pledge. Need to help promote this through AAP's. • Strategic Actions were circulated with the papers for today's meeting. 	AB	
3.	<p>Draft Climate Change Emergency Response</p> <p>OS reported that on 20th February this year the council declared a Climate Change Emergency and pledged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately adopt a new target for DCC of 60% by 2030 considering both production and consumption emissions. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate what further actions are necessary to make the county completely carbon neutral by 2050. <p>The County Council asked in February for report in 6 months on how the Council will intends to target this. Maggie has started on this and the report will go to Full Council on 17th July. To be successful, these targets need to be embraced and adopted by a range of stakeholders.</p> <p>Summary of where we are with County Councils targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Above target for with street lights fitted with LED Depots have solar panels fitted Support for decarbonisation of national grid <p>Members will see a whole council approach covering areas such as transport to tackle emissions. EU money will be used across the county for housing regeneration schemes to insulate homes better. Solar panel schemes to support businesses to be carbon neutral. To achieve the ambition step changes are required but resources will be needed. Solar panels being fitted to resident's houses mean prices of their gas and electric are down per quarter.</p> <p>From the Autumn we will be consulting with a variety of groups as it will be crucial to have views from collection of partners.</p> <p><i>Comments</i></p> <p>There is concern that we don't just have a climate emergency there is biodiversity too and we risk that it gets forgotten about. Can this try to be built in as the two issues go hand in hand?</p> <p>OS informed the Board members that it is business as usual until after the consultation, and he urged board to feed in their comments during the consultation.</p>		
4.	<p>County Durham Vision 2035</p> <p>GE presented the vision presentation to the Board. He mentioned that this was the first</p>		

	<p>Partnership to receive the presentation and the official consultation starts tomorrow.</p> <p>GE is conscious that biodiversity is not mentioned in the vision – SB felt that it is very important not to lose sight that natural environment is underpinning all health.</p> <p>PS felt there was nothing wrong with the headlines but there are very strange facts in there. If we want to have more and better jobs by 2025, we need to have lower economy achieve best possible outcome. Need to look at the wording critically - should be more ambitious. Peter will send GE his issues in detail to feed into consultation.</p> <p>KB – there is not enough emphasis on the Environment currently, we should be saying how proud we are of it. Partners have an obvious link to the successful delivery of the vision.</p> <p>OS – on Page 4 connected communities – can we substitute ‘connected’ with ‘sustainable’ it allows more environmental place-based elements and place for biodiversity.</p> <p>OS asked if there were any early thoughts on how this will impact on CDP as a whole? GE mentioned there will be cross cutting themes. Two of the Boards are statutory, but we will be looking to start a review in September of all the CDP groups.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Promoting Electric Vehicles</p> <p>PO gave a presentation on Promoting Electric Vehicles. He mentioned that as climate emergency is gaining traction within the council, the Electric Vehicle Working group felt this was a good opportunity to be doing more. The group have been meeting regularly since the beginning of the year. They discuss key issues and opportunities around Electric Vehicles. The group has representation from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial Policy • Transport • Low Carbon • Assets • Funding & Programmes • Fleet <p>Some workstreams link up to NECA projects e.g. OLEV Funding for EV taxi charging.</p>		

	<p><i>Next Steps</i> What can the Environment Partnership Board do to encourage electric vehicle uptake?</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>The county council fleet are looking at bits of small equipment such as electrical pedestrian sweepers. Also looking at cost for partial transfer to electric bin wagons.</p> <p>It was asked how do we respond to huge scaling up of charging points?</p> <p>The Environment Agency Air Quality Team have been involved in a lot of work around this area. Air quality is such a large issue and KB will feed back to Denise and Dave to keep them in the loop.</p> <p>It was asked if the government had thought through how the cars draw in electricity? PO mentioned they are looking at issues now as electric vehicles will still release particles.</p> <p>It was felt there could be wider implications as higher taxes on fossil fuels could be implemented when they increase the number of electric cars.</p> <p>It was suggested that there needs to be an increase in technology as 20 mins is a long time to stand and wait for charge. PO mentioned that they are hopeful to get improvements in technology to get to 5 minutes as the network needs to be future proofed.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that as DCC is one of biggest employers in the North East would discount schemes be offered on vehicle? This is something worth considering.</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p>Funding Opportunities</p> <p>GR mentioned that discussions had taken place at the County Durham Partnership Board about how best to maximise external funding opportunities across the partnership's framework.</p> <p>Recommendations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be a new process of including funding opportunities as a 		

	<p>standard agenda item for all Partnership Board meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Partnership would receive regular funding opportunity updates at meetings and E-bulletins in between meetings. 		
<p>7.</p>	<p>Updates from Group Chairs</p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u></p> <p>SB – the last meeting had an excellent presentation from Jody Larder in relation to National Heritage fund scheme that is running nationally. Now have a much bigger funding pot of £44m for the north. The changes caused a lot of discussion as to what projects do and their specific outcomes. Caused a lot of interest around how we can bring things together.</p> <p>Craig Wilson also gave a presentation about a new Heritage project to do with Crime and Punishment. There is historically a lot of knowledge around this area. The plan is to put in a lottery bid to set up a hub around crime and punishment. Craig is pulling this together into a bid.</p> <p>There was an update from Wear Catchment about water management on the riverbank and species that need to be managed.</p> <p>Brightwater were successful with another bid for lottery funded projects, which were launched at Hallgarth Manor, that focus on improving the river Skerne.</p> <p>The big project will be Durham Woodland revival which links to the carbon agenda drawing in £400,000 which will be match funded.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>PS – Met on 22nd May and focussed on two priorities of the Environment Board Action Plan. They decided that leaf composting and volunteering, could be linked up.</p> <p>There was a new project for leaf composting in Bishop Auckland – youth composting.</p>		

	<p>Investigations will take place to see how we can build on this.</p> <p>Environmental Volunteering – we will speak to the Auckland Project to see if we can work in partnership to do this.</p> <p><u>Climate Change & Air Quality Group</u> OS mentioned that John Reed may be off for a while so will consider someone from the group to make sure the group still meet in his absence. OS agreed to speak to Cliff Duff.</p> <p><u>Chair update</u> At the County Durham Partnership Forum meeting there was discussion around social cohesion and hate crime.</p>	OS	
8.	<p>Environment Awards</p> <p>SB circulated a brochure that covers guidance information for applications for the Environment Awards 2019. The closing date is 19th July 2019. Need partners to push this through their own networks. There was a disappointing response from local media. Coms will push this on social media to get more interest.</p> <p>It was asked what sort of projects were being considered – SB mentioned that they need to be recent projects or projects that are heading towards completion.</p>	All	
9.	<p>Environment Partnership Communications</p> <p>LW circulated the draft newsletter, if anyone has anything to add can please feedback to LW</p> <p>OS asked the Board if they were happy if the next newsletter focused on Climate Change. The Board agreed this.</p> <p>KB asked if OS could make sure that the Environment Agency had been contacted about the Climate Change Report.</p>	All OS	
10.	<p>AOB</p> <p>VB mentioned that following on from the BBC War on Plastics programme, the Council have had quite a few enquiries and FOI's about</p>		

	<p>where plastic goes to once it has been collected.</p> <p>Recycling week is September 23rd – 29th. We will be doing some 'recycling it's in our hands' awareness for this.</p> <p>BIFFA are investing £35m in plant in Seaham so a lot of recycling will now be processed within County Durham once this is up and running.</p>		
<p>11.</p>	<p>Date and time of next meeting: 25th September,2019, 10.00am, Town Hall, Durham</p>		



**County Durham Environment Partnership Board
Minutes**

**Wednesday, 25th September 2019
The Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham**

Attendees:

Oliver Sherratt (Chair) (OS)	-	Direct Services, DCC
Vicky Burrell (VB)	-	Strategic Waste, DCC
Steve Bhowmick (SB)	-	Chair, Coastal, Heritage and Landscapes Group
Peter Samson (PS)	-	DCA/Food Durham
Katharine Birdsall (KB)	-	Environment Agency
Gordon Elliott (GE)	-	Partnerships, DCC
Glenn Robinson (GR)	-	Partnerships Team, DCC
Angela Brown (Minutes) (AB)	-	Secretariat, Partnerships, DCC
Helen Grayshan (HG)	-	Durham County Council
Corinne Walton (CW)	-	Area Action Partnership, DCC
Neil Kelly (NK)	-	Mental Health NE

Apologies

John Reed (JR)	-	Chair, Climate Change Group
Lyndsey Waters (LW)	-	Communications, DCC

Item No.	Subject	Action By	
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>OS welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated round table introductions.</p> <p>OS suggested speaking to Jim Cokhill and Claire Thompson to see if they will be attending future meetings</p>		
2.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>PS asked if his comment on page 4 could be changed to 'PS felt there was nothing wrong with the headlines but we would need to look at the wording critically'.</p> <p>All other actions were agreed as a true record of the meeting</p>	AB	

	<p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PS mentioned he was down in last actions as Food Durham DCC. AB amended this • KB asked if Page 2 could be changed to Wear Environment not Wear Catchment. AB amended this • Pauline Walker in response to Claire's Presentation agreed to send information on volunteer litter pickers. AB forwarded this information to Claire Thompson. • OS mentioned that John Reed may be off for a while so will consider someone from the group to make sure the group still meeting in his absence – This will be covered in OS presentation on Carbon Neutral today • KB asked of OS could make sure that the Environment Agency had been contacted about the Climate Change Report – This is now an active consultation live until 31st October. 		
<p>3.</p>	<p>Business Energy and Efficiency Programme (BEEP)</p> <p>HG thanked the board for inviting her to present today. She gave a general overview of the BEEP project</p> <p>She discussed where the project is now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 260 SMEs have participated • 240 have received 12 hours of support • 834t of CO2e saved • Expecting further 500t to come in • 60k of grants released, but demand for more <p>They are now three years into the programme and have applied for larger grant pot of £400k. The programme tries to be target focused rather than being target driven</p> <p>Questions/Comments It was asked under ERDF is the programme able to support farming. It is unable to do so.</p> <p>It was suggested that the partnership could help with promotion of the programme. SB suggested teaming up and aligning projects to see what support can be given.</p>		
<p>4.</p>	<p>A Carbon Neutral Durham County by 2050</p> <p>OS gave a presentation to the Board on the County Durham Climate Emergency Consultation. On 20th</p>		

	<p>February 2019 Durham County Council declared a Climate Emergency.</p> <p>A climate emergency report has been written which highlights a range of exciting measures which could help the Council achieve these targets</p> <p>Two emergency targets have been set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the Council's carbon emissions by 60% by 2030 • Investigate what further actions are necessary to make County Durham completely carbon neutral by 2050 and pledge to achieve this <p>The first target is for the Council to set a good example and reduce its own carbon emissions by 60% over the next 10 years. To become 100% carbon neutral by 2050 we will need to work together to drastically cut County Durham's emissions over the next 30 years and ensure that we absorb or offset any emissions left by 2050 by planting trees or through peatland restoration for example.</p> <p>The four target areas for Council Emissions are Heat, Electricity, Transport & Schools – These deal with 3% of the county's emissions</p> <p>Target 2 is countywide emissions which are the remaining 97% of emissions that need to be tackled.</p> <p>It was felt that the most obvious change in the consultation would be to the name change for the Partnership. The Board agreed that the name change made sense as it helps to make sure Climate Change is brought up the agenda.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Area Action Partnerships & The Environment</p> <p>CW presented and updated the Board in relation to the work of Area Action Partnerships within the 'altogether greener' theme.</p> <p>She gave an overview of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A changing landscape for AAP's • North versus South • Community champions and engagement • Award winners, good practice and showcase • Winter is coming... but it's getting hot in here <p>She mentioned AAP's are driven by local priority setting, some have priorities for one year and others for two. Currently only two out of the 14 have 'environment' as a specific priority area which are Derwent Valley and Spennymoor. This doesn't reflect</p>		

	<p>the amount of time and resources spent on addressing environmental issues, as how communities define environment plays a key role in the work delivered against the 'greener' agenda.</p> <p>CW handed over to Neil Kelly, Chair of Mental Health North East who discussed the showcase project 'Greening the Gap' which offered a range of wellbeing activities to participants. Each week participants were able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in the polytunnel and plant and grow vegetables that could also be grown at home • Participate in holistic health discussions in confidence to identify new ways of dealing with mental and physical challenges • Participate in a walk in the Muddy Boots Dene <p>CW - DCC declared a Climate Change Emergency back in February with the aim of being 60% carbon neutral by 2030. The AAP's role will be to support this agenda moving forward including the opportunity for residents to take part in the forthcoming change consultations. The work of the AAP's is not just about the availability of funding to support environmental project delivery, they also support, promote and encourage intergenerational working national and local campaigns, our local heritage, tourism and local engagement which all form a part of the core AAP business.</p> <p>Questions/comments There are an awful lot of projects that are relevant to food strategy that are going on, it would helpful for an overview of all projects to help make more links.</p> <p>CW will pull together a booklet with all AAP projects and send to GR to circulate</p> <p>OS concluded that its not just environment itself one of the key priorities for environment is mental health</p>	CW	
6.	<p>Updates from Group Chairs</p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u> SB – the group have agreed an action plan and have high level actions through the Board and we did a quick refresh of what we would like to achieve: Natural Env – Pollen project Support County Plan Focus on woodland and woodland revival Work more closely with the river agenda</p>		

	<p>Built Env – Aware of non-designated assets and how we reflect that in improving the Environment. Support the Environment Action Zone programme and have discussion around the 2 heritage action zones. There are key areas that we are keen to develop e.g. more green areas working with AONB.</p> <p>Seascapes other big project is going into stage 2 lottery fund shortly so hopefully that will be successful.</p> <p>Had a discussion with Highways England have 3-4 months to support biodiversity along carriageways so we will need to have a discussion around this at the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u> PS mentioned that the Environment in your communities group has two priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf composting • Environment volunteering <p>Our targets have already been met as there is a lot of work going that people are not always aware of.</p> <p>Food Durham has just received money from National Lottery Fund to develop the food strategy it is £50,000 so will be looking to partners to help shape this.</p> <p>Food Waste – Working with VB team around Halloween and how food is wasted when it is carved. We have a pumpkin seller who will be offering recipes to use the food left over and stop food waste</p> <p>GE mentioned that he would like to catch up with PS regarding funding for holiday hunger. £10,000 is available for each AAP area.</p> <p><u>Chair update</u> The CDP Board meeting was held on 3rd September – Amanda Healy presented on signposting mechanism - a variety of health related interventions and support, this will be developed on a countywide basis. The vision refresh was also on the agenda and has now been approved by the Board and the vision will be formally launch at the CDP Event on 25th October.</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>GE/PS</p>	
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**County Durham Environment Partnership Board
Minutes**

**Wednesday, 11th December 2019
The Lantern Room, Town Hall, Durham**

Attendees:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Oliver Sherratt (Chair) (OS) | - | Direct Services, DCC |
| Steve Bhowmick (SB) | - | Chair, Coastal, Heritage and Landscapes Group |
| Lyndsey Waters (LW) | - | Durham County Council |
| Katharine Birdsall (KB) | - | Environment Agency |
| Gordon Elliott (GE) | - | Partnerships, DCC |
| Glenn Robinson (GR) | - | Partnerships Team, DCC |
| Angela Brown (Minutes) (AB) | - | Secretariat, Partnerships, DCC |
| Corinne Walton (CW) | - | Area Action Partnership, DCC |
| Sue Mullinger (SM) | - | Landscapes, DCC |
| Mike Boase (MB) | - | Durham Woodland Revival |
| Jenny Haworth (JH) | - | Strategy, DCC |
| Bryan Harris (BH) | - | Design & Conservation, DCC |

Apologies

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| John Reed (JR) | - | Chair, Climate Change Group |
| Vicky Burrell (VB) | - | Strategic Waste, DCC |
| Peter Samson (PS) | - | DCA/Food Durham |

Item No.	Subject	Action By	
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>OS welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated round table introductions.</p> <p>The Governance Review for the Partnership is on the agenda. There will be a wider review of The County Durham Partnership. Once it's revamped and revised, we need to look to get more partner representation for this Board.</p>		

<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>All actions were agreed as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 5 – Postponed as meeting was cancelled – SB • Page 5 – £10,000 funding for holiday hunger. Look at bigger bid hopefully this will be signed off this afternoon. The funding needs to be spent in the 6 weeks holidays. Working with a number of partners on this and will find out if it's successful in February. • Page 6 – GR met with OS to discuss. 		
<p>3.</p>	<p>County Durham Partnership Governance Review</p> <p>GE presented the County Durham Partnership Strategic Governance Review to the Board, he recapped that the vision has now been signed off and agreed. It has also been agreed that the Governance arrangements for the partnerships will be reviewed. He discussed the current Partnership Framework, the 'Altogethers', which had been in place since 2009.</p> <p>JH mentioned that it is critical to this debate to have partners thoughts on overarching structures.</p> <p>Four options were discussed as possible new structures for the Partnership Boards and thoughts from Board were requested.</p> <p>OS welcomed views from Board and members discussed the options.</p> <p>SB commented that people often didn't realise that some issues are environmental and not economic. His preference was Option 2, as he liked idea of combining the economic and environment. OS had concern with this option as he thought rural issues may become even more diluted.</p> <p>KB felt that the Environment and Climate Change could sit above all as it links to all of the proposed structures. For Environment Agency to continue to work with DCC there needs to be hooks in any new policy that are aligned their policies especially in relation to funding opportunities.</p> <p>OS mentioned that Durham County Council is charged with producing Climate Change Plan and they need to</p>		

	<p>outline the shape that is taking. For it to be delivered effectively, it needs to be cross cutting across all areas. The option needs to be outcome focused and have partnership structures working together for a common cause. Whichever option is chosen, the membership of the Environment Partnership will need reviewing.</p> <p>GE informed the Board that he would be completing review of the presentation in January and hoped to have something signed off in May. He mentioned that a questionnaire will be circulated to Board members and Chairs of Sub Groups for their views.</p> <p>OS concluded that the Board look over the options and share the presentation with sub groups to get their opinions.</p>	<p>GE</p> <p>All</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Environment Awards</p> <p>BH gave a presentation to the Board on the Environment Awards 2019 which were the 30-year anniversary.</p> <p>He covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebranding • Sponsorship • Launch • Exhibition • Ceremony • 3 things to consider for the future <p>SB thanked BH for presenting and mentioned that a paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting with issues to consider and he would happily welcome any feedback.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that young people could be involved with the judging process and the Youth Council was seen to be an excellent way to engage the Young people. GR mentioned that schools could be involved.</p> <p>There could be an award for the most innovative idea. One suggestion was that entries could be ‘jazzed’ up a little bit.</p> <p>It was felt that 2019 Event was marvellous with a great venue. More money was spent on this year as it was marking the 30th anniversary. For 2020 there will be a need to be look around the County for different options, and come back to the group for a steer, as could be less money. The format of categories also needs to be reviewed.</p>	<p>All</p>	

	<p>SB mentioned he would make a start and update at meeting in March.</p>	<p>SB</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Woodland Revival & Urban Tree Challenge</p> <p><u>Woodland Revival</u></p> <p>MB introduced the project to the Board; the Durham Woodland Revival is Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) supported project that aims to manage woodlands and revitalise the forestry sector in County Durham. Along with support from the Woodland Trust, Durham County Council, Northwoods and the Forestry Commission, first phase will start in the summer of 2019 and run to 2023 by which time over £1m will have been invested in woodlands within the project area. The partnership is keen to ensure that there are opportunities for the community, landowners, businesses and other stakeholders to get involved and will be holding several events throughout the development stages.</p> <p>There are significant outcomes to be delivered, which will involve significant planting through the woodland trust. The core is to consolidate skills and we are working closely with SM.</p> <p>There will be a public launch early in the New Year.</p> <p>OS felt that this was an excellent project. It was felt that there could be an opportunity to work with schools and the CDP in relation to tree planting and suggested SM get in touch with GR.</p> <p>SM mentioned that they are looking at availability of land. She is meeting with OS this afternoon to see how this can be taken forward as this is not straight forward, and it will need additional resources.</p> <p><u>Urban Tree Challenge</u></p> <p>The Government launched new project called the Urban tree Challenge, which plan to plant more than 130,000 trees in towns and cities in England. The project will be funded by £10m grants will be made available over the next two years to try and meet the governments targets to plant one million trees by 2022.</p> <p>The scheme will be open to individuals, local authorities and charities and will be administered by the Forestry Commission. The fund will pay for the tree planting and the first three years upkeep.</p>	<p>SM</p>	

	<p>The team, who only had a couple of weeks to get a bid together, had it signed off this week. If successful 60% of the planting must be done by March 2020. Currently looking at a number of sites mainly around housing estates. It was asked if SM could send a list of sites to CW to send to AAP's.</p> <p>OS concluded that this is remarkable and hope to make the most of this. SB remarked he is pleased there is such a strong excellent team to carry this out.</p>	SM	
6.	<p>Climate Change Emergency Response Plan Consultation</p> <p>OS informed the Board that an action plan has been developed to give direction for the next two years. The report will go to Cabinet in February.</p> <p>He recapped:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Feb 19 Emergency Declaration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60% Council reduction by 2030 - Net zero countywide by 2050 • 17 July 2019 Update Report • 19 Sep to 31 October Consultation Survey 523 Public 502 Staff 27 Primary Schools 394 Pupils 7 Secondary and CF Partnership • Work continues e.g. Tanfield Louisa Centre <p>Feedback was discussed OS mentioned that tree planting was top of list for the countywide priorities.</p> <p>Work in Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a costed two-year action plan • Potential for extra resources to support change • Review of targets in the light of proposed work • Over 100 Projects so far identified – welcome more! • Cultural change too, on an individual level • Governance influenced by CDP Review • Report to Cabinet February 2020 • Not much time! <p>OS agreed to share consultation responses analysis.</p>	OS	
7.	<p>Updates from Group Chairs</p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u> SB mentioned that the group didn't meet due to bereavement of colleague Gary Haley from</p>		

	<p>Woodland Trust after an illness. The funeral was on the day of the meeting so there were colleagues from the group wanting to attend. Gary was a valued member of the Partnership. The group will now meet next week.</p> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>Peter Samson sent an update to GR: The group are looking at the review of the County Durham Sustainable Food Strategy which is a strategy for the county with a wide range of partners is involved in the process. DCCs Strategic Waste team to have a strong input into the section about reducing food waste and Public Health to be an important contributor to the section on diet-related ill health and access to affordable healthy food.</p> <p>Members discussed farming in the county and explored way in which we could encourage the farming sector to explore more sustainable practices. To start that conversation DCA worked with the North Pennines AONB Partnership on a farm walk aimed at livestock farmers, mainly in Teesdale, to look at the approach taken on a farm near Brignall which is accredited by the Pasture Fed Livestock Association, which means that the beef produced on that farm is entirely grass fed, so without the use of any bought in feed (grain, soya, fish meal etc).</p>		
<p>8.</p>	<p>Environment Partnership Communications</p> <p>LW mentioned that a lot of comms have been on hold due to Purdah. She asked the Board If they have any comments for the newsletter can they be fed back to LW ASAP.</p> <p>GR mentioned that he had spoken to Vicky Pugh and its has been agreed that this would now be circulated to CDP Board members. AB and GR are currently reviewing circulation list for newsletter.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>GR & AB</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Environment Funding Opportunities</p> <p>GR mentioned that the funding opportunities had been circulated in advance of the meeting. If there is any interest contact GR and he may be able to support with the application process.</p>	<p>All</p>	

10.	AOB OS informed the Board that there will be changes in the County Council with the appointment of two new directors		
11.	Date and time of next meeting: 11 th March 2020, 10.00am, Town Hall, Durham		

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