



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

**Date**      **Friday 19 March 2021**  
**Time**      **9.30 am**  
**Venue**     **Remote Meeting - This meeting is being held remotely via Microsoft Teams**

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### **Business**

#### **Part A**

**Items which are open to the Public and Press**  
**Members of the public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement, and if registered to speak**

1. Apologies
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 February 2021 (Pages 3 - 14)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested parties
6. Impact of COVID 19 on Neighbourhoods and Climate Change Service Grouping
  - a) Report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 15 - 20)
  - b) Presentation by the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 21 - 34)
7. Climate Emergency Response Plan - Year 1 Update
  - a) Report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 35 - 94)
  - b) Presentation by Principal Officer Climate Change and Sustainability (Pages 95 - 114)
8. Quarter 3 2020/21 - Revenue and Capital Outturn

- a) Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Interim) and Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 115 - 126)
- b) Presentation by the Finance Manager Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 127 - 132)
9. Quarter 3 2020/2021 - Performance Management Report - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Interim) (Pages 133 - 146)
10. Refresh of the Work Programme - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Interim) (Pages 147 - 192)
11. 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  
11 March 2021

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, T Henderson, J Higgins, 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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**Contact: Paula Nicholson**

**Tel: 03000 269710**

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## DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Friday 12 February 2021 at 9.30 am**

**Present:**

**Councillor E Adam (Chair)**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors O Milburn, B Avery, A Batey, D Bell, L Brown, B Coult, R Crute, S Dunn, J Higgins, C Kay, L Maddison, R Manchester, I McLean, A Simpson and M Wilson

**Co-opted Members:**

Mr T Bolton and Mrs P Holding

**Also Present:**

Councillors R Bell, P Crathorne, S Quinn, A Reed, J Robinson, M Simmons, H Smith, T Tucker and M Wilkes

Mrs R Morris – Co-opted Member of Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### **1 Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **2 Substitute Members**

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

#### **4 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Wilkes declared an Interest in Agenda Item No. 6 Fuel Poverty in his capacity as a private landlord and remained in the meeting during consideration thereof.

#### **5 Any Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties**

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

#### **6 Fuel Poverty**

Members of the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

Members considered the joint report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration Economy and Growth and Interim Corporate Director of Resources that provided Members with detail of the projects and schemes available in the County to tackle fuel poverty (for copy of report, see file of minutes)

Cliff Duff, Housing Regeneration Project Manager supported by Adrian Cattle-Jones, Housing Regeneration Project Manager were in attendance to present the report and deliver a presentation (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

The presentation set out who were the fuel poor and explained that the government yesterday launched their new national fuel poverty strategy called 'Sustainable Warmth Protecting Vulnerable Households in England', and had changed their definition to 'The Low Income, Low Energy Efficiency'. The Housing Regeneration Project Manager informed members that feedback from Neighbourhood Energy Action, the national fuel poverty charity predicted that the new definition would see an increase in national levels of fuel poverty. The document would be reviewed, and a briefing update provided to Members on the new strategy.

Members were provided with details of the national and local context and a County Durham Fuel Poverty Map that indicated that the highest levels of fuel poverty were predominantly in the west of the county and the reasons for this were largely due to properties being off the gas grid and reliant on high cost fuels such as oil, electricity and solid fuel; secondly the properties were solid wall making insulation difficult and expensive.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager then provided details of the Delivery and Monitoring and advised Members that fuel poverty is included within the newly adopted Housing Strategy but the principal driver is the County Durham Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2018-2020, there is also a partnership element to fuel poverty and the Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership enables relevant organisations to

work together to get the message out to residents. The Warm Homes Campaign is the mechanism used to raise awareness and get the message out to residents of various fuel poverty grants. The Housing Regeneration Project Manager advised that engagement was key to their work in raising confidence and credibility. As part of the work was to provide free boilers, discounted boilers and free central heating systems, it is important that residents have confidence to apply and understand the criteria.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager provided a summary of assistance available including the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which is a national programme available to those on benefits, low incomes or who suffer ill health. Information was given on the Warm and Healthy Homes project which is a local programme that works with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) predominantly in the former Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield (DDES) area where GPs have written out to patients asking them to complete a warm and healthy homes questionnaire. When the service receives the completed questionnaire, they then contact them to offer support and assistance.

Information was given on another local project, Managing Money Better service which provides free and impartial advice on the energy market, including changing suppliers, fuel debt, high bills and fuel poverty. An example was given of residents who received significantly high energy bills who had contacted the service and on investigation the service found the electricity metre was inaccurate. The energy company were contacted and a new metre was installed, the service then asked the energy company to monitor the fuel usage against the previous usage and the fuel debt was written off and the residents were then found to be £1,000 in credit with the energy supplier.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his presentation and update and referred to the national consultations that were taking place due to the changing government policies.

Councillor R Bell advised that he had raised in the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30 October that the Government were consulting on the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and referred to rental properties needing to be EPC grade C or higher and indicated that there was a large number of terraced solid wall houses in the county and to meet this target, these properties required solid wall insulation. He was concerned about the cost of this and the effect on the housing stock and had written to the responsible Minister Lord Callanan and had received a technical response citing the minimum energy efficiency standard regulations that he would share with the Chair and the Housing Regeneration Project Manager. Councillor Bell advised the Committee that he was going to raise further queries with the Minister as there was some confusion about energy performance certificates and he did not know if the government were concerned about the cost to tenants or if their concerns related to CO2 emissions. He advised that his particular concern were for rural properties that were off gas

grid, particularly in the Durham Dales where there were lots of solid fuel and oil fuel properties and in being assessed for EPC if a property had oil fuelled central heating then this would increase the EPC banding. The broader issues for the county was that if this did not come with additional extra funding or significant exemptions then a considerable amount of housing stock would become unlettable and asked if the Housing Regeneration Project Manager had views on this.

The Chair asked Councillor R Bell to keep the committee updated on the progress of his investigation as it is of concern to this committee and the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager responded that there were three consultations taking place simultaneously. There was a minimum energy efficiency standard consultation that had concluded with the response currently awaited. There was also a consultation on the national fuel poverty strategy that was published yesterday and a further consultation on the national grant mechanisms, the energy company obligation that was in the third phase and a launch would take place on the fourth phase in 2022. The Housing Regeneration Project Manager advised there could be something included in the new poverty strategy but he had not had time to read it due to it being published yesterday afternoon, but the Fuel Poverty Charity had suggested there may be significant rises in funding available in relation to fuel poverty. The Housing Regeneration Manager asked the Chair if he could come back to committee once he had an opportunity to read the new strategy.

The Chair advised that perhaps the Housing Regeneration Project Manager may want to provide a briefing note to members on his findings from the new strategy.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager referred to the position with landlords and advised that it was a big challenge for landlords to bring their properties up to the necessary EPC ratings and that some would require significant investment. The average EPC rating for rental properties in Durham was below C and a number of landlords would have to contribute a substantial amount bringing their homes up to standard. He referred to the South of the country, where income rental was much greater and property values higher, so it was perhaps easier for landlords to meet these new requirements. In County Durham this was more difficult especially in the coalfield villages where there could be issues in letting properties. The rental values were low in some regeneration areas and had to invest to bring these properties up to a EPC C rating was a big challenge and the government needed to recognise that some further investment was needed in support for areas of multiple deprivation and fuel poverty. He advised Members that the Housing Solutions service had fed into the consultation and raised this point.

Councillor R Bell responded that in his consultation submission and in his letter, he specifically made reference to the difference in the cost of a terraced house in the North of the country compared to the South so the cost proportion of the value of

the property was higher for the county's housing stock and suggested that the committee needs to keep a watchful eye on this situation.

Rosemary Morris asked how they could improve the fuel poverty strategy in the drive for net zero. She referred to paragraphs 19 and 20 of the report and if there was any collaboration with the industry to reduce gas usage.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager referred to current schemes with northern gas networks that were operating two agendas, the new build agenda where new houses after a certain date would not be connected to gas but using alternative heating fuel. However, there were large areas of the country that were already connected to gas. Northern Gas Networks in particular areas were operating a pilot project to bleed in hydrogen into the gas network so that the boilers were operating on a combination of clean fuel and natural gas so industries were moving forward to the gas infrastructure and may eventually become a hydrogen-based infrastructure which would be a substantial step towards the net zero. In response to a follow up question from Mrs Morris regarding insisting on using alternative fuels to achieve net zero the Housing Regeneration Project Manager advised that his service did not insist on this approach this was a strategic decision that would come from the Planning service. His service worked to minimise fuel poverty in existing properties.

The Chair advised that the Council needs to look at this from a planning point of view and there were already consultations out; The County Durham Plan would need to focus on energy efficient buildings and new technologies.

Tom Bolton referred to the fuel poverty map and asked if another layer could be included on the map to show demographics and income. He then referred to the new garden village proposals for Seaham and the district central heating system which is going to use geothermal energy from the Dawdon mine water treatment plant and suggested that this maybe something to go into the committee's next work programme and to visit these locations when it is safe to do so.

The Chair indicated that this could be raised when the committee considers the refresh of the work programme at its next meeting.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager responded that a dialogue was taking place in relation to income, should this be agreed it could be added into the map as it would assist the service with targeting the right people. However, that is a corporate decision, but conversations are taking place. The information could also be used to target those households on low income who would now qualify for a grant.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager updated Members on the decarbonisation of South West Durham moving from gas based fuels, coal and oil to renewable energy. They were proactively delivering on decarbonised project across

the off gas areas installing the latest air source heat pump technology in homes and they could install a heat pump for someone in fuel poverty earning less than £30,000 at no cost to them. The issue was resources as the amount of money available was limited and they were bidding into national funding streams to get small amounts of funding. Installing low technology heating system into someone's home was only half the answer, the total solution was insulation but Durham had 57,000 solid wall properties and it would cost approximately £10,000 to externally insulate a house properly and required a big initiative from the government similar to the 'Decent Homes Programme'. The Housing Regeneration Project Manager advised that successful projects had taken place in Ramshaw, Craghead and South Moor, very good examples of where solid wall properties have been insulated. He advised that there was a need to insulate as well as installing low carbon technology.

The Chair indicated that the team were doing a great job and suggested that it was important to raise these issues within government through MPs and referred to the levelling up agenda that included these issues. He indicated that Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee could perhaps raise these issues.

Councillor Crathorne indicated that she hoped that all private landlords had the homes up to EPC standard as the people who lived in these homes were in poverty. She then referred to the warmer homes campaign and getting the message out via the AAP's and local charities who deal with people on low incomes and in poverty or people who own their homes but couldn't afford to bring up to standard.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager indicated that the Warm Homes Campaign has 900 community venues and that the AAPs are one of the principle drivers and mechanisms used to filter information out to residents, charities and partners, they also produce a leaflet that is distributed to organisations.

Pat Holding referred to inaccurate energy meters and asked if this was being investigated as a serious issue.

The Housing Regeneration Manager responded that if anyone had any concerns regarding their energy meters to contact the service via the Managing Money Better service as they could arrange to have the meter checked for accuracy.

Councillor Coult referred to the promotion of the various schemes and suggested that the council should push these schemes further with the use of social media as previously residents may not have needed such schemes but due to COVID-19, circumstances had changed with many working from home and using more energy resulting in higher fuel bills many now may need the support.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager indicated that they do use social media promotions and there was a rolling programme for this. The service usually used a case study and he would bring to the attention of the COMMS team to have a

further media promotion. He advised that they also use other mechanisms such as the Durham County News.

The Chair asked if members could be notified when the social media campaign was released, it would be useful if Members could also share the information.

Councillor Wilkes referred to the ECO grants where it was easy to make an application but highlighted that that residents wanting work to be done using the Green Homes Grant had found it difficult to find contractors to carry out the work and had contacted him to ask for help. He suggested that the Council could form their own database and work with these companies so that residents can access details of contractors within the various schemes, if more grants became available in the future, they would be able to help residents.

The Chair advised that through social media there was a lot of information out there, but it was difficult for residents to know which were reputable companies.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager indicated that the Green Homes grant was the government's voucher scheme that was a two billion pounds project that had been extended to March 2022, however the Minister has now said that this scheme would not be extended and funding had been reduced to 320 million pounds. Both Housing Regeneration Project Managers had met with the council's procurement service to try and put in place a contractor framework to deliver in house council schemes, and perhaps this could assist residents with contacting registered contractors.

The Housing Regeneration Project Manager advised of 'Trust Mark' which the government has introduced and those working on green homes grant jobs must be 'trust mark' approved. He went on to say that the service was working on a scheme and if all went to plan the information could be forwarded to residents, the scheme would ensure that companies have all the necessary documentation and standards.

The Chair thanked the Housing Regeneration Project Manager and the Housing Regeneration Manager for their presentation and answering members questions.

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

(ii) That a further progress report is included in the future work programme.

(iii) That Members receive an update briefing report in relation to the National Fuel Poverty Strategy.

## **7 Highways Maintenance**

Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

The Chair wished to convey his thanks to Brian Buckley, Strategic Highways Manager who had very recently retired from the authority. Members of the committee joined him in sending Brian best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

The Committee considered the Joint report of the Interim Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change that provided Members with background information in relation to highways asset management service delivery (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

Paul Watson, Interim Strategic Highways Manager supported by Paul Anderson, Highways Inspection and Maintenance Manager were in attendance to present the report and deliver a presentation (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

The presentation provided details of the highway Inventory; highway inspections; condition surveys; asset condition; structures condition index; footways and their management and safety inspections; footways capital schemes; maintenance backlog; highways assets performance and innovation.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager explained that the council had over 1000 kilometres of cycle infrastructure and just under 300 kilometres was highway related this information had been omitted out of the presentation, but the information would be updated and circulated to members.

Members were advised that there are two types of inspection safety and service and that in relation to A, B and C roads there was a fair condition target of 4% and the good condition target was 0%. However, the weather this time of year had an impact on the condition of the assets and their ability to repair defects due to the volume of repairs.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager advised that in relation to unclassified roads and footways the service would be addressing the backlog of repairs over the next few years using funding from government and Durham County Council. He went on to explain the structure condition indices and highlighted that there was an aim for a good condition target score of 100%, fair condition target scores ranged from 95 – 85%. Where a structure received a score 60 indicated that the structure had lost 40% of its function and would require intervention.

Since 2016 the authority had invested just under 19 million pounds in structures and repaired and maintained over 143 schemes. The purpose of the condition survey around structures is to identify the right treatment at the right time and using the investment over the last five years this is the direction Durham County Council is moving in. Currently there were one or two bridges in catastrophic condition which were being treated.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager provided comprehensive information relating to footways which had been requested by members. The frequency of footway inspections is determined by location and footfall, defects are rated into categories and repair times were determined by category. Almost 70,000 defects were reported this does not include reports from members and public. Members were informed that the authority had retained the maximum band rating from the Department of Transport and was one of only two local authorities to obtain ISO accreditation and had received an above average public satisfaction. The Interim Strategic Highways Manager explained how Durham County Council had embraced innovative projects such as the use of plastic crumb and the Govtech project.

The Chair indicated that it was interesting to note the miles of roads, footpaths and cycleways and that the public become parochial about their local highways and footways and this must generate lots of reports daily. He then referred to the impact of the weather on the highway and the report showed some improvement in terms of the maintenance on the roadway.

The Chair in relation to structures, specifically to the bridge maintenance and bridge condition and referred to the bridge index and noted that the condition of the bridges was deteriorating although not significantly enough to cause any huge concerns and asked if the service had the resources to improve that index as far as the condition was concerned. He then referred to the condition of the upgrading of footpaths and the use of top surfacing and if this was a short term measure as it was not always cost effective and if they had any plans to remove flagstones from footpaths. He then referred to the use of plastics and if these were used on new footpaths or was it solely for use on road surfaces.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager responded that bridge maintenance had historically been underfunded. Currently principal inspections were more detailed and identify more areas therefore more defects were being identified. Risk principal inspections that were a more detailed inspection were carried out between six and twelve years or sooner if relating to an identified risk.

The service was constantly applying to the Department for Transport (DfT) and the combined authority for any significant transport and highways related schemes. The service currently had a number of bids with the Department for Transport for various structures which would help address some of the backlog. Due to budget constraints they had to apply the right treatment at the time and the general and principal inspections on the bridges were identifying what those issues were.

If a bridge was in significant danger, then they would apply to the council for additional funding. He referred to the current closure of Elvet Bridge that was funded through the council and the Department for Transport and using existing budgets as the principle inspection identified an immediate need to deliver a programme.

He then referred to flagstones on footpaths and advised that these would only be replaced where there was significant vehicle overrun or damage due to utility trenches and identified that the majority of highway claims were trips on flagstones, where tree roots had lifted flagstones they would look to remove the flagstones and replace with bitmac.

The service was now using plastics on the vast majority of schemes and quantified the amount of plastics and rubber crumb that was used in all their surfacing but this had a cost against carbon. It was emphasised that Durham County Council would always embrace innovation.

The Highways Inspection and Maintenance Manager referred to the inspection frequency and indicated that flagged footpaths gave more likelihood of trips and falls. Their minimum inspection frequency for a flagged footpath was six months. He then referred to the surface treatment in relation to footway specialist treatment that was used to maintain existing footpaths for a period of five to seven years and was a cost effective treatment but footway specialist treatment would not be used if the footpath was degraded to such a point that it would not be cost effective and in these circumstances the service would look to reconstruct the footpath. However, the service was aware of the limitations of footway surface treatment.

Councillor Reed referred to unadopted roads in particular one in the Crook division that was installed by the council but had not had any maintenance work since the 1960's and was in a poor condition and was also used as a footpath and was the only access road to properties on that street. She asked if funding was available and if it was the council's responsibility to repair the road, she was aware that in the past when the council has spare materials they have provided the spare material to residents for residents to spread it themselves rather than the council having to dispose of the material.

The Chair suggested that the detail to this question could be given outside of the meeting.

The Interim Strategic Highway Manager indicated that they would check the ownership of the road and advised that in the past they had used road plainings. If the road was unadopted then there would be no inspection regime and was happy to discuss with Councillor Reed outside the meeting.

The Highway Inspection and Maintenance Manager advised members that they would provide road plaining if available and that members had the opportunity to get up to 50 tons of road plaining free if they had work in the area but the plainings belonged to the contractors and it was at their discretion. There is a small budget for ad-hoc inspections to be carried out.

Tom Bolton referred to adopted highways and footways and asked if they were always shown on the adopted map/record, the road in question was believed to

have been constructed by Durham County Council but did not appear on the adopted map/record. Could the service look at this.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager responded that this could be an anomaly and more investigation may be required and he would speak to Mr Bolton outside the meeting.

Councillor L Brown referred to the flagstones on footpaths and was disappointed when they were removed as they were a natural habitat for the masonry bee.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager responded that he would speak to colleagues in the Ecology Team to discuss if there was an alternative habitat that could be provided for the bees and at the request of the Chair would feed back the response to committee officers.

Pat Holding referred to the use of plastics and asked how they compared with conventional surfacing in terms of duration and how difficult was it to dispose of this material.

The Interim Strategic Highways Manager responded that plastics in road surfacing was a new product and detail regarding the durability was not known as yet but there was a lot of research being carried out across the county in terms of innovation. The disposal aspect there was a potential issue as it was plastic within a road surface that could not be recycled again, they had been using the product for the last three or four years and no repairs had been required in that time and it was expected to last at least 20/25 years.

The Highways Inspection and Maintenance Manager referred to the duration of the road surface and the maximum plastic put into the roads at present was six percent as the testing carried out was reporting that it does not affect the durability. In relation to disposal of the material he would speak to the contractors laboratories and other suppliers regarding development and disposal.

The Chair advised that it was an important issue which the committee would want to be updated and suggested that the information on the impact of the plastic surface was having on our roads was included within the Highways Maintenance item that will be included in the committee's 2021/2022 work programme.

The Chair thanked the officers for the presentation and for answering Members questions.

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

(ii) That a progress updated on highways maintenance in the county be included in its future work programme for 2020/21.

## 8 Quarter Two 2020/21 Budget Forecast

The Committee considered the Joint Report of the Interim Corporate Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which set out details of the forecast outturn budget position for the service area. The report highlighted and explained any major variances in comparison with the budget. The Finance Manager, Neighbourhoods and Climate Change was in attendance to present the report and gave a presentation (for copy of report and presentation, see file of minutes).

**Resolved:** That the contents of the report be noted.

## 9 Quarter Two Performance Management 2020/21

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Corporate Director of Resources that presented the progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the Council's corporate performance framework (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Corporate Scrutiny and Strategy Manager was in attendance to present the report and explained that the pandemic had affected some areas of performance.

The performance report was structured around the four ambitions contained within the County Durham Vision 2035 and the Council Plan.

The Corporate Strategy and Scrutiny Manager highlighted the performance of the service during this quarter around environmental cleanliness, fly tipping incidents, carbon emissions and waste collection and disposal.

He explained that they were developing an Environment and Climate Change Partnership that would be responsible for the county's Climate Emergency Response Plan and the development of an Ecological Response Plan and this may be something that the committee want to look at in more detail when the plan was developed.

The Chair commented that the report seemed to be shorter than usual and asked if there was a reason for this. The Corporate Scrutiny and Strategy Manager responded by explaining that outturn against some performance indicators is not available quarterly. For instance, performance against some measures is only published annually. When performance against annual measures becomes available then it is included in the next quarterly report to committee and these reports will be longer. The length of performance reports is therefore linked to what performance data is available for the reporting quarter.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

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

**19 March 2021**

**An update on the response  
of Neighbourhoods and  
Climate Change to the  
Coronavirus Pandemic**



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**Report of Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods  
and Climate Change**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the committee with an update in the actions that the teams within Neighbourhoods and Climate Change have taken, working with partners, to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic prior to a presentation from the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change attached as appendix 2.

**Executive summary**

- 2 Services across the Neighbourhoods and Climate Change service group continue to be significantly affected by the pandemic both in the operational procedures that remain in place to keep staff safe, and also the public facing service offer.
- 3 Social distancing continues to provide the most significant challenges, with many operations having to adapt to safe working practices. While many of these practices are now well embedded in many services, the operational and service impacts are still being felt.
- 4 In the area of regulation and compliance, we continue to see generally very good levels of compliance with the COVID regulations from the public and businesses across the county, with only a limited amount of formal enforcement being necessary.

- 5 The governments roadmap out of lockdown was published on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 and services are currently working through the detailed implications in readiness.

### **Recommendations**

- 6 That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:
- a) note the content of the report and presentation and comment accordingly.
  - b) include in the 2021/22 work programme a further update.

## **Background**

- 7 The council and its partners have continued to provide front facing environment services to the people of County Durham throughout the pandemic and for much longer that was anticipated when emergency procedures were introduced almost 12 months ago.
- 8 Council employees have continually risen to the challenge and demonstrated their willingness to work flexibly, adopt new ways of working and support each other, focussing on what needs to be done to maintain services and support local communities.
- 9 County Durham residents have observed and co-operated with national guidance and while the lockdown restrictions continue to be in place at the current time, there is now a Government Roadmap for release, which will bring its own issues for operational services.
- 10 Locally, the council continues to work with partner agencies via the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to manage the multi-agency response to COVID-19.

## **Neighbourhood services**

- 11 Social distancing remains the main impact of the pandemic on many of our operational services. Safe operating procedures remain in place for all services including refuse and recycling collections, highways and construction maintenance, grounds maintenance and cleansing.
- 12 Refuse and recycling services have continued throughout the pandemic without interruption albeit with more resource required. The garden waste collection service was delivered during 2020 on the basis of Saturday and Monday collections and with a short interruption early in the first lockdown. The service will re-commence in April 2021 on a Tuesday to Friday basis, which is the more usual configuration.
- 13 Household waste recycling centres continue to be very busy and this has increased further as the winter weather has receded recently. This additional demand, in conjunction with the social distancing measure that still need to be in place at the sites, have continued to create queues, which at some sites has meant that traffic management must remain in place. Solutions to ease this issue are in development including a booking system and an online queue monitoring system.
- 14 Highways maintenance returned to a normal programme during 2020 as safe operating procedures became embedded. More recently efforts have focussed on winter maintenance during some extended periods of exceptionally challenging winter weather. Significant efforts were also made to ensure that priority footpaths were kept clear and a special focus was given to all COVID testing and vaccination centres across the

county. This led to some very appreciative feedback from colleagues in the health service and others involved in the COVID response.

- 15 Major projects have continued, using COVID safe procedures. The New Elvet Bridge project continues to make good progress and the new Witton Park Bridge was opened in December 2020.
- 16 Community Protection teams have been involved principally in providing advice and guidance to those businesses across the county that were able to continue trading under the new regulations. Compliance has generally been very good however enforcement has been necessary in exceptional circumstances, with one gym being taken to court to gain a closure order after refusing to abide by the current regulations.
- 17 Community protection teams have also been working on outbreak management with public health colleagues.

### **Government Roadmap**

- 18 On 22nd February 2021 the government published the roadmap out of lockdown, setting out a four-step process based on data, not dates, but with an indicative timetable across the next five months.
- 19 While further guidance, and regulation, will be forthcoming to crystallise the requirement of each stage there is currently considerable work being progressed to understand what are the key milestones and decision points across this roadmap both for our operations and our public facing service offer.

### **Conclusion**

- 20 The teams working within the Neighbourhoods & Climate Change service grouping have continued to show resilience, dedication and flexibility to maintain essential services during this prolonged pandemic. The roadmap out of lockdown provides a template for work going forward but many details remain to be confirmed.

### **Background papers**

- None

Author

Alan Patrickson

Tel: 03000 268165

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Under section 2B NHS Act 2006 (inserted by Section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012), local authorities have a statutory duty to take such steps as they consider appropriate for improving the health of the people in their area.

The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/351) make provision for the steps to be taken by local authorities in exercising their public health functions. This includes providing information and advice for the purpose of protecting individuals in the area of the authority from events or occurrences which threaten, or are liable to threaten, their health, and may in particular include arrangements to deal with infectious diseases.

Section 73A (1) of the 2006 Act, (inserted by section 30 of the 2012 Act), gives the Director of Public Health responsibility for exercising their local authority's functions in planning for, and responding to, emergencies that present a risk to the public's health.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, local authorities also have a duty to collaborate with others to protect the public, which includes promoting business continuity and resilience. The council is designated as a category one responder under the Act, and as such collaborates with other agencies through the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 gives further powers to government to slow the spread of the virus; reduce the resourcing and administrative burden on public bodies; and limit the impact of potential staffing shortages on the delivery of public services. Under regulation, this includes postponing local elections including that of the County Durham and Darlington Police and Crime Commissioner due in May 2020, postponing the annual meeting of the council and allowing existing postholders to continue in office until an annual meeting is able to be held; and introducing 'virtual' council and committee meetings in the light of the lockdown and ongoing social distancing measures.

### **Finance**

The council has been allocated government grants to help cover the additional costs and lost income associated with coronavirus.

### **Consultation**

Not applicable.

## **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Not applicable.

## **Climate Change**

The lockdown and reduction in traffic and building use has generally been seen as having a number of environmental benefits including reduction in noise, light and air pollution, emissions and carbon reduction. Aspects of this may continue with walking and cycling being promoted as safer, socially-distanced modes of travel.

## **Human Rights**

Not applicable.

## **Crime and Disorder**

Not applicable.

## **Staffing**

500 employees were redeployed during the COVID-19 response and all of the council's main HR policies and procedures were revised as part of a comprehensive emergency HR policy.

## **Accommodation**

It has been necessary to close a number of council premises as part of the national lock-down and in some instances, where the council is an accommodation provider to business/commercial tenants, rent and/or rates relief has been offered to support tenants during the lockdown. A Facilities Management Task and Finish Group has been established under the council's recovery and restoration plan, to ensure that closed premises are re-commissioned and safe before they are opened again.

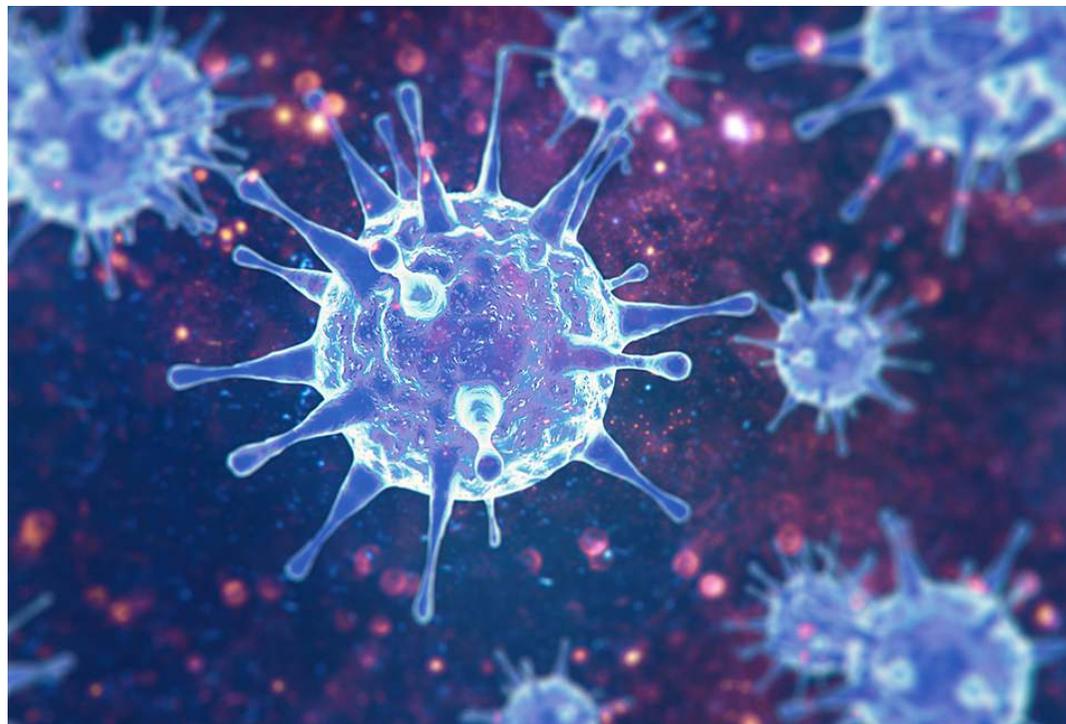
## **Risk**

A risk assessment of the impact of the pandemic has been undertaken by a risk management task and finish group as part of the council's governance arrangements. Risk assessments have been undertaken as part of the council's business continuity and response arrangements to ensure the health and safety of staff, volunteers and service users.

## **Procurement**

In order to respond to the pressures the council faced, emergency procurement procedures were adopted in line with government coronavirus legislation and procurement regulations.

# Neighbourhoods & Climate Change



**COVID-19 Update  
March 2021**

*Altogether better*





# Environment Services



*Altogether better*



# Waste Management

- Social Distancing still affecting productivity
- 2021 Garden waste crews returning to Tues - Fri
- Household waste recycling centres still require traffic management plans and social distancing.
- Web based live tracking being developed
- Booking system also in production
- Major multi-Council waste procurement post 2026 progressing.
- Additional focus on flytipping through strengthened warden service



*Altogether better*



# Parks and Open Spaces

- Play areas are open but with reduced equipment to encourage social distancing.
- Café's providing limited service at Hardwick and Wharton Park.
- Toilets available.
- Clean & Green service operating with safe operating practices



*Altogether better*

# Impact of Covid on Bereavement Services

- Early response
  - LRF sub group set up
  - Temporary Cremator procured (Mounsett Crem)
  - Additional staff trained
    - Wardens (majority)
    - Civic Pride
    - Libraries
    - School Crossing Patrol

*Altogether better*



# Impact of Covid on Bereavement Services

- The affect on services
  - Large increase in deaths in the 1<sup>st</sup> wave
  - Ongoing changes in Govt regulations
  - Streamlined processes
  - Reduced attendance (social distancing)
  - Enhanced cleansing routines
  - Held 2019/20 prices initially & offered free webcasts at Crems
  - Shifts implemented at crematoria (long days, weekends & bank hols)
  - An outbreak impacted on this small team early 2021
  - Increased number of public funerals



*Altogether better*

# Impact of Covid on Bereavement Services

- Current position
  - Still in the winter peak – no services cancelled despite the weather !
  - Reduced staffing at Crems to reduce the chance of transmission
  - Replacement cremators delayed by 3 months due to travel complications for specialist staff from Germany
  - Will respond to the updated Roadmap

## Final point

- Staff like in many areas are our greatest resource to ensure services are delivered, small team, very committed and dedicated to providing excellent services at a difficult time for families

*Altogether better*





# Community Protection



*Altogether better*



# Community Protection

- Business advice enforcement during current lockdown
- Hundreds of visits undertaken every months
- Early focus on food establishments
- Compliance is generally very good but with notable exceptions:
- Some areas of concern:  
hairdressers, Gyms, Take-aways



*Altogether better*

# Community Protection

Other areas include

- Outbreak Control
- GRT services
- ASB & Nuisance
- CAT teams & Safer Streets Initiative



*Altogether better*



# Technical Services



*Altogether better*



# A different kind of emergency



*Altogether better*

## New Elvet Bridge

- Work progressing well
- Central span has been lifted
- Work done on Joints
- Deck will lowered and partially fixed



## Witton Park Bridge

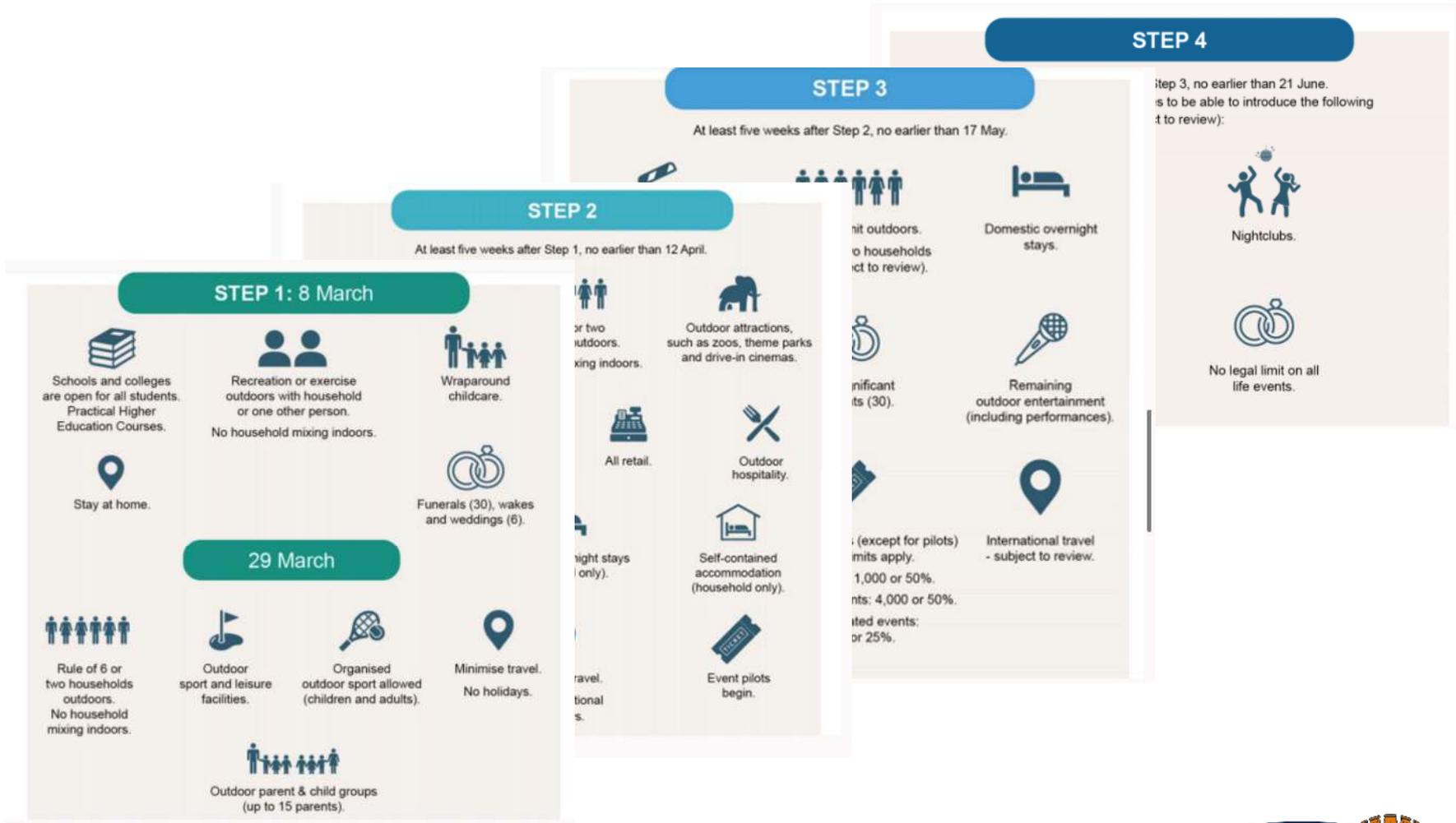
- Reopened December 2020



*Altogether better*



# Government Roadmap



*Altogether better*

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

**19 March 2021**



**Climate Change Emergency Response  
Plan – Year 1 Update**

**Report of Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods  
and Climate Change**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide.

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide an annual update on progress of the Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP), including an assessment of the impact of Covid-19 has had on Council and countywide carbon emissions.
- 2 To consider future challenges for new iterations of this plan beyond its initial two-year scope so that the plan can adapt, and progress to meet the long term, Council and countywide targets.

**Executive summary**

- 3 The Climate Emergency Response Plan adopted by Cabinet in February 2020 is a costed two year plan detailing over 100 projects that the Council with partners need to take towards achieving ambitious targets of reducing Council CO<sub>2</sub> reductions of 80% by 2030 (2008/9 baseline) and countywide of being totally carbon neutral by 2050. It was developed from extensive consultation across Council staff, community groups, residents, and schools.
- 4 Provisional estimates for the Councils carbon emissions during 2020/21 are approximately 43,297 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), a reduction of 16% compared with last year's 51,787tCO<sub>2</sub>e, this is a significant drop with the year average since 2009/10 being 6%. It achieves a reduction against baseline of 59.1% Council activities.
- 5 For all the devastating impact Covid -19 has brought, it has undoubtedly had a positive impact on these Council emission figures, and its influence felt within weeks of the CERP being agreed. The "stay at

home” lockdowns for many office based staff meant reduced usage of buildings, as well as reduced business travel and fleet. The temporary closure of some services such as leisure centres, also has meant that building energy has reduced, but as these building still need to be maintained, not eliminated entirely.

- 6 Provisional estimates across the Council estate, reveal a 20% reduction in electricity from buildings, a 14% reduction in gas for heating and a 6% reduction in fleet and transportation (which may have been more if not for the cold winter). Whilst these reductions are of course very welcome, it is unlikely that these full benefits will remain, as they are associated with low occupancy buildings. Going forward however there is opportunity to build on this, for example increased levels of working from home, even when normal conditions arise.
- 7 Continued implementation of the projects Climate Emergency Response Plan will be crucial if the momentum gained from these short term benefits are to be sustained. The report confirms that the vast majority of actions against Council targets have been able to be implemented, for instance LED lighting has been installed in 9 further buildings, 27 charge points have been installed in anticipation of a growing fleet of electric vehicles and a projects ranging from the new headquarters (including rooftop solar panels), boiler replacements, and installation of ground source heat pumps. The Council has also during the year moved its electricity tariff to that based on 100% renewables.
- 8 What is even more encouraging is that the Council has been successful during the year with a number of key funding bids to support its reductions. For example we have recently been successful in a £5 million European Regional Development Fund bid towards a solar farm adjacent Morrison Busty Depot which alongside building energy efficiency measures , such as insulation, will transform an aged facility to one which will be energy self-sufficient, including eventually powering a fleet of front-line vehicles.
- 9 Covid-19 will also undoubtedly have had an impact on the countywide emissions too, but the nationally published figures have a two year time lag, so that the broad impact can only be speculated. Increased home working, coupled with a cold winter, will have increased carbon emissions for heating. Emissions relating to transport and industry will however have reduced, the International Energy Agency estimate that overall a decrease of 5.5% in global energy demand with 6.5% reduction in CO2 emissions. It is not certain if this will be reflected in County Durham figures.

- 10 Work has been undertaken on the ground with a number of countywide initiatives, and the majority of actions in the CERP have continued to progress. This has included a scheme commencing on over 100 community electric charge points across the county, continued support for businesses with 97 business audits and grants to reduce carbon emissions carried out, and the programme of tree planting continuing, for instance through the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (21,000 trees over 70 location). Progress has also been made in securing external grants, for instance, £1.8 million awarded for retrofit works to domestic properties in Chilton and Dean Bank.
- 11 During the last year the Council has received several accolades for its work in combatting climate change, including Climate Change Initiative of the Year through Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and Durham City being identified as UK's Greenest City by Solar Cities Campaign. These are not a cause for complacency however, as much more work needs to be done in achieving the challenging targets. It is also recognised that future iterations of this plan need to consider the opportunities for development of a green economy, to consider how already disadvantaged groups are not disproportionately impacted, and what the Council and partners can do more in adapting to some of the inevitable consequences of climate change.
- 12 As the current costed Emergency Response Plan covers the period to April 2023, it is suggested that during the course of this year a further report is presented detailing the ambitions and measures that would take the Council to 2025, just five years away from a time when and a Council target of 80% reductions will be required.

### **Recommendation(s)**

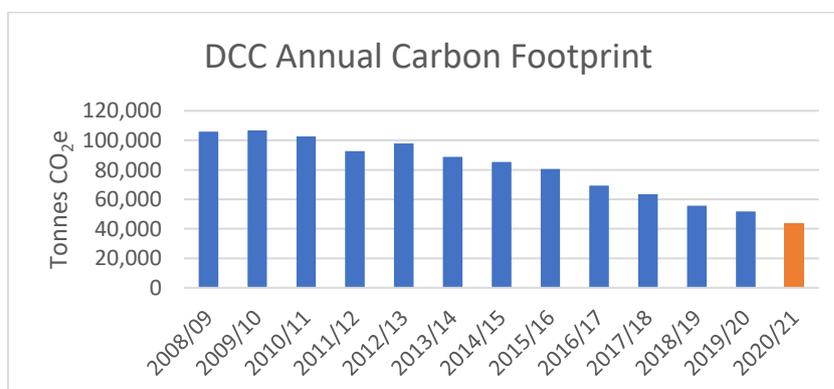
- 13 Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
  - (a) Note the progress made against delivering the first year of the Climate Change Emergency Response Plan, as well as the forecast drop in Council emissions, magnified by the influence of COVID -19 across the estate and comment accordingly.
  - (b) Receive a further update report in 2021/22 on the progress made against delivering the actions of the Climate Emergency Response Plan.

## Background

- 14 On 20 February 2019 the County Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and set ambitious targets to reduce its own carbon emissions by 60% by 2030 (from a 2008/9 baseline) and to investigate what further actions are necessary to make County Durham carbon neutral by 2050 (from a 1990 baseline). In February 2020, given the strong performance to date the Council target was raised to 80% reduction, however a reduction of this scale is extremely challenging.
- 15 The County Durham Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP) is a two year (2020-22) £66 million action plan adopted by Cabinet in February 2020. It was developed as an inclusive plan from extensive consultation (over 1,000 respondents) and builds on the considerable work to date on energy reduction both from the Council and countywide with partners.
- 16 Within weeks of Cabinet approving the Plan, the country was in its first national lockdown arising from the Covid -19 pandemic and clearly this has had a dramatic impact, not just on the plan itself, but of course on carbon emissions both from the Council estate and countywide.
- 17 The CERP had over 100 specific actions over the two years. The remainder of this report summarises not only the progress made against these actions, but also estimates the impact of covid-19. Suggestions are also made as to issues and opportunities that will need to be incorporated into future plans.

## Council Progress and Carbon Emissions

- 18 The provisional estimates and forecasts for the year end 2020/21 show remarkable reductions from last year's 51,787 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) to approximately 43,297CO<sub>2</sub>e a fall of a 8,490 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020/21. Whilst these are forecast only, they will certainly exceed (more than double) last years reduction which was 3,806 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.



- 19 Much if this performance is attributable to the impact of Covid-19 which closed a number of Council facilities (such as leisure centres during lockdown), reduced occupancy in buildings, especially offices, reduced fleet and transportation, as well as personal business miles on travel.
- 20 Energy assessments across buildings taken from April to January, show a 20% reduction in electricity use. Gas reductions have also been evidenced, of approximately 14%, and comparisons based around “degree days” temperature methodology reveal this would have been greater if it not had been the relatively cold winter this year compared to the year before. Caution clearly needs to be exercised relating to the extent that these reductions can be sustained, and of course, some of the emissions may have been transferred to a domestic environment for those who worked from home. Nevertheless opportunity exists in future plans to adopts some of the practices gained from Covid-19 to reduce emissions.
- 21 The CERP contained Council 28 actions and progress against each is detailed in Appendix 2. The majority of projects and actions have been unaffected and summary, performance is detailed below:

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>
Actions with significant delays	0
Actions with delays	5
Actions unimpacted	20
Actions complete	3
Actions no longer required	0

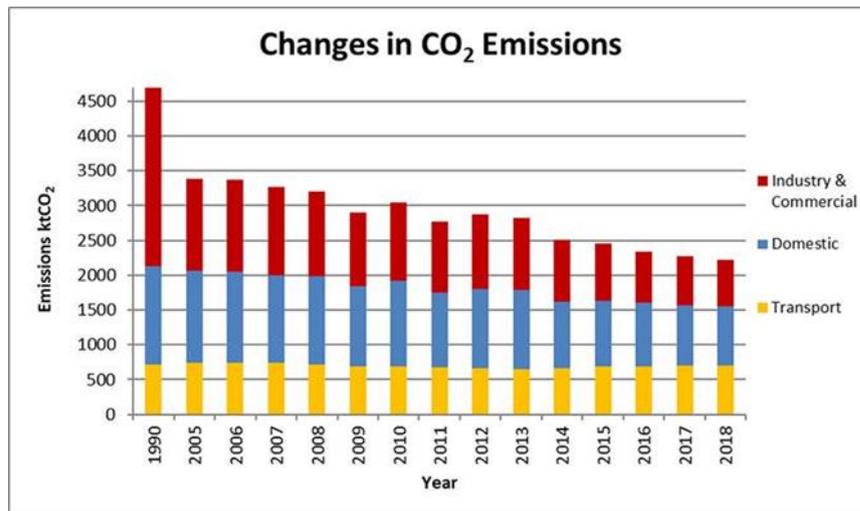
- 22 From the 5 temporarily delayed projects 4 were directly attributable to Covid and include the school LED lighting project which was hampered by access, the streetlighting LED scheme related supply chain issues, the pool cars (26 electric vehicles) as the need could not be justified at the present time, and the replacement gas boilers programme which slipped due to wider demands on the building and facilities maintenance team. The good news however is that all 4 can be progressed during 2021/22. One of the schemes that slipped, is the Louisa Minewater Heat scheme, which was dependent on Government Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) to match against ERDF funding. The Government announced a phase out of the RHI funding and the potential grant provision shared none of the innate risks. The positive however is that the scheme is progressed to a point where alternative funding bids can be made (including most recently to Salix as part of the Government Decarbonisation of heat programme).

- 23 Progress on actions to reduce emissions from electricity has been generally good. Sites to install further Solar PV have been identified as well as a site for a potential wind turbine, whilst the existing solar panels continue to outperform expectations. LED lighting has been installed in over 9 DCC buildings in 2020 and a list of a further 20 buildings have been identified and surveyed as being suitable. Two schools have had LED lighting installed through 0% loans from the nationally run public sector SALIX scheme. The ECO2 Smart Schools programme is continuing despite lockdown disruption with a pilot of 'Energy Sparks' data portal with selected schools. All of the Councils electricity is now purchased from a supplier providing 100% renewable electricity.
- 24 Regarding both electricity and heat carbon reductions, the Zero Carbon Depot project at Annfield Plain was submitted to ERDF was successful with the award of £5 million (to be supported by an additional £3 million Council invest to Save Capital) This will now pave the way for a 3MW solar farm, battery storage, charging posts and energy efficiency upgrades to the Council depot offices. Once operational the solar farm is intended to meet all existing and future energy requirements, including the expanding fleet of electric vehicles. CO<sub>2</sub> savings are projected to be nearly 600t per year.
- 25 Regarding heat , work on a new strategic building energy management system (BEMS) has begun, which will mean a significant improvement in the control of energy and reduce the need to travel. A new Air Source Heat Pump has been installed at the Annfield Plain Waste Transfer Station to replace an existing oil system. Currently efficiency and reliability are being analysed.
- 26 Regarding transport, whilst the work on the pool cars has not progressed, to pave the way for a significant expansion 27 charge points have now been installed at strategic sites across the county. Furthermore all new vehicles are subject to a business case to explore the replacement with electric vehicles across various Council services and those replaced during 2021/22 will include a number of electric vehicles. The Council has also trailed and now ordered a fully electric refuse collection vehicle, which will be available from Summer 2021. Finally, business travel has significantly reduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and whilst it will increase again when normal conditions arise, there is opportunity to build in the best of the recent practices, that avoid travel unless essential.
- 27 The CERP has also been flexible and opportunistic, for example making funding bids when opportunity arises. The Council for instance submitted to Highways England £2.28 million which would have

purchased 50 electric vehicles, for business use “try before you buy” but returned to the Council after 2 years. Unfortunately Highways England paused nationally on the scheme. In October 2020 the Government released £1 billion worth of funding to help decarbonise the public sector estate. The Low Carbon Economy team working alongside a cross section of services developed a long list of projects that potentially fitted the strict criteria (to be heat focused and deliverable by Sept 2021). Working alongside teams and services, a shortlist of seven projects has been applied for and we are currently awaiting the outcome of these applications.

## Countywide Progress and Emissions

- 28 The latest figures for Countywide emissions, have a two year delay, consequently the latest figures are for 2018. By the end of 2018 the County’s emissions were 52.6% lower than in the baseline year of 1990, showing continued progress.



- 29 Without the figures for 2020 the impact of covid-19 is less clear. Increased home working, coupled with a cold winter, will have increased carbon emissions for heating. Emissions relating to transport and industry will however have reduced, the International Energy Agency estimate that overall a decrease of 5.5% in global energy demand with 6.5% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It is not certain if this will be reflected in County Durham figures, although with both the industry and transport carbon contribution taking nearly two thirds, it is highly likely that they will be suppressed more than the domestic sector increases.
- 30 If the anticipated reductions in carbon emissions do arise, caution needs to be exercised regarding if they can be sustained. Back in 2008-09, after the global financial crash, carbon emissions rose by 5% as a result of stimulus spending that boosted fossil fuel use. Clearly there is an opportunity for a more sustainable recovery.

- 31 CERP identified 85 actions for the Council and Partners that would benefit Countywide emissions rather than being linked solely to the Council estate. Just as with the Council actions, significant progress has again been made, as illustrated in the summary below, and detailed in **Appendix 3**.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Countywide Actions</b>
Actions with significant delays	3
Actions with delays	19
Actions unimpacted	58
Actions complete	1
Actions no longer required	4

- 32 One of the schemes not progressed was ERDF applications for solid wall insulation. The Housing Solutions team have however worked with the North East LEP and have had £1.8 million bid successful for energy efficiency retrofit projects in Chilton and Dean Bank. A further bid for £3.8m has also been submitted.
- 33 Another scheme not progressed was the minewater heat project in Horden. Elsewhere, the prospect of utilising minewater heat continues, for example Seaham Garden Village which has a national focus, being potentially the first development of its scale in the UK to be heated by minewater. This will make the development carbon neutral for heating and ensure residents and business have low cost affordable low carbon heat.
- 34 Support for community renewable energy schemes is ongoing through and a community loan scheme will be established in 2021/22. Work is ongoing with partners including, Durham University, Northern PowerGrid (NPG) and Energy Catapults, to undertake research and development.
- 35 Regarding electricity, opportunities for a solar farm and battery storage facility at Netpark are being assessed alongside other options for Solar Car Ports on park and ride sites. New electric points will be installed in Durham Market Place before April, allowing market traders to use direct electricity instead of diesel generators.
- 36 The Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP) continues to progress despite Covid restrictions and during the last year provided support for 97 businesses, with a total value of 292,000 for projects that emerged, and grant funding of 67,000. The work carried out utilising these grants will save 435 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

- 37 There have been a number of Government funding packages released at short notice with challenging timescales for delivery. A further bid for £3.8m has also been submitted. Further work is ongoing to install Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) in off gas communities (43 thus far). Support and advice is also ongoing to residents across the County on Smart Meters and the Managing Money Better Programme
- 38 Regarding heat, funding from the Department Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), £100,000 has been secured to develop the business case for a town centre (Riverside area) district heating scheme, potentially based on utilising heat from the River Wear or Barkers Haugh Sewerage Treatment works.
- 39 For transport the first three Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) will be complete by January 2021. Further funding is being sought to develop LCWIPs for the remaining 9 main towns. The Park that Bike scheme to deliver 300 stands and 6 secure bike stores will commence in January 2021. Furthermore, a new private e-cargo service is now operating in Durham City in co-operation with the marketplace and various SME's.
- 40 The Durham City bus station is on track to be delivered, whilst the Real Time Passenger Information system will be replaced in a regional project by December 2021. Funding for A177 bus lanes has been secured, however Covid continues to be a major threat to the viability of services. Further work ongoing investigating land acquisition at Stonebridge and for an extension for Sniperley Park and Rides as well as an options appraisal for the deployment of electric busses.
- 41 Contract 2 of the superfast broadband programme is currently ongoing. Delivery under the contract, which includes coverage to other areas in the North East, is expected to be completed by Q1 21/22.
- 42 Much of the work in relation to carbon offsetting through improvements to the natural environment has continued unabated. The Councils work on tree planting is the subject of a separate report, but in summary includes the completion of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (21,000 trees or whips over 70 sites), continued progress with the Woodland Renewal project (which aims to plant 60 hectares), as well as a bid submission to be part of the North East Community Forest.
- 43 Peatlands are a major carbon sink, and their international loss, represents a serious climate change concern. Working with the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty over 600 hectares of peatland in County Durham are being restored this winter, on sites ranging from Kilhope, Eggleston and Holwick moors. CERP Funding has been utilised at Valance Lodge Ridge for restoration, including the

reintroduction of sphagnum and cotton grass to seed the restored habitat.

- 44 The Council is working with the North Pennines AONB to identify sites and negotiate with landowners to undertake peatland code verification to create opportunities for carbon credit off-setting with businesses. The Raby Estate is undertaking a carbon auditing exercise of its land assets as a result of the discussions in this project so that when a suitable peatland site is made ready, investment will be sought from County Durham businesses wishing to off-set their residual CO<sub>2</sub>. Such a project would be the first of its kind in England.
- 45 A regional Blue Carbon/Marine Habitat Restoration Group has formed. Currently this includes Environment Agency, Natural England, the Tees Rivers Trust and the council, bringing together current activity and sharing knowledge, experience and skills. There are a small number of pilot projects underway.
- 46 Schools educational work through Eco2Smart Schools was curtailed in March 2020, with staff moving onto furlough. New arrangements for the new school year are in place and activities are progressing, together with new home energy awareness schemes. Children 4 Climate Change, in collaboration with Durham University and OASES are working with schools across County Durham to understand climate science and provide active citizenship opportunities to raise awareness in communities through interactive website.
- 47 The development of a specific website and branding for the Climate Emergency in County Durham will be developed over the next few months. In addition, there is a programme of communications and engagement activities being developed which will look at internal and external audiences.

### **Key Post-Covid Influences and New Iterations of the Plan**

- 48 During the last year the Council has received a number of accolades for its work. This includes Climate Change Initiative of the Year through Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and Durham City being identified as UK's Greenest City by Solar Cities Campaign. The Council has also been commended by the national food growing charity Sustain, for having one of the only action plans in the UK that recognised food as a significant contributor to the challenges of carbon reduction. Clearly none of this should be a cause for complacency and there is a continued need to modify and adapt the plan.
- 49 Covid -19 may have given a short-term benefit for reduction in carbon emissions but there is a clear need to build on this and for sustainability to be built into the recovery. The UK president of COP26 and

Government Business Secretary Alok Sharma MP has called on governments around the world to submit enhanced climate action plans and to put clean technologies at the heart of their post-coronavirus economic recovery strategies. They suggested that more emphasis, and ambition is needed towards the following measures as part of the recovery:

- Green Deals;
- Green transition in industry;
- Investment in clean technologies and innovation;
- Raising ambition on renewable energy;
- Importance of nature-based solutions;
- Adaptation to avoid future shocks.

50 The briefing comes after the UK Committee on Climate Change<sup>1</sup> called for low carbon and resilient policies to be put in place to build a green and sustainable recovery. The UK CCC highlighted the following five core measures:

- Investments in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure;
- Supporting reskilling, retraining and research for a net-zero, well-adapted economy;
- Upgrades to our homes ensuring they are fit for the future;
- Making it easy for people to walk, cycle, and work remotely;
- Tree planting, peatland restoration, green spaces and other green infrastructure.

51 Considering these and other national drivers, as well as local needs the priorities emerging going forward will therefore consider more emphasis on:

- *New Green Deal*; working with the business community in creating new carbon-based jobs market;
- *Adaptation*; Council responses needing more work (community resilience to extreme weather, align to initiatives by Health and Wellbeing board to assist the vulnerable in dealing with Covid);
- *More focus on the concept of achieving a Just Transition*; that climate change activity must support and not hinder people in moving forward in terms of accessing green energy, EV's and wider power sharing;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CCC-to-Prime-Minister-Boris-Johnson-Covid-19-recovery-002.pdf>

- Carbon budgeting – exploring use of this to ensure all policy and practices achieve carbon savings through service delivery (making integrating carbon normal practice)
- *Governance*; embedding the mechanisms for stakeholder and community engagement as outlined to Cabinet at its February meeting. This also extends to fostering new partnerships, and continuing the awareness raising and collaborative work with our communities. A copy of that report can be found at **appendix 4**.

52 It is suggested that a new plan be written during 2021 and submitted for approval that will continue the progress made, and build in the above issues, as well as any others that emerge during the year.

## **Conclusion**

53 Despite Covid, considerable progress has been made on implementation of the Climate Change Emergency Response Plan. Conversely, Covid has had a significant impact on temporarily magnifying the reduction in Council emissions, more than would normally be anticipated, and the same is anticipated for County figures when they become available.

54 There is opportunity now to build on this success and ensure a sustainable recovery, making full use of any national climate change initiatives, and continue to forge innovative partnerships in delivering for the communities of County Durham

### **Background papers**

- Full Council 20 February 2019 Climate Change Emergency Declaration
- Full Council 17 July 2019 Climate Change Emergency Update Report
- Cabinet 12 February 2020 Climate Emergency Response Plan

### **Other useful documents**

- County Durham Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan (2015-20)
- Durham County Council Carbon Management Plan (2015-20)
- Committee on Climate Change Net Zero: The UKs contribution to stopping global warming

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

The Climate Change Act 2008 established a UK commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 from 1990 levels and the Paris Agreement (to which the UK is a signatory) which aims to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2oC above preindustrial levels; and to limit the increase to 1.5o C to prevent dangerous climate change. On 12 June Government announced plans to legislate to revise the Climate Change Act and adopt a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 which is now in law.

### **Finance**

A wide range of projects are described in this scheme. They fall broadly into a mix of overlapping categories:

- (a) invest to save projects where capital funding is available for schemes (such as LED lighting or more efficient boilers) and the cost is paid back over a period of time, not typically exceeding twelve years, however this report suggests that a more flexible approach (such as longer payback periods) should be considered;
- (b) partnership funded schemes, where external finance supports Council costs in delivery. Examples in this report includes European Regional Development Funding (supporting potential schemes at the Louisa Centre for Minewater and zero carbon plans at Morrison Busty Depot) or Heritage Lottery Fund that support the Woodland Revival Project; The Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme;
- (c) Core Council investment.

### **Consultation**

Consultation on the CERP was undertaken in 2019.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

None identified.

### **Climate Change**

This is a key issue addressed throughout the report.

### **Human Rights**

None identified.

## **Crime and Disorder**

None identified.

## **Staffing**

Climate Change is now a key responsibility for all staff as its now included in Job Descriptions.

## **Accommodation**

Considerable progress has been made in introducing renewable energy (solar panels) across Council buildings and depots as well as making offices more energy efficient.

## **Risk**

Key risks to achieving the targets are identified in the Appendix 2 report and include Government support and policy, resources and the greater challenge posed for carbon reductions in rural areas such as County Durham.

## **Procurement**

There are major opportunities through procurement to influence carbon reductions. This may be in public transport contracts or purchase of fleet and equipment. The role of procurement is detailed in the Appendix 2 report.

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**Appendix 2: Climate Change Emergency Response  
Action Plan 2020/1 and 2021/22**

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Attached.

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## **Appendix 3: Countywide Progress Table**

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## Appendix 2: Council Action Plan Update

<b>Progress</b> <b>Colour Key</b> (use format painter)	Complete	3
	On track / progressing	20
	Some difficulty/delay to progress	5
	Progress stopped	
	Action no longer required	

Priority Area	Project Description	Project Cost (Thousand £)	Annual Carbon Saving (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Funding Secure? (Source)	Progress So Far	Action to 2030
Electricity	<b>Solar PV</b> Install solar panel arrays on suitable council buildings.	£180	43	Pending (Invest to Save)	Project growing: There is potential to install solar PV on sites across the County, 10 sites have been identified that would meet invest to save criteria	Renewable electricity generation installed on all financially appropriate buildings and land.
Electricity	<b>LED Lighting Replacements</b> Installing LEDs in nine council owned buildings. (second phase of project)	£400	200	Yes (Invest to Save)	Complete - More buildings have been identified	More LEDs - no lights in Council properties are to be less efficient than LED by 2030.
Electricity	<b>LED Lighting Replacements</b> (third phase of project)			Yes (Invest to Save)	Further buildings identified. 4 sites completed. 2 sites being programmed in.	More LEDs - no lights in Council properties are to be less efficient than LED by 2030.
Electricity	<b>Enlighten</b> Installing LED lighting in schools.	£500	120	Yes (Invest to Save)	First two schools complete. Significant list of further schools identified.	More LEDs - no lights in Council properties are to be less efficient than LED by 2030.
Electricity	<b>Gala Theatre Theatrical LED Lighting</b> Installing LED stage lights.	£133	20	Yes (Invest to Save)	Complete	More LEDs - no lights in Council properties are to be less efficient than LED by 2030.

Electricity	<b>LED Street Lighting</b> Continuing the replacement of old inefficient street lights with LEDs. (Two years of the next phase of the project, which should take three years in total.)	£6,000	1,100	Pending (Invest to Save)	Project delayed due to supply chain disruption due to Covid-19 pandemic.	All street lights to be LED by 2030.
Electricity	<b>LED Lighting Replacements Continued</b> Where invest to save cannot be used, other funds will be used to provide LED lighting.	£50	50	Pending (Other Council Fund)	One building complete. One further building identified.	More LEDs - no lights in Council properties are to be less efficient than LED by 2030.
Electricity	<b>Electric Bin Hoists</b> Install electric motors on 6 bin lorries so that engines do not need to run while bins are being lifted.	£8	TBC	Yes	Electric bin hoists to be installed on new RCVs	All bin hoists to be electric by 2030.
Electricity	<b>Depot Renewable Generation</b> Our depots use a lot of electricity and this will increase with the addition of electric vehicle charging points. Investigations are underway to find suitable places for renewable electricity generation and storage at our depots.	TBC	TBC	Pending (Invest to Save)	Depots are part of the solar PV installation project.	More renewable electricity generation to be installed at appropriate locations across the council's estate.
Electricity	<b>Electricity Grid Decarbonisation</b> National effort to reduce the carbon footprint of the electricity grid.	£-	3,500	N/A	The grid factor of the National Grid continues to fall as more renewable electricity sources are added. The annual carbon saving is an estimate based on the last five years.	It is expected that the carbon factor of the national grid will be reduced significantly by 2030. Our estimate is based on previous years' data.
Electricity	<b>ECO2 Smart Schools</b> Programme of engagement in schools as well as assistance with energy monitoring.	£80	354	Yes	Project continues despite lockdown disruption. New for 2020-21: pilot of Energy Sparks data portal, virtual support for schools from OASES Team.	All schools to have the opportunity to access energy management services and a sustainability education programme.
Electricity	<b>Freemans Quay Leisure</b> Installation of solar PV array on the roof alongside some improvements to insulation.	£140	20	Pending (Salix)	New Project to install solar PV and upgrade major plant at FQ	

<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Durham Sixth Form</b> Installation of solar PV array on the roof alongside better glazing.	£600	15	Pending (Salix)	New Project solar PV, window upgrade and LED retrofit	
<b>Electricity, Heat, &amp; Transport</b>	<b>Zero Carbon Depot</b> Transform the whole site at Morrison Busty Depot to be zero carbon, including all buildings and vehicles.	£4,000	590	Pending (ERDF)	Stage 3 design complete, ERDF full application complete, Planning application in, procurement for main contractor to begin	Learn from this project and carry out more whole site actions.
<b>Electricity &amp; Heat</b>	<b>Louisa Centre</b> Mine water heat pump to provide low carbon heat with solar PV to generate the necessary electricity. Also other energy efficiency measures in the building.	£3,500	503	Pending (Salix)	Funding is being sought to allow this project to continue. Other essential work at the Louisa Centre may continue without the minewater element.	Learn from this project to inform future mine water heating projects.
<b>Electricity &amp; Heat</b>	<b>New Headquarters</b> We are leaving the old County Hall and moving to a much lower carbon building in the City Centre. The building will be very well insulated and includes low carbon lighting and ventilation, as well as rooftop solar panel generation (subject to planning).	TBC	TBC	Yes	The New HQ is under construction. The rooftop solar PV will be installed. Future occupancy of the building may be lower than expected to allow for physical distancing.	The building is prepared to be added to a district heating scheme in the city centre, through which it will receive low carbon heat.
<b>Electricity &amp; Heat</b>	<b>Crimdon Coastal Hub</b> Installation of a heat pump and solar PV array to ensure new building is low carbon.		N/A	Pending (Salix)	New Project Funding is being sought.	All new buildings to be low carbon by 2030.
<b>Electricity &amp; Heat</b>	<b>Building Energy Management Systems</b> Install BEMS in appropriate council buildings to better control heating and lighting, and reduce need to travel.	£200	20	Partial (Other Council Fund)	A feasibility study has been commissioned to find the best way forward for the whole estate.	All large council buildings to have BEMS by 2030.
<b>Electricity &amp; Heat</b>	<b>Abbey Leisure Heat Pump</b> Install a heat pump at Abbey Leisure Centre, along with renewable electricity generation including solar PV panels.	£300	45	Pending (Salix)	New Project to install a ground source heat pump and solar PV alongside leisure transformation projects	No gas boilers less than 90% efficient to be used in Council properties by 2030.

Heat	<b>Depot Heat Pump</b> Removal of fossil fuel boiler to be replaced with an air source heat pump at Annfield Plain Waste Transfer Station.	£18	30	Yes (Invest to Save)	Complete  Monitoring ongoing to optimise compliance, efficiency & reliability.	Learn from this project and aim to replace more fossil fuel boilers with heat pumps if successful.
Heat	<b>Away from Oil</b> Replacing oil boilers with low carbon heating alternatives. Investigations are underway to complete this at some rural schools that have no access to the gas network, and some council depots.	£250	68	Pending (Salix)	Hybrid concepts at two schools being developed that should reduce oil by around 70-80%. Other schools to follow once models and process refined.	Complete removal of all oil boilers from all council properties.
Heat	<b>Improving Gas Use</b> Replacing older gas boilers with more efficient models.	£250	20	Pending (Other Council Fund)	Investigations underway at a number of buildings.	No gas boilers less than 90% efficient to be used in Council properties by 2030.
Heat	<b>Comeleon Heaters</b> Replace outdated gas heaters with low carbon heat source in Comeleon Warehouse	TBC	TBC	Pending (Salix)	New Project Feasibility underway to find the best way to heat the building.	No gas boilers less than 90% efficient to be used in Council properties by 2030.
Heat	<b>Teesdale Leisure refurbishment</b> Extension of solar PV array, upgrade of glazing throughout the centre	£100	8	Pending (Salix)	New Project	No gas boilers less than 90% efficient to be used in Council properties by 2030.
Transport	<b>Low Carbon Fleet</b> Installation of necessary infrastructure to begin transition to electric fleet vehicles in the first two years. Evaluate options for refuse lorries to be fuelled by biogas.	£150	N/A	Pending (Other Council Fund)	27 charge points installed at strategic sites across the county to facilitate fleet transition	Significant proportion of Council fleet to be electric by 2030. Remaining fleet may be fossil fuel, hybrid, or other alternative fuel.
Transport	<b>Electric Refuse Lorries</b> Trial use of electric refuse collection vehicles and implement them where possible.	£900	36	Pending (Other Council Fund)	New Project to procure 2 electric RCVs	Fossil fuel fleet vehicles to be in the minority by 2030, with majority being low or zero carbon alternatives.

<b>Transport</b>	<b>Reduce Business Miles</b> Encourage remote meetings and working at most appropriate location by working with the Inspire programme and internal management.	£-	120	N/A	Business travel has significantly reduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Efforts will be made to ensure this continues.	Greater use of remote meeting tools, such as video conferencing, webinars, or telephone meetings, to reduce the need to travel.
<b>Transport</b>	<b>Pool Cars</b> Transition to electric vehicles for our staff pool cars and the chair of the council's vehicle. Aiming to have 26 electric pool cars and 40 electric vans in this period.	TBC	TBC	TBC	This is on hold (as pool cars aren't being used during pandemic)	No fossil fuel only pool cars to be in use by 2030. Some could be hybrids.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>At least 6861 tonnes saved of 8012 tonnes of CO2e required to be saved by March 2023.</b>			<b>Work is progressing.</b>		<b>Save a further 17,071 tonnes by 2030.</b>

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### Appendix 3: Countywide Progress Table

Key								
<b>Progress</b>	Complete	1						
	On track / progressing	58						
	Some difficulty/delay to progress	19						
	Progress stopped	3						
	Action no longer required	4						
<b>Action Type</b>	Investment priority							
	New Project since CERP was adopted							
			<b>Progress Notes Nov 2020</b>					
<b>Priority Area</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding confirmed?</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Progress Update Comments</b>	<b>Funding Spent to Date</b>	<b>Amount of Carbon Saved where known</b>
Renewable Energy	Renewable Energy	RE1: Develop and safeguard a portfolio of Council owned land suitable for renewable energy developments.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Review of land is ongoing. Shortlist of sites have been identified and we are progressing our investigations. Speaking to GIS teams about adding suitable land as a layer.	n/a	n/a

		RE2: Establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to enable DCC to install renewable energy technologies on partners' land and buildings and become a green electricity provider	£40,000	No	Northumbrian Water	No further progress	n/a	n/a
		RE3: Promote and support community renewable energy schemes through the Neighbourhood Planning process, partnership working, repowering and any other mechanisms including a new climate change loan scheme	£500,000	Yes	n/a		Report drafted, LEP research underway and due to complete Feb 21. need to reprofile spend to £40k in 2020/21 and £460k in 21/22	5000
	<b>New technology and innovation</b>	NT1: Set up joint research and business development with Durham University, NETPark, Energy Catapults and local businesses to develop and exploit new energy technologies	£50,000	Yes	Durham University	Ongoing exploration of opportunities		
		NT2: With partners explore sites and new technologies for electricity generation, storage and management across different end uses (EVs, heat, industry, hydrogen, etc.)	n/a	n/a	n/a	On track, continuing to explore sites and technologies, including for different uses - hydrogen etc.		
		NT3: Install electric power points in 3 main market places to replace diesel generators	£30,000	Yes	n/a	3 new electric power points in Durham City market place. Not cost effective to do Bp Auckland. Once installation is complete we will review how they are		

						utilised in order to decide upon future investment.		
		NT4: Solar Car Ports (with batteries) on car parks including park and ride and other public car parks to power electric buses and vehicles	£5 million	No	n/a	Minimal progress. Land acquisition nearly complete for 1 site. Waiting for draft internal report. Further development of PV generation output and used. Escalated through EVWG.		
Buildings and Heat	Business Support	BS1: Projects to support SMEs to reduce their energy use including Business Energy Efficiency Project	ERDF funded	Yes	n/a	Close to target for Q3 businesses assisted with five grants also provided. Q4 number of businesses coming forward slowing down but this quarter is already proving to be a record quarter for grants awarded.		
		BS2: Network of larger businesses to support SMEs with energy efficiency	n/a	n/a	n/a	No progress		
		BS3: Shared business clustering - Bishop Auckland	£200,000	Yes	n/a	No progress		
		BS4. Increase in the proportion of local food grown and sold in the County. A thriving local agricultural sector supplying food to local markets	n/a	n/a	Durham Food Group	Local Food strategy in development. Funding yet to be found for CERP projects by partnership. DCA having a restructure.		
		BS5. Work with BEIS and other partners to help develop a national process to support SMEs on energy efficiency. BASEE Project	£20,000	Yes	BEIS	Meeting due early Dec 2020 to discuss progress.		

	BS6. Pilot research to explore changes to application of Business Rates to remove disincentives to installation of renewable energy or efficiency measures	£40,000	Yes	n/a	Invoiced Nov 2020		
<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>	ST1. Develop a project to support energy efficiency in smaller tourism and food related businesses, learning from international best practice through SME Power and support the work of the Durham Food group	n/a	part funded through Interreg Europe	n/a	SME Power has started looking at Good Practice from other partners and one has delivered a hospitality project which we will investigate. Lack of direction from national Government on Shared Prosperity Fund or other support mechanisms will delay any scoping and implementation.		
<b>Domestic</b>	D1. Advice - currently provided through DCC's DCC - Durham County Council Managing Money Better service to private sector tenants and owners.	£60,000	Yes (Warm Homes Fund and DCC funding)	?	Ongoing		
	D2. Solid wall insulation scheme (250 homes)	£500,000	No (ERDF bid)	?	Low Carbon ERDF Programme funding withdrawn April 2020 due to COVID – No bid possible		
	D3. HEET project (Energy friends)	£22,000	No (Interreg bid)	?	Horizon 2020 bid submitted 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020 – awaiting decision Dec 2020		
	D4. Domestic Retrofit Measures	£2,765M (estimated)	No	?	BEIS LAD1a bid successful £1.8M retrofit properties in Chilton and Dean Bank.		
	D5. Work with landlords to improve building quality / energy efficiency / higher	£100,000	Yes	Private Landlords and Social	LAD1b bid submitted Decemeber 20 for further 350 homes £3.8M		

		standards and improve enforcement actions			Housing Providers			
		D6. Supporting low carbon heating in off gas homes	£2M	Yes (Warm Homes Fund)	?	43 Renewable Air Source Heat pumps and first time central heating systems have been installed in off gas grid homes across the County		
		D7. Home energy efficiency loan scheme	£150,000 (pilot)	In part?	?	£75K funding has been used to underwrite 25 Green Homes Grant top up loans		
		<b>NEW:</b> SMART Metering	?	?	NEA, UK Smart Meters	Information, support and advice to 65+ residents across Durham		
		<b>NEW:</b> Decarbonisation Pilot - 100 social homes with ASHPs, Battery and PV with EWI	130,000		Believe; Livin; Karbon			
	<b>Geothermal Projects</b>	G1. Further develop a district heating scheme for Durham City including Freemans Reach, Passport Office,	£150,000	No	n/a	Funding from BEIS has been secured to advance project to the business case.		

		G2. Support and enable a deep geothermal district heat scheme for Bishop Auckland	£4,810M	?? £2,886,000E RDF application submitted	Auckland Castle Trust	Extensive preparatory work has been completed on behalf of both The Auckland Project and BEIS by some of the UK's leading geothermal experts. A recent techno-economic appraisal completed by Arup/BEIS confirmed viability and concluded that the scheme has the potential to deliver significant carbon savings and wider social benefits for the local population. TAP continue to seek funding to progress with more detailed development and for capital funding for the construction of the deep geothermal doublet well system and accompanying heat network. ERD bid not submitted		
		G3. Undertake research to identify opportunities for mine-water and other sustainable heat (and cooling) schemes across County Durham – includes heat storage	HeatHub (£15,000) Durham university joint post,(£50,000) Earth Sciences students free except for staff time	In part. Durham Uni contributed £15,000	Durham University, Coal Authority	Students completed research on proximity of pumping stations to centres of population but concluded - limited, financially viable opportunities. Ongoing review and research required.		
		NEW: Hawthorn/Jade	£25,000	No	Coal Authority	Funding confirmed. Feasibility to progress in 2021.		

		G4.Support a mine-water district heating scheme for Seaham Garden Village	£3M	Yes (HNIP confirmed)	Coal Authority	HNIP funding received, project progressing to build out.		
		G5. Assessment for use of pumped mine-water heat in Horden	£25,000	Yes	Coal Authority	Limited progress, Feedback from the TCA (a key partner) awaited.		
Transition to EV and Sustainable Travel	EV Infrastructure	EV1. Install at least 100 community backed EV charge points in more rural areas of County Durham within 5 minutes' walk of properties without off-street parking (SOSCI Project)	£1.25M	Yes	Community groups / organisations	First 50 EVCP units are ordered, 37 expected to be fitted November for batch 1a. Progress is being made to identify batch 2 and 3 from the 246 sites mapped out.		
		EV2. Community EV infrastructure in more urban areas of the County (complements SOSCI)	£200,000	No	n/a	Successful in bids outcomes WEVA and DOCs projects. WEVA procurement tender going out for a contractor in next week. 10 EVCP to be fitted in the Stanhope area. Awaiting response from OLEV on the DOCs project.		
		EV3.Facilitate the provision of ultra- rapid EV charging and EV filling stations where appropriate	staff time	n/a	Commercial Partners	Rapid EVCPs planned for batch 1b in Belmont and Nevilles Cross.		

		EV4. Encourage and incentivise commercial organisations to switch to EVs – especially taxis, fleet and delivery firms	staff time	n/a		SOSCI have received emails from businesses requesting charge points to enable them to change their fleet to EV. SOSCI is currently looking into 3 locations to assist a company car change. These are included in batch 3. Although the EVCP wont be solely designated to the business they will be for public to use as well. Car parks being used have 24-7 access to support business and over night charging. Also Highways England Bid - Try before you buy (Helen Grayshan)		
		EV5. Explore two-way EV charging infrastructure as the technology develops (V2Street project)	£4,500	Yes		Meeting held with Nissan and E-on to explore their V2G offer. A programme of site audits is to be undertaken, free of charge, on our depots and other suitable buildings to assess the potential.		
		EV6. Investigate gaps in the network and opportunities for additional installations, including tourism hotspots	staff time	n/a	Visit County Durham	SOSCI continues to look into locations for best positions of EVCPs. Batch 1a includes Bowlees centre in Barnard Castle. Potential EVCPs in Crimdon dene caravan park.		
	<b>Alternative Fuels</b>	AF1. Work with partners to research new technologies for vehicle fuel such as hydrogen, bio gas, etc.	staff time	n/a	NELEP, Regional Transport Team, INTEGRAL	DCC not currently in a place to pursue funding hydrogen infrastructure in the County as the technology, nor demand, is not at the required level. Costs associated with this kind of technology are prohibitive at this time		

Cycling and Walking Strategy	C1. Completion of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for 12 main towns (LCWIPs)	£280,000	Yes		First 3 LCWIPs for DHM, CLS and NA will be complete by Jan 2021 (£70,000). Funding to be sought (ongoing)	70,000	
	C2. Park that Bike (2 years cost)	£65,000	?		New contract (£50K) due to commence Jan 2021 and be complete by April 2024. to deliver 300 stands and 6 secure bike stores		
	C3. Construction of priority routes identified in LCWIPs and associated infrastructure	£500,000	No		LCWIPs to be completed by end of Jan for 3 towns. Funding sought as mentioned		
	C4. Complete construction of Great North Cycleway (NCN 725)	£500,000	No		Construction continues in phases		
	C5. Construct Cycling Super Routes linking key settlements within 5 miles of Durham City	£500,000	No		Brief for LCWIP Lite study being drafted		
	C6. Support the use of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes especially for last mile deliveries	?	n/a		Support ongoing. New service on offer in Durham City working with various small businesses.		
	Integrated Public Transport	PT1. Comprehensively redesign / develop Durham City's bus station as the County's main bus interchange	<del>8M</del> 10.4M	Yes		£3.6m DfT funding (towards the estimate), is due to be drawn down at the Regional JTC on 19th Jan. <b>No comms or publicity before then.</b> Demolition to then start 15th Feb. Construction of new build in June 21, and opening in August 22.	

	PT2. Extend real time information, journey planning software and interactive mapping information	3.2M	? (Transforming Cities Fund bid)		Existing County Durham Interactive Public Transport map to be retendered during 2021 with new contract starting April 2022. Enhancements made to Traveline North East journey planner July 2020. Existing North East Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system to be replaced as part of regional project by December 2021.		
	PT3. Identify and introduce bus priority measures in areas of need	<del>35000</del> £349,000	? (TCF bid – 2 projects) Yes £198K DfT Funding		This is Gillesgate and Shincliffe A177 bus lanes. £349k in total. £198k DfT funding contribution is due to be drawn down in September 2021. Construction commencement in November 21 after New Elvet Bridge is complete. Open in Spring 22.		
	PT4. Continue the commitment to underwrite a comprehensive bus network for the County	£2.5M	Yes		Covid emergency continues to be a major threat to viability of services due to distancing suppressing travel by bus. Covid Bus Service Support Grant assisting with increased net spend up to the end of social distancing measures. Work ongoing with major operators and regional colleagues on post-CBSSG network scenarios		
	PT5. increased P&R provision	£4.5M	? (Part of TCF bid - one additional site)		Investigating land acquisition at Stonebridge Commenced Land acquisition for extension at Sniperley Design of extra site		

		PT6. Bring in electric buses for the Durham City park and ride routes (cost per bus)	£250,000 per bus	?		Options appraisal for bus/charging method Financial comparison of diesel versus E-bus options Identification of potential suppliers and technical discussions Assessing options for renewable energy provision through solar car ports		
		PT7. Support a transition to ultra-low emission buses across the County (cost per bus)	£25,000 per bus	?	Bus companies	National bus strategy delayed until around February 2021. Need to be seen whether previous government aspirations in respect of local bus services remains the same in the face of the impacts of covid-19		
	<b>Broadband</b>	B1. Reduce the need to travel through IT including increased roll out of high-speed broadband connectivity, especially in rural areas	£8.54M	Yes	Digital Durham	Contract 2 of the superfast programme is currently ongoing. Delivery under the contract, which includes coverage to other areas in the North East, is expected to be completed by Q1 21/22. Delivery to County Durham is expected to be completed during Q4 20/21. Note the budget has now increased due to additional work that was contracted for Tees Valley (original figure £8.54m)	£8.4M	
	<b>Transport Behaviour</b>	TB1. Support a programme of sustainable travel awareness campaigns across all sectors and geographies in the county	staff time	No		Campaign calendar developed for council staff. Measure delivered to promote & encourage sustainable travel choices		

	TB2. Run a campaign to raise awareness of and prevent the pollution resulting from vehicle engines left idling (e.g. taxis, buses, school pick up etc)	staff time	No		We have liaised with local campaign groups about this but Covid has prevented any progress towards a wider campaign. In the interim we have established that DCC drivers are expected to turn their engines off when idling. Climate change awareness is now part of all staff job descriptions and this can be part of the future behaviour change programme		
	TB3. Explore opportunities for an increase in car clubs	staff time	No		Currently exploring the potential for a model to develop additional car clubs with community groups across the county		
	TB4. Support sustainable transport research projects with partners such as Decarbonate, etc.	staff time	n/a		We have supported urban foresight on an EV project in the North east. We are providing old EVCP units to Durham university.		

Natural Environment/Agriculture	<b>Policy</b>	Pol1.Explore the implementation of a Carbon Offsetting Fund for use by developers, businesses and their carbon and choose to support the programme of carbon storage schemes below	£40,000	Yes	North Pennines AONB, Forest Carbon	<p>1. DCC is working with AONB to identify sites and negotiate with land-owners to undertake Peatland code verification to create opportunities for carbon credit off-setting with businesses. The Raby estate is undertaking a carbon auditing exercise of it's land assets as a result of the discussions. Two other land-owners have declared an interest in the Peatland code for the development of their Peatland assets. If/when a suitable site is made ready investment will be sought from Co Durham businesses wishing to off-set their residual CO2. Such a project would be the first of it's kind in England. Projects and carbon credit off-setting opportunities expected to be available from Q3 2021.</p> <p>2. A new Woodland code opportunity has arisen close to Bishop Auckland. 13 Hectares of farmland will be planted with 2000+ trees, mostly broad-leafed, from early in 2021. Once the quantity and mix of trees has been established the initiative will be measured and validated for carbon credits during the spring of 2021. Off-setting investment will be available from Q2/3 2021. The intention is to create a community woodland hub with investment from local businesses and enterprises. Local</p>		
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	<b>Peatland</b>	Peat1. Enhance the rate of peatland restoration through the Peatland Programme with the AONB Partnership.	£50,000	Yes (£50,000)	North Pennines AONB	On course to restore peatland identified.		
		Harwood	£173,771					
		Holwick	£259,708					
		Valance Lodge	£750,718					
	<b>Blue Carbon</b>	BC1. Blue carbon: off- shore oyster / mussel bed creation and kelp eco-system development (stores three times as much carbon as tree planting but Durham's seabed has been badly damaged)	£40,000	Yes	Heritage Coast Partnership	<p>A regional Blue Carbon/Marine Habitat Restoration Group has formed. At the moment this includes EA, NE, DCC and the Tees Rivers Trust given their IMMERSE project.</p> <p>Initially this is bringing together current activity and sharing knowledge, experience and skills. There is a small number of pilot projects underway.</p> <p>Govt now have a marine strategy that supports this type of activity.</p>		
	<b>Tree Planting</b>	TP1. Major tree planting and habitat creation schemes across the County to maximise carbon storage, working with partners, communities, AAPS, schools and landowners.	£300,000	Yes	Communities, AAPS, Schools, Landowners	Officer in post. First batch of potential planting sites growd-truthed and sent to CPaL to check deeds and site constraints. Report to Corporate Property Board to agree this procees, leading to a portfolio of planting sites has been approved.	£15,421	
TP2. Support the Durham Woodland Revival project to manage and plant woodlands with partners,		£820,000 (4 years)	Yes		Ongoing			

		landowners and communities						
		TP3. Durham Hedgerow Partnership	£20,000/pa	Yes	Durham Hedgerow Partnership	Hedge planting planting and management schemes now underway, to be completed by end of March		
		TP4. Managing DCC woodland estate . 2000ha of DCC woodland under management, with Forestry Commission approved plans	n/a	n/a		Ongoing		
		TP5. Tree Week grants for small projects in community and landowners	£6,000/pa	Yes		The scheme is now open and applications are coming in. Planitng to be complete by end of March 2021		
		TP6. Urban Tree Challenge Fund, to plant larger specimen trees in towns and villages	£1M	Yes	Karbon Homes & Believe	Yr 2 of the UTCF 1 is almost complete. UTCF 2 is also underway. Several thousand whips currently being planted along with remianing standards. This phase will be complete by the New Year then we will be on to the maintenance phase for the next 3 years.	290,000	
	<b>Land Management</b>	LM1. With Durham University and other partners undertake a programme of research into the effectiveness of different natural carbon storage systems	staff time	n/a	Durham University	Once the new Environment and Climate Change Partnership is established this will become one of the areas of action		

		LM2. Promote existing guidance for land managers across the County on maximising carbon storage (includes large land owners, T&P Councils, allotment holders, tourist destinations, etc)	staff time	n/a		Ongoing		
		LM3. Implement an urban street tree replacement scheme including urban fruit trees	?	No		Ongoing		
		LM4. Promote green infrastructure and green wall schemes alongside <u>reduced mowing regimes</u> and managed urban rewilding through the Planning process	funded through S106	n/a		No delivery in 2020, due to COVID issues. Planning for work for 2021 delivery has continued.		
		AGR1. Consider how soil conservation, soil regenerative farming, and agro-ecology can be promoted with farmers and landowners	staff time	n/a	Durham Food Group, NFU	Discussions ongoing on various fronts - including NECCC partnership working groups and UK 100 coalition. Progress is expected once the new Climate Emergency Strategic Board is established, with this as a priority area		
Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling	<b>Waste Management</b>	WM1. Consider the introduction of a food waste collection scheme to households across County Durham.	?	No		Consultation round 2 indicated as still happening despite COVID and as early as January 2021. Strategic Waste continue to network with Defra and LARAC over this and await release of the consultation documents. Increasingly 2025 looks the more likely introduction date and not 2023 as originally envisaged.		

	WM2. Promote and encourage home composting with carbon management guidance.	?	Yes		DCC actively promote and encourage residents to purchase subsidised home compost bins. See: <a href="http://www.durham.gov.uk/composting">http://www.durham.gov.uk/composting</a>		
	WM3. Promote the uptake of garden waste collections to households across County Durham.	?	No		The start of the 2020 chargeable garden waste scheme was delayed this year by 4 weeks to the current pandemic. Collections are being provided on Saturdays and Mondays in order to ensure resources are available for refuse and recycling collections from households to take place. There are currently approximately 61,000 subscriptions to the service (£35 per bin subscription). DCC have in-housed the operation and processing of the garden waste from this season at the Joint Stocks site at Coxhoe. The service is operating well and is well received by customers.		
	WM4. Provide information and advice to residents, schools, businesses and community groups in order to facilitate awareness and behavioural change towards sustainable waste management practices	?	No		The strategic waste management team have carried out 71 number of community, school and business roadshow events in relation to sustainable waste management practices during April 2019 – March 2020. This aspect of community engagement is currently on hold.		

	<b>Plastics</b>	Plas1. Continue to promote sign ups to the Single Use Plastics Pledge across Durham in order to encourage the reduction of, and seek alternatives to, the use of single use plastics	?	No		The dedicated task group continues to promote the reduction of SUPs across DCC and County Durham. To date there are 272 sign ups from schools, community groups, businesses and individuals from across County Durham. There are 271 sign ups across County Durham to the Northumbrian Water Refill Scheme. A dedicated action plan is available for this area of work which links into the County Durham Climate Emergency Response Strategy.		
	<b>Procurement</b>	Proc1. Sustainable procurement – research and produce guidance on carbon reduction in procurement across all sectors	staff time	n/a	NEPO?	A short series of webinars with NEPO for SMEs on using environmental TOMs properly to increase chances of success.. NEPO are keen to do more on the environmental side. Work within DCC to select and improve the TOMs we use		
Awareness Raising	<b>Schools</b>	Sch1. Continue and grow schools work through OASES to include home energy awareness	£20,000 per annum	?	OASES	Base contract has been extended for next year. This will enable additional services such as home energy to be incorporated into it. Initial scope drafted, undergoing review. Aim to start home energy project in first half of 2021. Programme start has been delayed due to Covid and furlough but plan to begin in early 2021	0	

		Sch2. Children 4 Climate Change. In collaboration with Durham University OASES are working with schools across County Durham to understand climate science and provide active citizenship opportunities to raise awareness in communities through interactive website	?	?	OASES, Durham University	The programme will work with 25 schools in total. First six schools have completed: Crook Primary; Esh Winning Primary; Ribbon Academy; Timothy Hackworth Primary; Cockfield Primary; Cleves Cross Academy. Another 4 to complete by March 21. Programme involves awareness raising and climate research and production of green screen films by pupils to view on programme website <a href="http://c4cc.org.uk/">http://c4cc.org.uk/</a>	zero from CERP	TBC
	<b>Communities</b>	Com1. Set up a revolving loan scheme to support carbon reduction projects across the community	£500,000	No		HG been speaking to others in the Council on how they do it e.g. Housing - bringing homes back into use - existing models. Going to look at an external model too. Potentially 3 examples on how to administer it. Can we ask for a minimum carbon return - what is our criteria going to be? What are other local authorities doing? Putting a draft paper together for circulation round our team		

	Com2. Large scale programme of awareness, involvement, to support behavioural change, and promote community grants/opportunities. Working with AAPs, Town and Parish Councils and other community organisations	£50,000	?		A number of challenges encountered internally due to the covid pandemic have had an impact on the delivery elements of this project. However we are now beginning development of the website, content material and branding, looking at internal and external practices on raising awareness (workshops, events etc) that will help communicate Climate Change. In addition there is a programme of communications and engagement activities being developed which again will look at internal and external audiences which entails working with corporate comms, AAP's and partners.		
	Com3. Set up and manage an online interactive website for the climate emergency	staff time	n/a		Falls under Comm2		
	Com4. What you can do section for Website	staff time	n/a		Falls under Comm2		
	Com5. Engage with local, technical expert organisations in order to align research, development and investment priorities	staff time	n/a		Falls under Comm2		
	Com6. Work in partnership with public health bodies on shared goals such as active travel and wellbeing	staff time	n/a	Public Health	Falls under Comm2		
	Com7. Promote the Environment Awards, in particular the Innovation	staff time	n/a		Some delay, but progressing		

		and Climate Change categories						
	<b>Research and Innovation</b>	RES1. Engage in multiple joint research projects with Durham University and Energy Institute to actively engage students on our work and add extra research capacity to our work.	staff time	n/a	Durham University		For the third year in succession an excellent group of Earth Sciences students are undertaking research for us on technical mine water heat challenges. The INCLUDE project is providing us with a researcher for one year to explore social inclusion in our work. A Masters student has just completed a detailed assessment of carbon opportunities for Durham. Partners from the DEI Board are working with us on a range of technical issues.	
		RES2. Work across the region with Local Authority partners and the NELEP in order to develop regional projects and to learn from regional best practice.	staff time	n/a	NELEP		Work continues to progress. Best practice being shared amongst local authorities (provide examples).	

**Cabinet****10 February 2021****A Corporate Environmental Statement,  
Management System and Governance****Ordinary Decision****Report of Corporate Management Team****Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and  
Climate Change****Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for  
Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships****Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide.

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To set out a statement of environmental ambitions for the County Council.
- 2 To approve the adoption of a nationally recognised environmental management system and accreditation through Investors in the Environment to ensure robust processes and performance management discipline are integrated into driving improvements.
- 3 To consider strategic governance arrangements, that will help lead in the corporate coordination of environmental activity in fulfilment of these ambitions, especially those linked to climate change.

**Executive summary**

- 4 The County Council has a wide variety of plans and strategies related to the environment, for example Climate Change Emergency Action Plan, Single Use Plastics, Cycling and Walking Strategy, Sustainable Procurement, as well as commitments made in the Local Plan and County Durham Vision. It is now timely to consider how these plans work together and to set out a summary statement of it the Council's environmental aspirations, encompassing existing and future plans, within which initiatives, targets and benefits can be identified and addressed.

- 5 This report provides for consideration an overarching environmental statement that fulfils this. It is set out in a few pages and the ambitions contained in it will be reflected in the Council's values and its relationships, both internally and externally. The statement is set out in Appendix 2.
- 6 It is important to recognise that the development of a variety of important environmental plans, some of which are nationally recognised as developing best practice, has continued at pace. The introduction of an overarching statement will provide immediate and long-lasting benefit by reinforcing an overall and unifying commitment.
- 7 An effective environmental policy is dependent on a clear and practical delivery mechanism and an Environmental Management System (EMS) is an established process for achieving this.
- 8 The nationally recognised Investors in the Environment (IiE) management system has been developed to record, monitor and improve all environmental aspects of organisational operations leading to an auditable, externally verified accreditation. By adopting this system, the Council will achieve and measurable demonstration of environmental performance.
- 9 It is recognised that the Council's greatest environmental challenge is that of reducing its carbon emissions, and through a partnership approach fostering a reduction in emissions across the County. The report to Cabinet in February 2019 detailed an ambitious Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP). Significant progress has already been made against this plan and an annual progress report will shortly be published. There is an opportunity to align the work of the CERP with the EMS through a common governance framework.
- 10 Overseeing the implementation of the EMS and the CERP will be the responsibility of a senior-officer level Net Zero Carbon Board under the leadership of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change. This board will be supported by operational and policy workstreams from across the organisation to ensure delivery is achieved.
- 11 The board will also play a pivotal role in relating corporate activity to externally based initiatives that are being developed through the recently re-established Environment and Climate Change Partnership. This comprises county-wide external stakeholders working with the Council to achieve environmental outcomes and operates under the auspices of the County Durham Strategic Partnership.

## Recommendations

12 Cabinet is requested to:

- (a) endorse a new corporate Environmental Statement and agree to implement it across all Council services (Appendix 2);
- (b) agree to the introduction of an Environmental Management System to manage and record progress, and accreditation through the national Investors in the Environment (IiE) accreditation scheme;
- (c) support the establishment of a cross-service mechanism to drive the delivery of the Environmental Statement along with the existing Climate Emergency Response Plan and other key environmental commitments through the introduction of a corporate Net Zero Carbon Board.

## **Background**

- 13 The County Council's work and reputation in tackling environmental issues is excellent, with national recognition in its work for example ranging from carbon reduction, fly tipping, environmental cleanliness waste management and horticulture.
- 14 Much of the success has arisen from bespoke policies, and action plans in delivering a plethora of projects and initiatives. These plans might range from example Climate Change Emergency Action Plan, Single Use Plastics, Cycling and Walking Strategy, Sustainable Procurement. Part of the Local Plan and County Durham Vision also express aspects of the Council Vision.
- 15 The establishment of a single overarching policy statement regarding the environment will provide recognition and co-ordination of initiatives as being inter-connected and part of an overall environmental purpose.
- 16 Increasingly it is recognised, that delivering environmental objectives is a corporate responsibility. Nowhere is this more evident than in the delivery of the Climate Change Emergency Response Plan approved by Cabinet in February 2019 and involving all service groupings across the County. There is a need to enshrine this corporate working in our internal governance arrangements and additionally have mechanisms in place to monitor and review performance, benchmarking against others where necessary.
- 17 This report therefore sets out:
  - i) an over-arching environmental statement which sets out Council ambition;
  - ii) an outline of an environmental management system proposed to be adopted as a tool for assessing and improving environmental performance.
  - iii) an outline of internal governance intended to deliver on the foremost challenge of carbon reductions;

## **Environmental Statement**

- 18 To date environmental management and reporting has developed across a number of separate fronts. Bringing these together into a single management system will provide for a more holistic view of progress. As a result, a new policy and delivery document has been produced to embed environmental performance and improvement activities it into existing strategic management and decision-making processes.

19 The new statement encompasses key emerging issues including the climate emergency, single use plastics and critical declines in biodiversity. It will enable issues to be prioritised, focussing on aspects of activity where the council can have the greatest impact whilst being broad enough to capture the range of environmental impacts and issues that the Council is facing.

20 The key ambitions are that:

*Durham County Council recognises the importance of striving for and maintaining a high-quality environment and our responsibility towards it as being an integral part of our organisational duties and core values. It therefore commits to:*

- *Take opportunities to improve environmental outcomes;*
- *Reduce the environmental impact of our operating methods and consumption of resources;*
- *Regularly monitor and continually improve our environmental performance;*
- *Ensure environmental impacts are understood within our decision-making processes and practices;*
- *Take a lead role on critical issues such as climate change, single-use plastic reduction, declines in biodiversity;*
- *Raise awareness of and encourage environmentally positive behaviours and best practice;*
- *Work with and support others to protect and improve our natural environment.*

21 A copy of the full environmental statement, including sections detailing responsibilities and principles is included in Appendix 2.

### **Environmental Management System (EMS)**

22 An effective environmental policy is dependent on a clear and practical delivery mechanism and an Environmental Management System (EMS) is an established process for achieving this. Investors in Environment (IiE) is one such system, nationally recognised accreditation scheme providing independent audit and advice which is utilised by Business, Industry and Local Authorities alike.

23 A specialist independent assessor has carried out an audit of council activities and plans for the environment against a nationally recognised environmental standard; 'Investors in the Environment'.

- 24 The audit, which involved interviews with 35 strategic managers, assessment of a variety of existing plans and strategies, also made a series of recommendations which are being utilised for improvement plans. Whilst this is the most important aspect of the work, their assessment has also revealed that we are currently at a Silver (middle standard: (Bronze low, Silver progressing, Green achieved highest standard). This can perhaps be taken as good news, recognising that the Council is already achieving a lot, but also highlighting that there is scope for further improvement.
- 25 Based on the value and benefits of this one-off audit, it is suggested that the system be adopted, and consistent with policy there is a strive for further improvement. Managing the implementation of the EMS will be the responsibility of a cross-service environmental management workstream of technical leads reporting to the Net Zero Carbon Board.

## **Governance**

- 26 Overseeing the implementation of the new policy will be the responsibility of a senior-officer level Net Zero Carbon Board under the leadership of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change. It will be supported by operational workstreams of internal technical leads, including an environmental management workstream, to ensure delivery is achieved.
- 27 The board will also play a pivotal role in relating corporate activity to externally based initiatives that are to come forward from the recently established Environment and Climate Change Partnership. This comprises county-wide external stakeholders working with the Council to achieve environmental outcomes and operates under the auspices of the County Durham Strategic Partnership.
- 28 The Net Zero Carbon Board will not have decision making powers, but will be instrumental in fulfilling Council vision, policy and plans in this area, with reports to Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny Boards as appropriate.

## **Conclusion**

- 29 This report seeks to provide a single overarching environmental policy statement, which links together both existing and future plans and strategies, expressing the Councils broad commitment to this important issue.
- 30 It outlines new internal governance arrangements to further drive and coordinate a corporate approach to reducing carbon emissions and introduces an environmental management system (Investors in

Environment) as an important tool to ensure systems are in place to deliver on the ambitions.

## **Authors**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

It will improve our compliance on environmental issues.

### **Finance**

£6,000 revenue budget allocation for liE registration fees going forward on an annual basis.

### **Consultation**

35 interviews have taken place with key internal services and managers have been engaged throughout the process. The resultant environmental statement, support for a management system, and initial plans are all in furtherance of this statement.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

No issues. In the unlikely event that individual actions will have issues, they will be addressed as part of the project.

### **Climate Change**

The policy and liE will complement our work on climate change and will reduce climate impacts that are outside the scope of our carbon management plan. For example, reduced resource use and improved waste disposal will lower carbon emissions produced in raw material extraction but are outside the formal scope of our carbon management plan.

### **Human Rights**

No Issues.

### **Crime and Disorder**

No Issues.

### **Staffing**

There will be some staff time required from across the Authority to deliver the work, notably with Low Carbon Economy and Service Performance management teams.

### **Accommodation**

No Issues.

**Risk**

The proposal reduces risk of environmental consequences.

**Procurement**

The Procurement team has been involved and will continue to be engaged with the project.

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## **Appendix 2: Environmental Statement**

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### **Durham County Council's Environmental Statement**

Durham County Council recognises the importance of striving for and maintaining a high-quality environment and our responsibility towards it as being an integral part of our organisational duties and core values. We will therefore:

- Actively identify and take opportunities to improve environmental quality and outcomes throughout our activities;
- Reduce the environmental impact of our activities, operating methods and production and consumption of resources;
- Regularly monitor and report on environmental indicators and continually improve our environmental performance;
- Ensure environmental impacts and sustainability are understood and embedded within our decision-making processes, policies, strategies, projects and working practices;
- Comply with and endeavour to exceed all relevant certification standards, accreditations and regulatory requirements;
- Take a lead role on critical issues such as climate change, single-use plastic reduction, declines in biodiversity and ensuring a green, inclusive and resilient Covid 19 recovery;
- Contribute to tackling other global challenges we face as defined by the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- Raise awareness of and encourage environmentally positive behaviours and best practice among employees, members, partners, those we commission work to, residents and our communities; and
- Work with and support others to protect, improve and connect County Durham's natural environment and natural capital.

### **Responsibility**

Durham County Council's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team have overall, collective responsibility for the Council's Environmental Statement. The Net Zero Carbon Board will oversee and review its implementation. All employees, including those that work within schools and arm's length organisations are to abide by its principles, including when determining any locally specific environmental guidelines and when working with partners.

## **Key Principles:**

### **Climate Emergency**

All service areas and staff are responsible for responding to the climate emergency in their area of work in order to meet or exceed emission reduction targets, raise awareness of the climate emergency and ensure that we are best able to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

### **Sustainable Procurement**

The Council's commissioning and procurement activity will be undertaken in an economically, environmentally and socially responsible manner, taking into account whole life impacts and benefits of the contract along with the environmental and ethical credentials of suppliers.

### **Resources**

The Council will proactively seek to avoid and minimise unnecessary resource consumption as a key part of its decision making and operational practices. Where resources, such as energy, water, minerals etc are required, these will be managed sustainably and will be kept in use for as long as possible, abiding by 'circular economy' principles.

### **Waste**

The Council will avoid and minimise waste by encouraging employees, members suppliers, businesses and our residents to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost.

### **Sustainable Design and Construction**

The Council will adhere to sustainability principles to ensure that the location, orientation, construction methods and materials, ongoing maintenance, refurbishment, operation and demolition of its buildings and infrastructure minimises impact on the natural and built environment and maximises resource efficiency. All new buildings will need to meet the requirements of the County Durham Plan and comply with the standards set out in all other relevant internal policy and guidance. The Council will seek to achieve the same standards for major refurbishment projects where viable.

### **Natural Capital**

The council will seek to protect and enhance natural capital, across its estate, highways, woodlands, green and blue spaces and within decision making, ensuring that net gains in biodiversity are achieved, the most environmentally beneficial management regimes are adopted and pollution is prevented.

### **Transport and Air Quality**

The council will work to reduce the environmental impacts of staff travel and seek innovative, sustainable solutions to travel and travel avoidance around the county, including the adoption of smarter working practices. Where travel is necessary, we will work to reduce the impacts from our own vehicle fleet and the use of officers' cars for business travel, including supporting the uptake of electric vehicles, bikes and roll out of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle charging

infrastructure. The Council will also seek to embed walking, cycling and public transport use into County Durham's everyday travel culture and will pay particular attention to the implementation of measures within Air Quality Management Areas.

### **Festivals and Events**

The council will be leaders in festival and event environmental responsibility, ensuring that we, organisers, traders and attendees comply with standards relating to marketing and promotion, waste reduction, reuse and recycling, sources of power, travel, food, pollution prevention and protection of public amenity and biodiversity.

### **Culture**

The council will involve staff and members in the implementation of this policy for greater environmental accountability and improved performance. Staff and members will be provided with relevant environmental training and will be engaged through regular communication, sharing of performance information and activity. We will also work with suppliers, contractors, sub-contractors and our partners to encourage their environmental performance and will actively engage with our residents and communities to encourage and facilitate environmentally positive behaviour. This policy will be reviewed at least once annually in consultation with staff and other stakeholders where necessary.



**Durham County Council - Cabinet**  
**Durham County Council – Corporate Management Team**

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## **Appendix 3: Indicators**

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### **Council Wide Indicators**

Tracking impacts across the whole of the authority:

- Mileage/Transport
- Carbon emissions
- Water consumption
- Renewable energy generated
- Procurement impacts, initially looking at spend on consumables but working on key contracts as they come up for renewal.

### **Building specific indicators**

Looking at impacts from key buildings-County Hall, Crook, Green Lane, and Spectrum 8:

- Waste generated-general, recycling, other
- Electricity use
- Gas use/heat generation
- Water use

### **Natural Capital**

The Council owns and/or manages a variety of land including, for example, woodlands, parks, nature reserves, amenity open space, highways verges, grazing land, playing fields etc. Whilst not currently available, this EMS will identify actions to better understand:

- The natural capital assets, benefits and services provided by our estate; and
- How our estate in its entirety and its management currently benefit biodiversity and how this can be enhanced.

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# Climate Emergency Response Plan Year 1 Progress

Stephen McDonald,  
Principal Officer – Low Carbon Economy

Rosalind Farrow,  
Carbon and Energy Analyst – Low Carbon Economy

*Altogether better*



# Content

- Background
- Council Emissions and Targets
- County Emissions and Targets
- Actions
  - Council Actions
  - Countywide Actions
- Looking Ahead
- Corporate Environmental Statement

*Altogether better*



# Background

- Council 80% CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction target by 2030
- County Carbon Neutral by 2050
- Adoption of CERP in February 2020
  - Two year action plan
  - Over 100 actions
  - Mitigation and Adaption

*Altogether better*



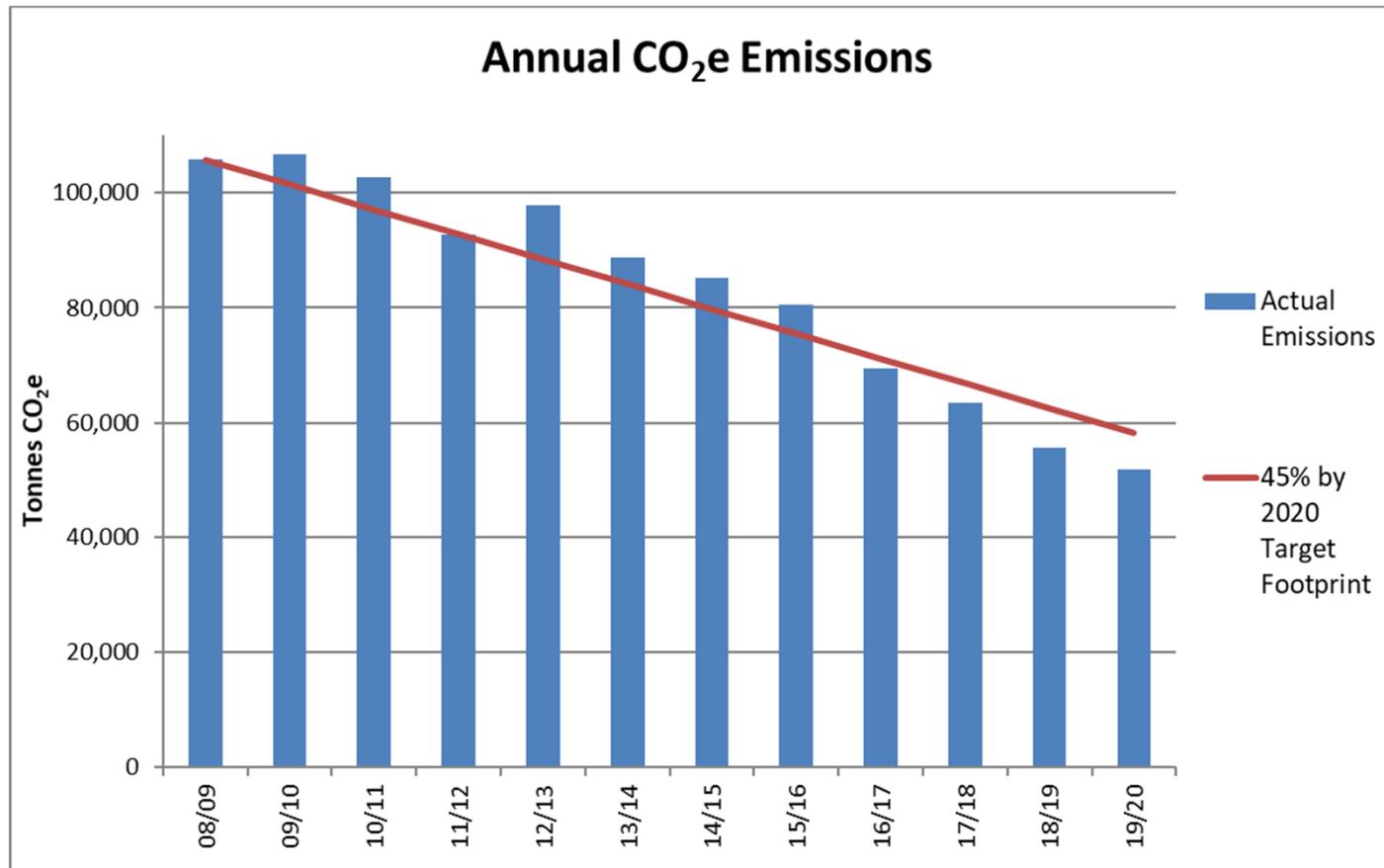
# Council Emission Targets

- CMP 2015-2020: target 45% from 2008/09
  - March 2020: 51% achieved
  - 2020-21: figures due in July 2021
- Climate Emergency Target
  - **80% by 2030**
- Expect to be on track this year

*Altogether better*

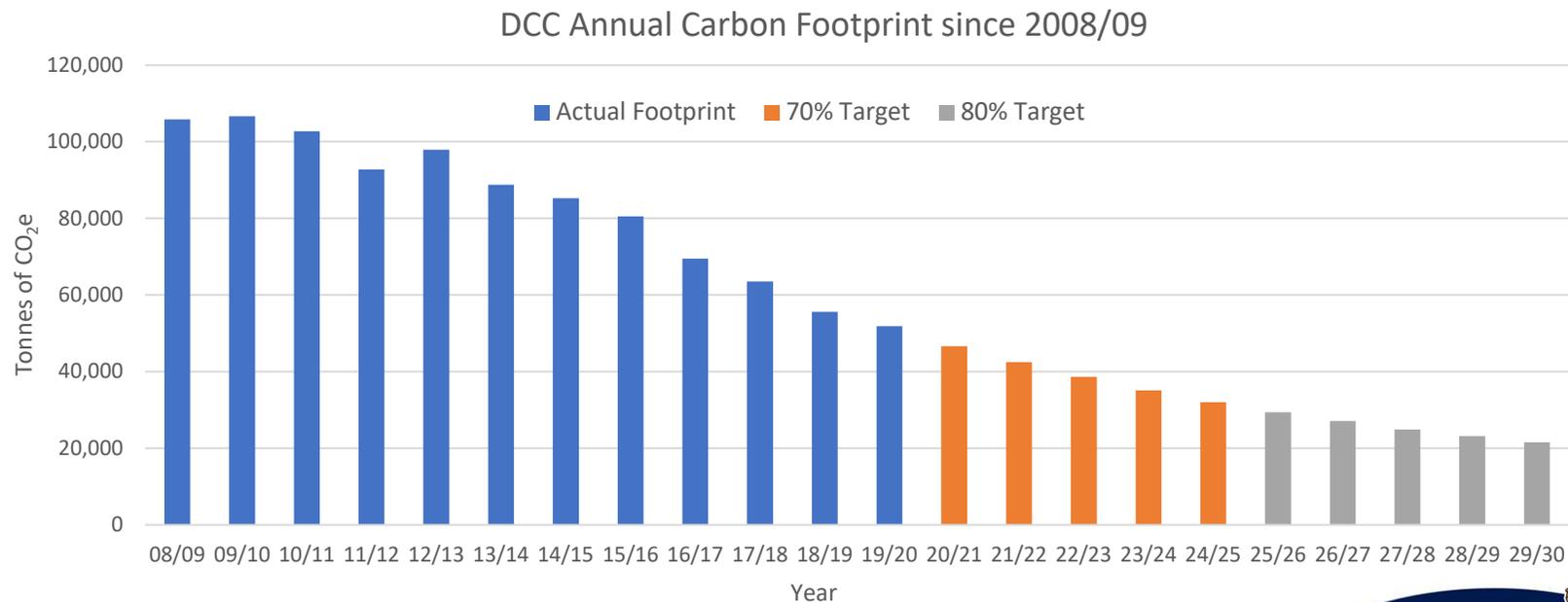


# Carbon Management Plan 2019-20



# Carbon Management Plan 2020-25

- Climate Emergency Target: 80% by 2030
- Carbon Management Plan Target: 70% by 2025



*Altogether better*



# Carbon Management Plan 2020-25

From the Climate Emergency Response Plan

Areas of focus:

- Heat (44% of total footprint)
- Transport (21% of total footprint)
- Electricity (35% of total footprint)
- Schools (40% of total footprint)
- Monitoring and targeting

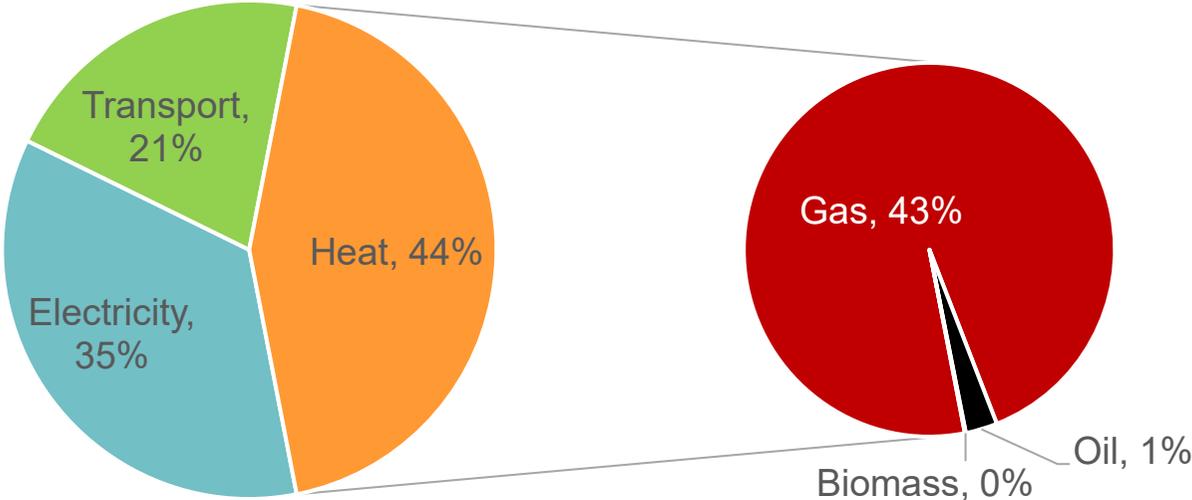
*Altogether better*



# Carbon Management Plan 2019-20

- Heat contributes the most to our carbon footprint.

Carbon Emissions 2019/20



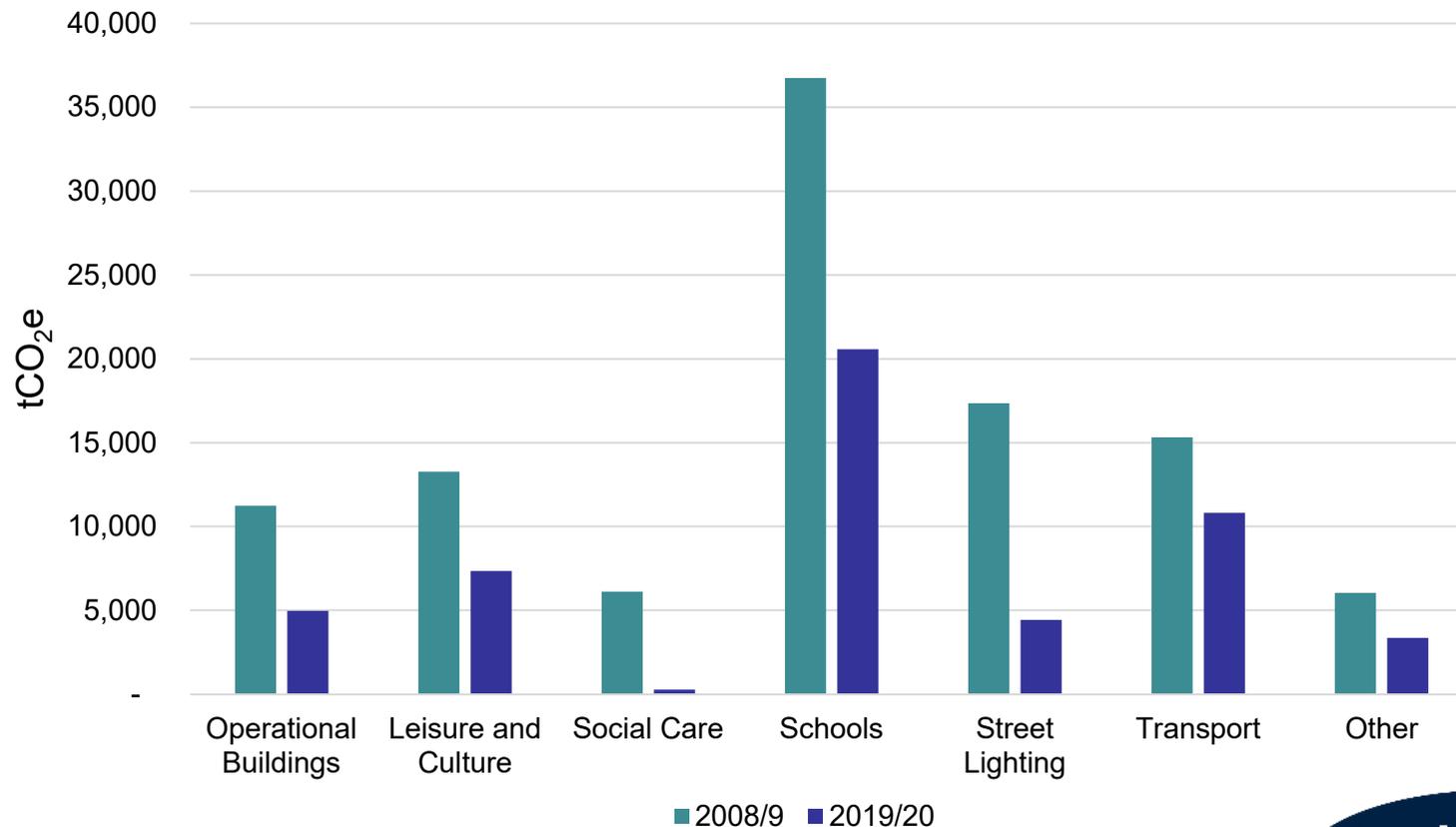
■ Electricity ■ Transport ■ Gas ■ Oil ■ Biomass

*Altogether better*



# Council Emission Reductions by Service Area

Change in Emissions by End Use



*Altogether better*



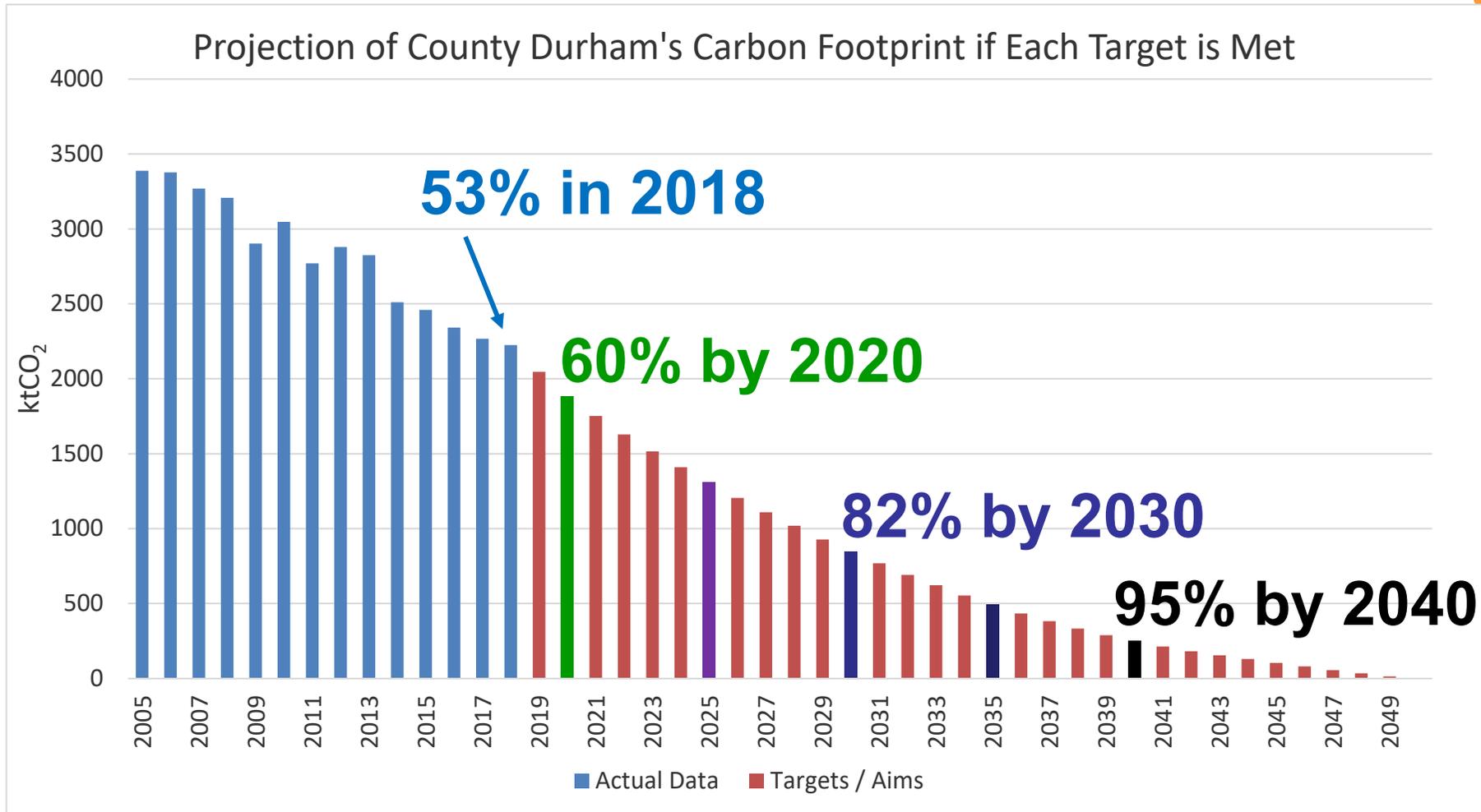
# Countywide Emissions Targets

- Carbon Neutral 2050
- Milestones
  - 2020 – 60% reduction (data will be released in 2022)
  - 2025 – 72% reduction (data will be released in 2027)
- Currently 54% (2018)

*Altogether better*



# Countywide Emissions Targets



53% in 2018

60% by 2020

82% by 2030

95% by 2040

# 2019-20 Progress – Council Actions

- Electricity     **-16%** ↓
  - LED Lighting
  - New HQ rooftop PV
- Heat             **+5%** ↑
  - Annfield Plain Waste Transfer Heat Pump
- Transport       **-11%** ↓
  - Electric RCV trial, Remote working

*Altogether better*

# 2019 Progress - Countywide

- Housing Regeneration
  - £2.5 million ERDF Solid Wall Insulation Innovation (SWii) project
  - £2 million WHF new off gas heating systems including 100 renewable systems
- Natural Environment
  - Woodland Revival Project (64ha of woodland planting)
  - Further peatland restoration through the AONB Partnership
- Transport
  - SOSCI – EV infrastructure project funded by Innovate UK rolling out charge points in rural areas
  - Cycling and Walking Delivery Plans

*Altogether better*



# 2019 Progress – Countywide

- Communities
  - Civil Contingency Unit support with Emergency Plans
- Business
  - 241 SME's supported through BEEP, saving 1500t CO<sub>2</sub>
- Heat
  - Support of potentially the first UK minewater DH scheme in Seaham
  - Detailed Business Case Development of Durham City District Heating potential
- Waste
  - Currently 44% of County Durham's waste is reused, recycled and composted
  - Success of the Single Use Plastic pledge

*Altogether better*



# Looking Ahead – 2020 Countywide

- Community Tree Planting Programme
- Community EV Charging points
- Market Electric Points
- Minewater feasibility at Hawthorn Pit
  
- Further support for Peatland restoration
- Blue Carbon – Oyster farm development
- Education and Awareness raising
- Borrow a Bike Scheme
- Domestic External Wall Insulation Schemes
- Electric Busses for the Park and Ride
- Electric Vans ‘Try before you buy’ scheme
- New Website and Awareness Raising Activities

- CERP 2022 - 24  
*Altogether better*



# Looking Ahead – 2021 Council

- Electricity
  - Zero Carbon Depot
- Heat
  - Abbey Leisure Centre
  - Comeleon Heating
- Transport
  - Park and Ride
  - Fleet renewal
- Low Carbon Leisure Transformation
- Building Energy Management Systems

*Altogether better*



# Environment Strategy

- A new Environment Statement setting out the environmental ambitions for the County Council
- Adopt a new Environmental Management System and accreditation system through Investors in the Environment (IiE)
- Adopt new strategic governance Arrangements.

*Altogether better*



# Environment Strategy

Durham County Council recognises the importance of striving for and maintaining a high-quality environment and our responsibility towards it as being an integral part of our organisational duties and core values. We will therefore:

- Actively identify and take opportunities to improve environmental quality and outcomes throughout our activities;
- Reduce the environmental impact of our activities, operating methods and production and consumption of resources;
- Regularly monitor and report on environmental indicators and continually improve our environmental performance;
- Ensure environmental impacts and sustainability are understood and embedded within our decision-making processes, policies, strategies, projects and working practices;
- Comply with and endeavour to exceed all relevant certification standards, accreditations and regulatory requirements;
- Take a lead role on critical issues such as climate change, single-use plastic reduction, declines in biodiversity and ensuring a green, inclusive and resilient Covid 19 recovery;
- Contribute to tackling other global challenges we face as defined by the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- Raise awareness of and encourage environmentally positive behaviours and best practice among employees, members, partners, those we commission work to, residents and our communities; and
- Work with and support others to protect, improve and connect County Durham's natural environment and natural capital.

*Altogether better*



# Governance

- Investors in Environment (IiE) will provide a clear and practical delivery mechanism providing independent audit and advice.
- Overseeing the implementation of the new policy will be the responsibility of a senior-officer level Net Zero Carbon Board under the leadership of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change. It will be supported by operational workstreams of internal technical leads, including an environmental management workstream, to ensure delivery is achieved.
- The Net Zero Carbon Board will not have decision making powers, but will be instrumental in fulfilling Council vision, policy and plans in this area, with reports to Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny Boards as appropriate.

*Altogether better*



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



**19 March 2021**

**Neighbourhoods & Climate Change –  
Quarter 3: Forecast of Revenue and  
Capital Outturn 2020/21**

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**Report of Corporate Directors**

**Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources (Interim)**

**Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Climate  
Change**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide details of the forecast outturn budget for this service area highlighting major variances in comparison with the budget, based on the position to the end of Quarter 3 (31 December 2020).

**Executive summary**

- 2 This report provides an overview of the updated forecast of outturn, based on the position at Quarter 3, 2020/21. It provides an analysis of the budgets and forecast outturn for the service areas falling under the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee and complements the reports considered and agreed by Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- 3 The updated position is that there is a forecast underspend of £1.333 million, against a revised budget of £133.241 million.
- 4 In arriving at the cash limit position, COVID-19 related expenditure and lost income of £24.521 million, offset by COVID-19 related savings of £4.4 million have been excluded from the forecasts. COVID-19 related costs are being treated corporately and offset by Government funding so far as is possible, though forecast net costs currently exceed the grant that has been made available.

- 5 The revised service capital budget is £46.903 million and this is forecast to be fully spent by year-end.
- 6 Details of the reasons for under and overspending against relevant budget heads is disclosed in the report.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 7 Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.

### **Background**

- 8 County Council approved the Revenue and Capital budgets for 2020/21 at its meeting on 26 February 2020. These budgets have subsequently been revised to account for changes in grant (additions/reductions), budget transfers between service groupings and budget re-profiling between years (in terms of capital). This report covers the financial position for the following budgets of the services within the scope of this committee;
  - (a) Revenue Budget - £133.241 million
  - (b) Capital Programme – £46.903 million
- 9 The summary financial statements contained in the report cover the financial year 2020/21 and show: -
  - (a) The approved annual budget;
  - (b) The forecast of income and expenditure as recorded in the Council's financial management system;
  - (c) The variance between the annual budget and the forecast outturn;
  - (d) For the revenue budget, adjustments for items outside of the cash limit (outside of the Service's control) to take into account such items as redundancies met from the strategic reserve, capital charges and use of / or contributions to earmarked reserves.

### **Forecast Revenue Outturn 2020/21**

- 10 The service is reporting a forecast **underspend of £1.333 million** against a revised budget of £133.241 million.
- 11 The following table shows the revenue outturn position analysed by Head of Service area.

## Service Budget - Analysis by Head of Service £'000

Head of Service	2020/21 Budget £'000	Forecast Of Outturn £'000	Variance (under) / over spend £'000	Net Covid Adjustment £'000s	Items Outside Cash Limit – Transfers to / From Reserves £'000	Cash Limit Variance QTR3 £'000
Central Costs	33,318	33,168	(150)	0	150	0
Environmental Services	51,375	60,810	9,436	(9,160)	(303)	(27)
Technical Services	13,540	14,922	1,382	(1,120)	(1,167)	(906)
Community Protection	4,543	4,356	(187)	(50)	11	(226)
Partnerships & Community Engagement	7,581	10,907	3,326	(3,357)	(17)	(48)
Culture, Sport & Tourism	22,884	20,544	(2,340)	(6,434)	8,646	(127)
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>133,241</b>	<b>144,707</b>	<b>11,467</b>	<b>(20,121)</b>	<b>7,320</b>	<b>(1,333)</b>

### Cash Limit Outturn – Explanation of Over and Under Spending

- 12 The forecast revenue outturn for 2020/21 is a forecast underspend of £1.333 million, after taking account of the forecast use of reserves, and items outside the cash limit.
- 13 The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are shown below:

- Environmental Services is forecast to underspend by £27,000. There are overspends relating to pay re-gradings for Refuse Collection drivers of £0.206 million and Neighbourhood Wardens of £0.188 million, while income at the Joint Stocks landfill site has underachieved by £0.350 million for power generation.

These overspends have been offset by savings resulting from delays in implementing two new refuse collection rounds (£0.330 million), and delays in appointing new Neighbourhood Wardens (£0.199 million). The service received full year budget growth in 2020/21 for the new refuse rounds and the additional Neighbourhood Wardens, meaning that the delays in implementation are producing one-off underspends in the current year.

In addition, there is a £96,000 underspend on power generation equipment maintenance and £0.156 million underspend in vacant posts within the service.

- Technical Services is forecast to be underspent by £0.906 million. The main reasons for this are: employee savings of £0.354 million due to vacancies in Strategic Highways, a £0.254 million underspend on electricity, and additional income of £0.308 million from permit income and other fees and charges. There is also an overspend of £1.317 million on Winter Maintenance due to the low temperatures in January that necessitated a high level of activity, however this is being treated as outside the cash limit.
- Partnerships & Community Engagement is forecast to underspend by £48,000. This is mainly due to a managed underspend in Supplies and Services, that will be utilised in 2021/22 for a delayed MTFP saving.
- Consumer Protection is forecast to underspend by £0.226 million. There are a number of vacant posts that are producing an underspend of £0.375 million along with an underspend in general supplies budgets of £40,000. However, this is partially offset by an overspend on staff re-gradings (£0.111 million) and £78,000 under achieved licensing income.
- Culture, Sport & Tourism is forecast to be underspent by £0.127 million. This results from an underspend of £0.481 million across Locality Delivery offset by an overspend of £0.342 million relating to the former Leisureworks Service. There are also a number of other minor variances across the service.

14 **Appendix 2** provides a more detailed breakdown of variations across the service area contained within the revenue budget.

### **Capital Programme**

15 The capital programme was revised in May for budget re-phased from 2019/20. This increased the 2020/21 original budget. Further reports to the MOWG detailed further revisions, for grant additions/reductions, budget transfers and budget re-profiling into later years. The revised budget now stands at **£46.903million**.

16 Summary financial performance to the end of December is shown below.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Original Annual Budget 2020/21 £000</b>	<b>Revised Annual Budget 2020/21 £000</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn 2020/21 £000</b>	<b>Variance 2020/21 £000</b>
Environmental Services	6,237	4,268	4,268	0
Technical Services	30,954	34,692	34,692	0
Partnerships & Community Engagement	5,972	4,723	4,723	0
Community Protection	106	31	31	0
Culture, Sport & Tourism	11,349	3,189	3,189	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,618</b>	<b>46,903</b>	<b>46,903</b>	<b>0</b>

17 As at 31 March 2020, the capital programme for 2020/21 was £43.269 million. The capital budget has subsequently been adjusted at MOWG meetings during the year as a result of additional funding sources being identified, along with virements into future years, and this has now resulted in a revised 2020/21 Capital Programme of £46.903 million. It is currently anticipated that the full budget will be spent in 2020/21.

### **Background papers**

- County Council Report (26 February 2020) – Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2020/21.
- Cabinet Report (17 March 2021) – Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2020/21 – Period to 31 December 2020.

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**Contact:** Philip Curran

Tel: 03000 261967

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Finance**

Financial implications are detailed throughout the report which provides an analysis of the revenue and capital projected outturn position.

### **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**

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable.

## Appendix 2: Heads Of Service Analysis – Environmental Services

	Variance	Explanation
<b>Head of Environment</b>	(11)	Minor variance
<b>Environment &amp; Design</b>	0	Minor variance
<b>North Penines AONB</b>	0	Minor variance
<b>Clean &amp; Green</b>	(28)	(£38k) underspend re unbudgeted Commuted Sums from developers £65k overspend on 3 unbudgeted posts at Wharton park (Programme Officer and 2x apprentices) £30k overspend on 1 unbudgeted post for Playing Fields & Pitches (£65k) overachieved income mainly due to Housing & Parish council SLA (£21k) underspend on transport due to lower contract hire costs until new vehicles arrive
<b>Depots</b>	(114)	£22k overspend on security due to year 3 terms of contract (£143k) underspend on utilities £7k overspend on supplies such as refuse collection and equipment
<b>Fleet</b>	4	Minor variance
<b>Neighbourhood Protection</b>	4	£188k overspend due to Wardens pay increase (£199k) underspend on Neighbourhood Wardens mainly due to new wardens not being appointed until part way through the year £20k underachievement of income on FPNs £28k overspend on Bereavement mainly due to lower levels of cemetery income (£25k) underspend on Pest control due to overachievement of income (£8k) minor variance across other areas
<b>Refuse &amp; Recycling</b>	2	£206k overspend on job evaluation of drivers £50k overspend to remove and re-fit camera and brakesafe equipment on new vehicles (£330k) underspend on delay of new rounds not starting until April £40k overspend on postage / printing due to new rounds commencing April (£12k) underspend on transport costs due to vehicle replacement £49k overspend on legal fees relating to EU challenge
<b>Strategic Waste</b>	116	(£117k) underspend on Employees due mainly to vacant posts (£71k) underspend on Garden Waste scheme where the sign ups have increased £400k underachieved Income - £350k Power generation, £81k soil imports less £31k additional trade waste disposal (£96k) underspend on other areas such as power generation
<b>TOTAL</b>	(27)	

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## Appendix 2: Heads Of Service Analysis – Partnerships & Community Engagement

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	Variance	Explanation
<b>AAP</b>	(51)	£16k overspend on Employees due to fully staffed so not able to meet the 3% turnover saving. (£3k) Premises underspend. (£64K) managed underspend on S&S
<b>CCU &amp; Policy</b>	21	(£2k) managed Underspend (£2k) managed underspend on S&S (£25k) unachievable income, due to the schools having received training and are now in a position to prepare their own emergency plans.
<b>Community Buildings</b>	0	No Material Variance
<b>PACE Management</b>	0	No Material Variance
<b>Partnership team</b>	(11)	£1k overspend on Employees due to fully staffed so not able to meet the 3% turnover saving. (£12k) managed underspend on S&S
<b>Strategic Manager Partnership</b>	4	£4k overspend on Employees due to fully staffed so not able to meet the 3% turnover saving.
<b>PACE</b>	(11)	£5k overspend on Employees due to fully staffed so not able to meet the 3% turnover saving. (£16k) managed underspend on S&S
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(48)</b>	

## Appendix 2: Heads Of Service Analysis – Technical Services

	Variance	Explanation
<b>Head of Technical Services</b>	(137)	Underspend on Employees of (134k) re vacancy and underspends on Transport and Supplies of (3k).
<b>Highways Services Trading</b>	(132)	Reduced income of 4,662k generated by trading activities in Highways, Street Lighting and Commercial Group, offset by reduced related cost of sales of (3,811k) on Employees, Supplies and Agency. Adjustment of (1,133k) for COVID related costs and lost income. Reserve transfer of 150 to cover capital costs for replacement festive lights and fittings next year.
<b>Highways Services Non-Trading</b>	0	A net overspend of 1,317k on Winter Maintenance due to a shortfall in the budget and severe snow events in December and January will be treat as outside the cash limit for the service.
<b>Strategic Highways</b>	(637)	Employees net underspend of (354k) due to vacancies and reduced hours in Street Lighting, Drainage, Traffic, Road Safety and Asset Management, offset by additional overtime and agency staff, honoraria payments and apprenticeships in Structures and Highways Permit Scheme, the latter of which is offset by matching Income.
		Underspend of (254k) on Premises for electricity saving of (259k) offset by additional business rates of 5k.
		Underspend of (44k) on Transport for car allowances and fuel largely in Traffic, Road Safety and Asset Management.
		Overspend of 153k on Supplies and Services with overspends of 131k on consultants, legal expenses, advertising and other hired services, and 64k on ICT, offset by underspends of (42k) on equipment and general expenses across all service areas.
		Overspend of 110k on Agency. Saving of (39k) on re-scheduled column testing in Street Lighting. Additional spend of 62k on rechargeable works in Traffic & Street Works, offset by recharged income. Saving of (11k) in Road Safety on driver training costs. Additional spend of 27k on Section 38 supervision and rechargeable works in Asset Management (condition surveys costs now capitalised). Additional spend of £71k on contractors in Drainage.
		Overspend of 48k on Central costs in Asset Management and Street Lighting due to additional staff recharges for inspections.
		Over achieved Income of (308k). Street Lighting additional fees of (15k). Traffic & Street Works (179k) and Highways Permits (272k) additional income from fixed penalty notices, street naming, inspections, and the new permit scheme. Asset Management reduced roundabout sponsorship and other income of 64k. Structures additional recharge income (6k). Road Safety reduced grant, contributions and fee income of 100k.
		Adjustment of (£20k) for COVID related lost income on roundabout sponsorship and £32k for savings on transport, supplies, etc. making a net adjustment of £12k.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(905)</b>	

## Appendix 2: Heads Of Service Analysis – Community Protection

	Variance	Explanation
<b>Head of CP</b>	95	<b>£111k</b> overspend due to 20/21 staffing budget increase not being funded (regrades/increments) <b>(£16k)</b> underspend due to manager reducing hours
<b>Consumer Protection</b>	(115)	<b>(£165k)</b> underspend on staffing due to vacancies <b>£9k</b> overspend on supplies and travel <b>(£19k)</b> underspend on Claypath traffic enforcement <b>£78k</b> underachieved income due to historic bad budget <b>(£18k)</b> overachievement of income on Hackney Carriages and FPNs
<b>Health Protection</b>	27	<b>£14k</b> overspend on staffing mainly due to staff turnover saving <b>(£14k)</b> underspend on transport and supplies <b>(£21k)</b> underspend due to vets being unable to carry out site visits <b>£17k</b> underachieved income on Feed project where income has reduced over the years (FSA) <b>£31k</b> underachieved income on Food Hygiene ratings and Animal Boarding
<b>Strategic Regulation</b>	(23)	<b>(£21k)</b> underspend on staffing mainly due to vacancy <b>(£2k)</b> underspend on transport and supplies
<b>Environment Protection</b>	(48)	<b>(£35k)</b> underspend on staffing due to maternity leave and reduced agency <b>(£13k)</b> underspend on transport and supplies
<b>Neighbourhood Interventions</b>	(99)	<b>(£95k)</b> underspend on staffing due to vacancies <b>(£10k)</b> underspend on transport & supplies <b>£6k</b> under achieved income from PCC
<b>Safer Communities</b>	(63)	<b>(£57k)</b> underspend on staffing due to secondment of staff <b>(£6k)</b> underspend on transport and supplies
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(226)</b>	

## Appendix 2: Heads Of Service Analysis – Culture, Sport & Tourism

	Variance	Explanation
<b>Culture &amp; Sport Management</b>	240	<b>C&amp;S Management £241k over budget</b> - additional posts not budgeted for £44k, (£5k) underspend on supplies and services to offset additional cost of temporary post. MTFP Savings to be achieved pending restructure £202k
<b>Service Development</b>	(221)	<b>Place &amp; Experience (£92k) under budget</b> - mainly due to underspend in Community Arts and Visual Arts. <b>Wellbeing (£132k) under budget</b> - due to 2 vacant posts and supplies and services underspends. Staff vacancies to cover Leisure Transformation Manager post in CS&t Mgt <b>Growing &amp; Learning (£59k) under budget</b> - Mainly vacant posts within Library, Stock and Distribution and Volunteer and Skills supplies and services underspends offset with additional Bowes payment in year 1 of the five year agreement <b>Improvement &amp; Development £70k over budget</b> -primarily overspent on leisure contracts including payments to 1Life and Premises related costs for DLI museum <b>Externally Funded (£8k) under budget</b> - surplus on the prison library service
<b>Locality Delivery- Mgt</b>	(4)	<b>Localities Management (£4k) under budget</b> - saving against mileage and supplies and services offset with staff turnover saving
<b>Locality 1</b>	(72)	<b>Locality 1 (£72k) under budget</b> - Mainly a shortfall in income of £254k and a £92k overspend on Agency and Contracted Services offset with savings against Employees of (£168k) Premises (£119K) - primarily utilities and Supplies and Services of (£132k)
<b>Locality 2</b>	(169)	<b>Locality 2 (£169k) under budget</b> - Mainly Leisure Centre income saving of (£705k) due to adjustments in line with 2019/20 final position plus saving on staffing of (£117k), Premises (£66K) - primarily utilities and supplies and services of (£30k) offset with overspend against transport £4k and <del>agency and contracted services of £745k</del>
<b>Locality 3</b>	(236)	<b>Locality 3 (£236k) under budget</b> - Mainly made up of (£199k) underspend staffing, (£255k) saving on Premises Costs offset by underachievement of income of £37k and overspends against transport £1k, supplies and services £82k and agency and contract related services of £98k
<b>Visit County Durham</b>	(7)	<b>VCD (£7k)</b> primarily underspend against employees (£47k) offset with overspend against staff travelling £2k and supplies and services £38k
<b>Derwentside Culture &amp; Sport</b>	342	<b>Derwentside £342k over budget</b> - Employees (£65k), utilities £182k, rates £17k, cleaning £9k and income £460k overspends offset with underspends against insurance (£27k), transport (£6k) and agency and contract related expenditure (£228k)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(127)</b>	

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FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21  
QUARTER 3

**NEIGHBOURHOODS & CLIMATE CHANGE AND  
CULTURE, SPORT & TOURISM  
(ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES)  
REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN**

Phil Curran  
Finance Manager  
Neighbourhoods & Climate Change

*Altogether better*



# OVERVIEW

- Service Budgets - Background
- Revenue Forecast Outturn and Variance Explanations
- Capital Forecast Outturn and Variance Explanations

*Altogether better*



# ANALYSIS BY HEAD OF SERVICE

	Revised Base Budget 2020/21 £'000	Q3 Outturn (Apr-Dec)  £'000	Reserves & O/s Cash Limit  £'000	Variance Over/ (Under)  £'000
Central Costs	33,318	33,168	150	0
Environmental Services	51,375	60,810	(9,463)	(27)
Technical Services	13,540	14,922	(2,287)	(906)
Community Protection	4,543	4,356	(39)	(226)
Partnerships / Comm Engagement	7,581	10,907	(3,374)	(48)
Culture, Sport & Tourism	22,884	20,544	2,212	(127)
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>133,241</b>	<b>144,707</b>	<b>(12,801)</b>	<b>(1,333)</b>

*Altogether better*



# Reasons for variances

• Overspend on pay re-gradings	£0.505m
• Underspend on new refuse rounds	(£0.330m)
• Underspend on new Wardens	(£0.199m)
• Underspend on staff vacancies	(£0.747m)
• Savings on electricity	(£0.254m)
• Additional Highways Income	(£0.308m)
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	<b>(1.333m)</b>
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*Altogether better*



# CAPITAL OUTTURN

	Revised Base Budget 2020/21 £'000	Q3 Outturn (Apr-Dec)  £'000	Variance Over/ (Under)  £'000
Environmental Services	4,268	4,268	0
Technical Services	34,692	34,692	0
Community Protection	31	31	0
Partnerships / Comm Engagement	4,723	4,723	0
Culture, Sport & Tourism	3,189	3,189	0
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>46,903</b>	<b>46,903</b>	<b>0</b>

*Altogether better*



ANY QUESTIONS?

*Altogether better*



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

**19 March 2020**

**Quarter Three, 2020/21**

**Performance Management Report**



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**Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources (Interim)**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide.

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To present progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework.

**The impact of COVID-19**

- 2 During 2020, a highly infectious coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) causing the respiratory disease COVID-19 spread rapidly across the world and led to the declaration of a global pandemic<sup>1</sup>.
- 3 To contain the virus, minimise deaths and prevent our health and social care systems being overwhelmed, significant restrictions to our normal way of life, travel and business have been put in place.
- 4 Increased local restrictions were introduced in County Durham and six neighbouring authorities at the end of September and the whole North East region was placed into the high alert category when the national three tier system was introduced for England in mid-October. At the beginning of November, we entered a second national lockdown (for four weeks) in response to a second wave of infections. When lockdown was lifted, the North East region moved to the very high alert category of the national three tier system. However, as infection rates rapidly increased due to the emergence of a more transmissible strain of the virus, the three tier system was extended to include a stay at home category – most of the country, including the North East region, was moved to this category. More recently, in January 2021, we entered a third national lockdown.

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<sup>1</sup> On 11 March 2020 by the [World Health Organisation](https://www.who.int/)

- 5 There was positive news at the beginning of December when the UK medicines regulator approved the first COVID-19 vaccine and the government started rolling out a [national vaccination programme](#). Two more vaccines were subsequently approved in December.
- 6 The pandemic continues to impact on council services and our ways of working. We are continuing in our public health role and are working in partnership with other agencies on the local resilience forum (covering both County Durham and Darlington) to protect our communities and support those affected by the pandemic. We are also developing plans for future recovery.
- 7 The COVID-19 surveillance dashboard can be accessed [here](#).

## **Performance Reporting**

- 8 This performance report is structured around the three externally focused results-based ambitions of [the County Durham Vision 2035](#) alongside a fourth 'excellent council' theme contained within our [Council Plan<sup>2</sup>](#). It also includes an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on council services, our staff and residents.

## **Connected Communities – Sustainable Communities focus**

- 9 Overall environmental cleanliness levels remain good (based on a sample survey) and reflect the targeted initiatives put in place to improve our local environment. Although fly-tipping incidents increased during the first national lockdown when our Household Waste Recycling Centres were closed, levels have now returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- 10 Throughout the 12 months ending 30 September 2020, due to people spending more time in their homes, we collected more than 7,000 additional tonnes of household waste compared to the previous year. However, the proportion recycled has reduced. This is in part due to the closure of the recycling markets, which have now reopened, earlier in the year and we expect recycling levels will soon return to normal.
- 11 We are progressing towards becoming carbon neutral by 2050 with carbon levels that are now almost half the 2008 baseline. We are expecting a further significant reduction for 2020/21, partly due to the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions which closed businesses, reduced levels of road traffic and encouraged more people to stay at home.
- 12 Having reduced since 2012, our road maintenance backlog is now broadly in line with other local authorities – although an issue remains with unclassified roads, the severe winter of 2017/18 resulted in a deteriorating condition which is worse than the national average. A

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<sup>2</sup> approved by full council October 2020

programme of resurfacing works for both footways and street lighting columns which have reached their end of service life is in place.

### **Risk Management**

- 13 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects.
- 14 There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this ambition.

### **Recommendation**

- 15 That Environment and Sustainable Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter three performance, the impact of COVID-19 on performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic.

### **Author**

Jenny Haworth

Tel: 03000 268071

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Finance**

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

### **Consultation**

Not applicable.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

### **Climate Change**

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable.

### **Crime and Disorder**

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

### **Staffing**

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable.

### **Risk**

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable.



# Durham County Council Performance Management Report

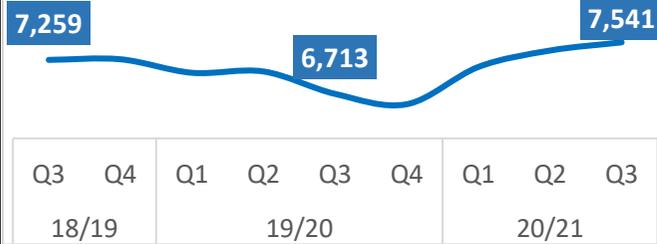
## Quarter Three, 2020/21



# CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

## a) How clean and tidy is my local environment?

No. reported and responded to fly-tipping incidents (12 month rolling trend)



### Hotspots

- Bishop Auckland
- Shildon
- Craghead
- South Moor

Mostly household waste

During quarter 3

7 cameras deployed

0 incidents caught on CCTV

475 further investigations

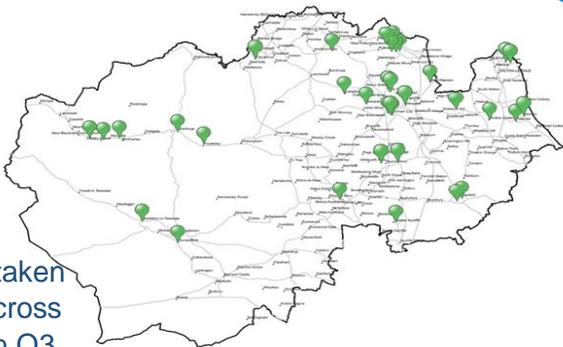
2 prosecutions  
13 FPNs  
5 vehicle seizures

### Community Action Team

- Horden – 366 issues of concern identified
- Shildon - next focus

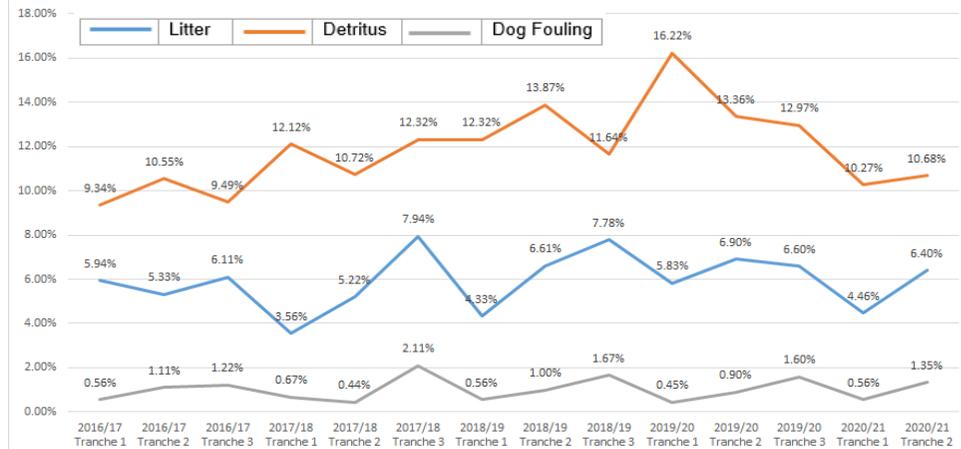


Find & Fix works undertaken at 34 sites across the county in Q3



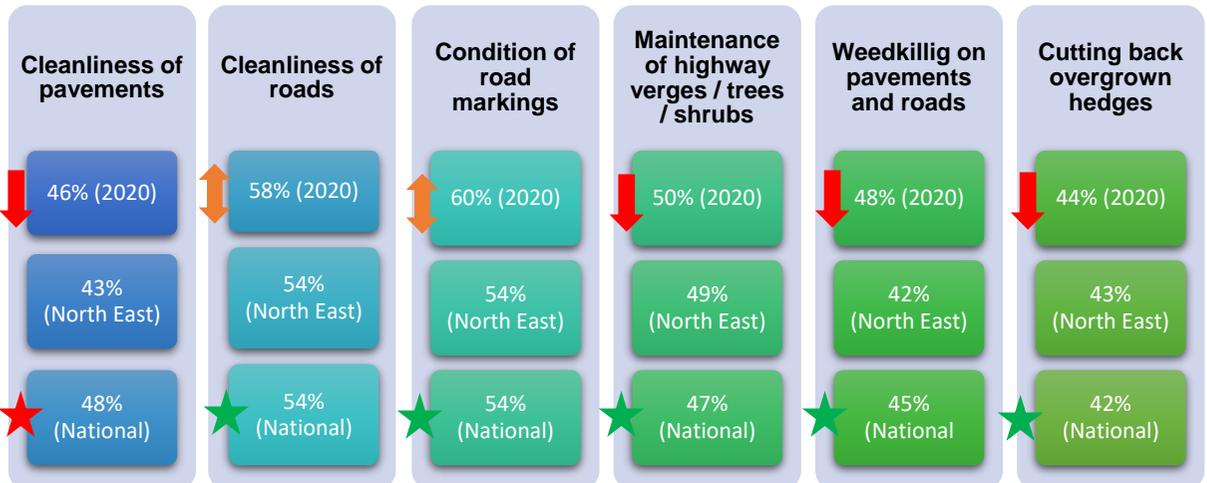
### Environmental Cleanliness

% relevant land/highways assessed as having deposits that fall below an acceptable



visual survey 3 times a year (3 tranches) - each tranche involves surveying 900 50m transects of varying land types across the county

### National Highways and Transport Survey (NHT) 2020 Satisfaction with...



## **Connected Communities - Sustainability**

- 1 The ambition of Connected Communities – Sustainability is linked to the following key questions:
  - (a) How clean and tidy is my local environment?
  - (b) Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?
  - (c) How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

### **How clean and tidy is my local environment?**

- 2 Although the number of fly-tipping incidents in 2020 was 12% higher than in 2019, most of the increase occurred between April and June when Household Waste Recycling Centres were closed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The number of incidents returned to pre-COVID-19 levels between October and December. To deter fly-tipping during 2020, almost 2,000 further investigations were completed, which resulted in 38 Fixed Penalty Notices and the seizure of 15 vehicles.
- 3 During quarter three, our Find and Fix Teams were active across 34 sites undertaking work such as pruning, removing and planting of trees and shrubs, removing graffiti, painting benches and play equipment, replacing/repairing bins, repairing/removing/replacing fencing, repairing steps, and clearing general vegetation and weeds.
- 4 During the same period, our Community Action Team was working in Horden looking at housing standards, management of privately rented properties, empty properties, rubbish accumulations and anti-social behaviour. 366 issues of concern were identified and the team served 311 legal notices. Works will continue in the area through the Make Every Adult Matter and Safer Streets projects.

(b) Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?

**On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)**

- 37 vehicle charging points installed in Chester-le-Street, Consett, Seaham and Stanley.
- 10 more to be installed in Stanhope
- A further 50 will be delivered across the county working in partnership with parish councils.

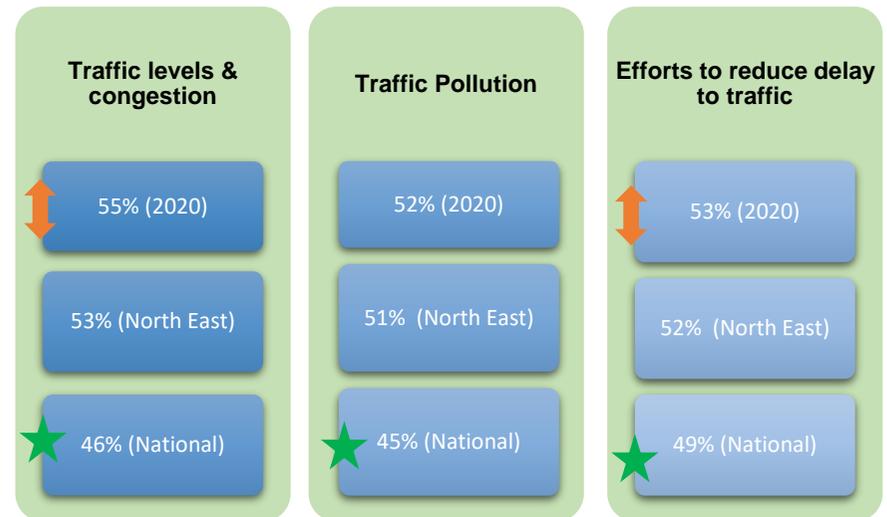


**Scaling On-Street Charging Infrastructure Project (SOSCI)**

100 charge point locations have been requested by residents across the county in partnership with Innovate UK.

**National Highways and Transport Survey (NHT) 2020**

Satisfaction with...



Phase 1 of EV charging infrastructure completed at DCC sites. Phase 2 to be developed to reflect forecasted fleet requirements

85.7% of all fleet and hire vehicles meet Euro 6 emission standards

Proportion of EV in fleet has increased to 1.3%

**Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP2)**  
(Oct-Dec)

- 26 businesses engaged
- 10 grant offers accepted (28 to date)
- 239.5 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> saved by installing a mixture of LED lighting, energy efficient heating and compressors in the premises

## **Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?**

- 5 We have successfully reduced carbon emissions by 47% from the 2008 baseline and are now working towards a 70% reduction by 2024/25<sup>3</sup>. A further significant reduction is expected for 2020/21, partly due to COVID-19 restrictions, the details of which will be included in the year-end report.
- 6 During quarter three, we completed the LED lighting replacement programme (phase one), installed LED stage lights at the Gala Theatre and replaced an oil boiler with an air source heat pump at Annfield Plain Waste Transfer Station.
- 7 We also completed phase one of the electric vehicle charging infrastructure programme at DCC sites. Phase two is to be developed in line with forecasted fleet requirements.
- 8 Having achieved silver accreditation in the Investors in the Environment scheme, we are now putting in place a new Environmental Management system and policy.
- 9 During quarter three, we shortlisted 25 entries to the 2020 Environment Awards. The event, which is scheduled to take place virtually on 19 February, will be broadcast on the Council's YouTube site.
- 10 We have provided funding to help revitalise local green spaces and combat climate change through tree planting. Community groups, parish councils, schools and individuals can apply for a grant (up to £150) until February 2021.
- 11 21 applicants had received a combined total just over £2,500 (86% of the budget) as at 31 December.

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<sup>3</sup> For more details on targets can be found at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/4487/The-council-s-carbon-footprint>

# CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

Page 142

## c) How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

**39.0%** household waste reused, recycled or composted\*

↓ **2.0pp** on same period last year

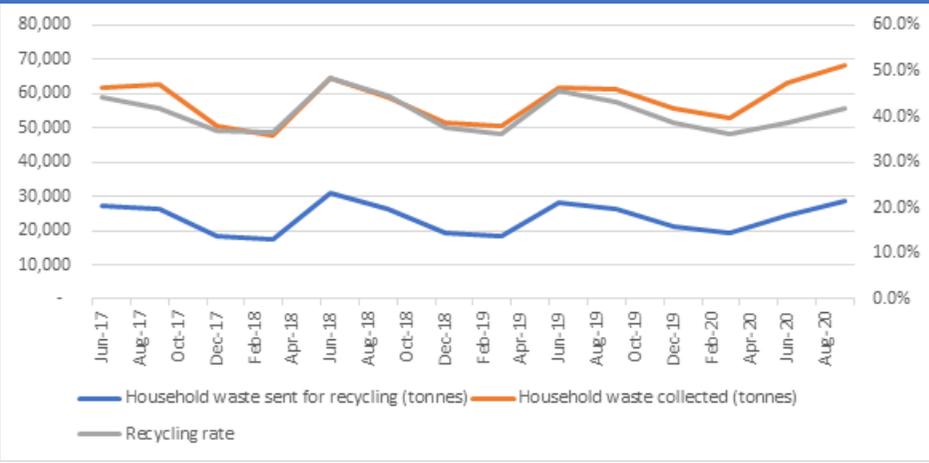
**93.5%** diverted from landfill\*

↓ **2.7pp** on same period last year

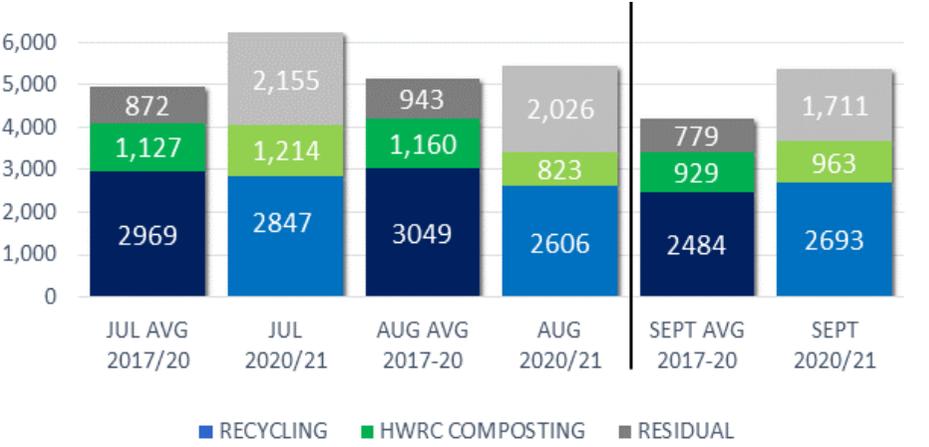
**% of waste collected for recycling identified as contaminated (12 months ending)\***



### Household waste collected and sent for recycling (tonnes)



### Household Waste Recycling Centre Tonnages (average 3 years) Q2 data Jul-Sep 2017-20 vs Jul-Sep 2020-21



**65,328**  
garden waste sign ups  
(Jan-Dec 2020)  
6% increase on last year

**20,133**  
bulky waste collections  
(Apr-Dec 2020),  
3% increase on last year

\*Waste data is reported a quarter in arrears, so the latest reported data is 30-Sep-20

## How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

- 12 In January 2021, Stainton Grove Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) achieved national recognition at the Awards For Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management. Judges were impressed with the innovation and creativity of the newly refurbished site which boasts a trade waste facility and a re-use shop. The site, alongside our Single Use Plastic project, was shortlisted for an award. The awards took place in January and Stainton Grove HWRC was 'highly commended' in the Recycling Facility of the Year category.
- 13 The quantity and type of household waste collected from kerbside continues to be impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Latest data (July-September 2020) shows a 15% increase in tonnages against the 3-year average for that time of year. The increase coincides with COVID-19 restrictions which encourage people to stay at home.
- 14 Although more household waste has been collected and a greater tonnage has been sent for recycling, the proportion of household waste recycled has reduced by two percentage points compared to the same period last year. However, glass tonnage sent for recycling continues to surpass the three-year average with latest data showing a 27% increase.
- 15 Although there has been an improvement in the HWRC's landfill diversion rate following the re-opening of recyclable markets and increased capacity within the refuse system, it remains below the 3-year average of 89%, with a rate of 76%.
- 16 Challenges within the market and resource issues, caused by COVID-19, has resulted in our waste contracts being extended. MRF and haulage contracts have been extended to March 2022 and the HWRC contract to March 2023. The residual contract, which is in partnership with seven other North East local authorities, is progressing well and procurement is expected to be completed by January 2022.

## Key Performance Indicators – Data Tables

Page 14

There are two types of performance indicators throughout this document:

- (a) Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
- (b) Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and/or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

A guide is available which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources for the 2020/21 corporate indicator set. This is available to view either internally from the intranet or can be requested from the Strategy Team at [performance@durham.gov.uk](mailto:performance@durham.gov.uk)

### KEY TO SYMBOLS

	Direction of travel	Benchmarking	Performance against target
<b>GREEN</b>	Same or better than comparable period	Same or better than comparable group	Meeting or exceeding target
<b>AMBER</b>	Worse than comparable period (within 2% tolerance)	Worse than comparable group (within 2% tolerance)	Performance within 2% of target
<b>RED</b>	Worse than comparable period (greater than 2%)	Worse than comparable group (greater than 2%)	Performance >2% behind target

### National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, for example educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

### North East Benchmarking

The North East figure is the average performance from the authorities within the North East region, i.e. County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at [performance@durham.gov.uk](mailto:performance@durham.gov.uk)

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

### How clean and tidy is my local environment?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Comparison to						Data updated this quarter
				Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	
95	% of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level	6.4	Sep-Nov 2020	Tracker	6.9					Yes
				N/a	GREEN					
96	% of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level	10.68	Sep-Nov 2020	Tracker	13.36					Yes
				N/a	GREEN					
97	% of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of dog fouling that fall below an acceptable level	1.35	Sep-Nov 2020	Tracker	0.9					Yes
				N/a	GREEN					
98	Number of fly-tipping incidents	7,541	2020	Tracker	6,713					Yes
				N/a	RED					

\*not directly comparable

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

### Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Comparison to						Data updated this quarter
				Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	
99	% reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions in County Durham (carbon neutral by 2050)	55.2	2018	Tracker	54					No
				N/a	GREEN					
Page 145 200	% reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from local authority operations compared to the 2008/09 baseline, 70% by 2025	51	2019/20	Tracker	47					No
				N/a	GREEN					

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

### How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Comparison to						Data updated this quarter
				Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	
101	% of municipal waste diverted from landfill	93.5	Oct 2019-Sept 2020	95 <b>RED</b>	96.2 <b>RED</b>	89.2 <b>GREEN</b>	92.9 <b>GREEN</b>		2018/19	Yes
102	% of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted	39.0	Oct 2019-Sept 2020	Tracker N/a	41.0 <b>RED</b>	42.7 <b>RED</b>	35.1 <b>GREEN</b>		2018/19	Yes

### Other additional performance indicators

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

### Is it easy to travel around the county?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Comparison to						Data updated this quarter
				Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	
110	% of A roads where maintenance is recommended	3.0	2019	Tracker N/a	2.6 <b>RED</b>	3.38 <b>GREEN</b>	1.92 <b>GREEN</b>		2019	Yes
111	% of B roads where maintenance is recommended	3.3	2019	Tracker N/a	4.7 <b>GREEN</b>	4.57 <b>GREEN</b>	2.83 <b>GREEN</b>		2019	Yes
112	% of C roads where maintenance is recommended	4.3	2019	Tracker N/a	3.7 <b>RED</b>	4.57 <b>GREEN</b>	2.83 <b>GREEN</b>		2019	Yes
113	% of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended	21.3	2019	Tracker N/a	21.0 <b>AMBER</b>	15.08 <b>RED</b>	16.25 <b>RED</b>		2019	Yes

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

**19 March 2021**

**Refresh of the Work  
Programme**



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**Report of Paul Darby, Interim Corporate Director of Resources**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

None

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ESE OSC) with the opportunity to review and refresh the work programme for 2021/2022.

**Executive summary**

- 2 The ESC OSC reviews its work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan and is set in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035 three ambitions of:
  - More and Better Jobs
  - People Live Long and Independent Lives; and
  - Connected Communities.
- 3 The report (paragraphs 10-13) provides information for members to note activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21 and enables discussion to suggest areas for review activity or agenda items to be included in the committee's work programme for 2021/2022.

**Recommendations**

- 4 The ESCOSC is recommended to:

- a) Note the proposed ESCOSC work programme in relation to the current Council Plan 2020 – 2023. (copy attached at appendix 2)
- b) Note that a further report detailing the ESCOSC work programme for 2021/2022 will be submitted at the first meeting of the 2021/2022 municipal year.

## **Background**

- 5 The current overview and scrutiny committees' work programmes focus on the priority areas identified within the context of the:
  - Council Plan
  - Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions
  - County Durham Vision for 2035
  - Partnership plans and strategies
  - Performance and budgetary control data
  - Changes in government legislation.
- 6 In October 2019, public, private and voluntary sector bodies that make up the County Durham Partnership jointly agreed a Vision for County Durham 2035. This vision was based on a strategic assessment of need using our intelligence platform Durham Insight and was developed following extensive consultation with the public. The vision document that was agreed sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve over the next 15 years and is written around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham:
  - More and Better jobs
  - People live long and independent lives
  - Connected communities
- 7 As well as being of key importance to local people's long-term priorities, they remain key strategic ambitions in our response to the COVID-19 crisis, where key impacts relate to employment, health and wellbeing, and communities.

## **Council Plan 2020 - 2023**

- 8 The Council Plan is the primary corporate planning document for the county council and details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Vision for County Durham 2035 together with its own change agenda. It aims to provide a readable and accessible summary for Members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main programmes of work that we will undertake over the coming three years to help achieve these priorities.
- 9 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around three ambitions which are mentioned above. An additional

ambition of an excellent council has been developed for the Council Plan to capture the corporate initiatives that the council has identified and that it wants to undertake to transform its operations and enable achievement of the ambitions within the vision.

**a) More and Better Jobs**

- A broader experience for residents and visitors to the County
- Fewer People will be affected by Poverty and deprivation in the County

**b) People Live Long and Independent Lives**

- A physical environment that will contribute to good health

**c) Connected Communities**

- Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well used, clean, attractive and safe
- People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities.

## **Current Work Programme**

- 10 During 2020/21, the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee had to prioritise items to come to a reduced number of formal meetings and items to be electronically circulated as briefing reports due to the Coronavirus. However, although there was a reduced number of formal meetings the committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring and overview presentations:

## **Overview Activity**

- **A broader experience for residents and visitors to the County**
  - Stockton to Darlington Railway Bicentennial Celebrations – Briefing Report
  - Heritage Assets
- **Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation in the County**
  - Fuel Poverty
- **A physical environment that will contribute to good health**
  - Walking and Cycling Delivery Plan – Briefing Report
  - Climate Emergency Response Plan – Briefing Note & Formal Meeting

- Carbon Management Plan – Briefing Report
  - Urban Tree Challenge – Briefing Report
  - Heritage Coast and Tourism Offer - Briefing Report
  - Single Use Plastics – Briefing Report
- **Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well used, clean, attractive and safe**
    - Air Quality – Briefing Report
    - Community Action Team – Briefing Report
    - Environmental Campaigns
    - Overview of Household Waste Management
    - DCC Fleet – Briefing Report
- **People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities**
    - Gala Theatre – Briefing Report
    - Leisure Centre Transformation – Briefing Report
    - Bereavement Services
    - Libraries and Museums – Briefing Report

## **Performance Monitoring**

- 11 The committee has considered and commented on quarterly budget and performance reports for the Neighbourhoods and Climate Change Service Grouping.

## **Cross Cutting Areas**

- 12 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also considered the following areas which cut across all objectives within the Council Plan:
- Overview of the work of the Environment Partnership – (Covers all objectives and outcomes)
- 13 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also considered the following areas which cut across objectives within the Council Plan or cut across the remit of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees:
- Impact of COVID 19 on the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Service Grouping – invite to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 July and 30 October 2020 and 23 February 2021
  - Visit County Durham, update – invite to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 October 2020
  - Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document and Parking and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document Consultations –

invite to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 February 2021

- Town and Village Centres Programme, update – invite to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 February 2021.
- Transport activity regional and local – Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Briefing report.

## **Areas for consideration in the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

- 14 Paragraphs 10 - 13 of this report identifies the activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21. The committee has identified a number of these areas for further progress updates and will need be included in the committee's work programme for 2021/2022.
- 15 With regard to review activity, members will recall that a review of refuse and recycling collections was identified in the committee's work programme for 2020/21 however this review was put on hold due to the reduction in Overview and Scrutiny meetings resulting from the introduction of virtual meetings by DCC and the additional support required to manage this type of meeting. Members are invited to consider whether this review is undertaken in 2021/22 or whether there are other potential topics for review activity to be undertaken in the 2021/22 work programme.
- 16 The committee will receive a further report at its first meeting of the new municipal year 2021/2022 detailing the proposed work programme for 2021/2022 and subject to both meeting and service capacity will be asked to agree a topic for future review activity following today's discussion.

## **Conclusion**

- 17 The report and attached appendices provide information for members to note and comment on activity undertaken during 2020/2021 and requests suggested areas to consider for potential review activity or agenda items within its 2021/2022 work programme.

## **Background papers**

- None

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	Diane Close	<a href="tel:03000268141">Tel:03000</a> 268141
	Tom Gorman	<a href="tel:03000268027">Tel:03000</a> 268027

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **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**

The committee will continue to include within its work programme future reports detailing progress made in relation to the actions identified within the Climate Emergency Response Plan, DCC's Carbon Management Plan and any further relevant policies developed by the authority.

### **Crime and Disorder**

Not applicable

### **Staffing**

Not applicable

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable

### **Risk**

Not applicable

### **Procurement**

Not applicable



# Durham County Council Council Plan

2020-2023



## Executive Summary

County Durham is a dynamic place, used to overcoming challenges and reinventing itself. Recently, the council and partners agreed a vision for County Durham for 2035 following extensive consultation with our residents. Over 30,000 responses helped shape a vision that people recognise. This is to **create more and better jobs, help people live long and independent lives and support communities to be well connected and supportive of each other**. Our purpose holds to deliver on these ambitions against a context of COVID-19. This plan sets out how we will achieve this.

We want to create **more and better jobs** by supporting businesses emerging from lockdown back to stability and help to rebuild our economy. We are developing a pipeline of projects and investment plans; our roadmap to help stimulate economic recovery. We will create major employment sites across the county, cementing our position as a premier place in the region to do business. Employability support programmes will be developed to help people back into employment or to start their own business. As young people return to our schools and colleges, we will ensure that they receive a good education and training to equip them with the skills they need to access opportunities of today and the future. We will help our tourism and hospitality sector to recover as a great visitor destination with a cultural offer which will help stimulate the local economy.

We want our residents to **live long and independent lives** and remain in good health for many years to come. Surveillance, early identification and outbreak management are vital in controlling the virus, the most immediate threat to the health of our residents. We want to tackle some of the mental health challenges that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. There have been positive impacts on the environment since lockdown began. The council is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050 and making our county more conducive to physical exercise to benefit the environment and our health. We have a strong track record of health and social care integration in Durham. We want to build on the financial and practical support we have provided to the care sector during the pandemic by ensuring we have a high-quality care market that is sustainable in the future.

We want our **communities to be well connected and supportive of each other**. As town and village centres reopen, we will help them to be vibrant and accessible places that are well used, clean, attractive and safe. We will support the most vulnerable in our communities, particularly those socially isolating, shielding or adversely affected financially.

These ambitions will be supported by a well-run council with a good grip on its performance and finances and which makes best use of our workforce and technology to provide the best possible service we can for our residents.

Our ambitions are fully supported by a delivery plan at the end of this document.



Leader of the Council, Councillor Simon Henig  
and Chief Executive, John Hewitt

## A Vision for County Durham

In October 2019, public, private and voluntary sector bodies that make up the County Durham Partnership jointly agreed a [Vision for County Durham 2035](#). This vision was based on a strategic assessment of need using our intelligence platform [Durham Insight](#) and was developed following extensive consultation with the public. Residents, businesses and specific interest groups such as children and young people and people with a disability were asked what they would like to see in a new vision for the county and their views were incorporated into our final vision. The vision document that was agreed sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve over the next 15 years and is written around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham:

**More and better jobs**

**People live long and independent lives**

**Connected communities**

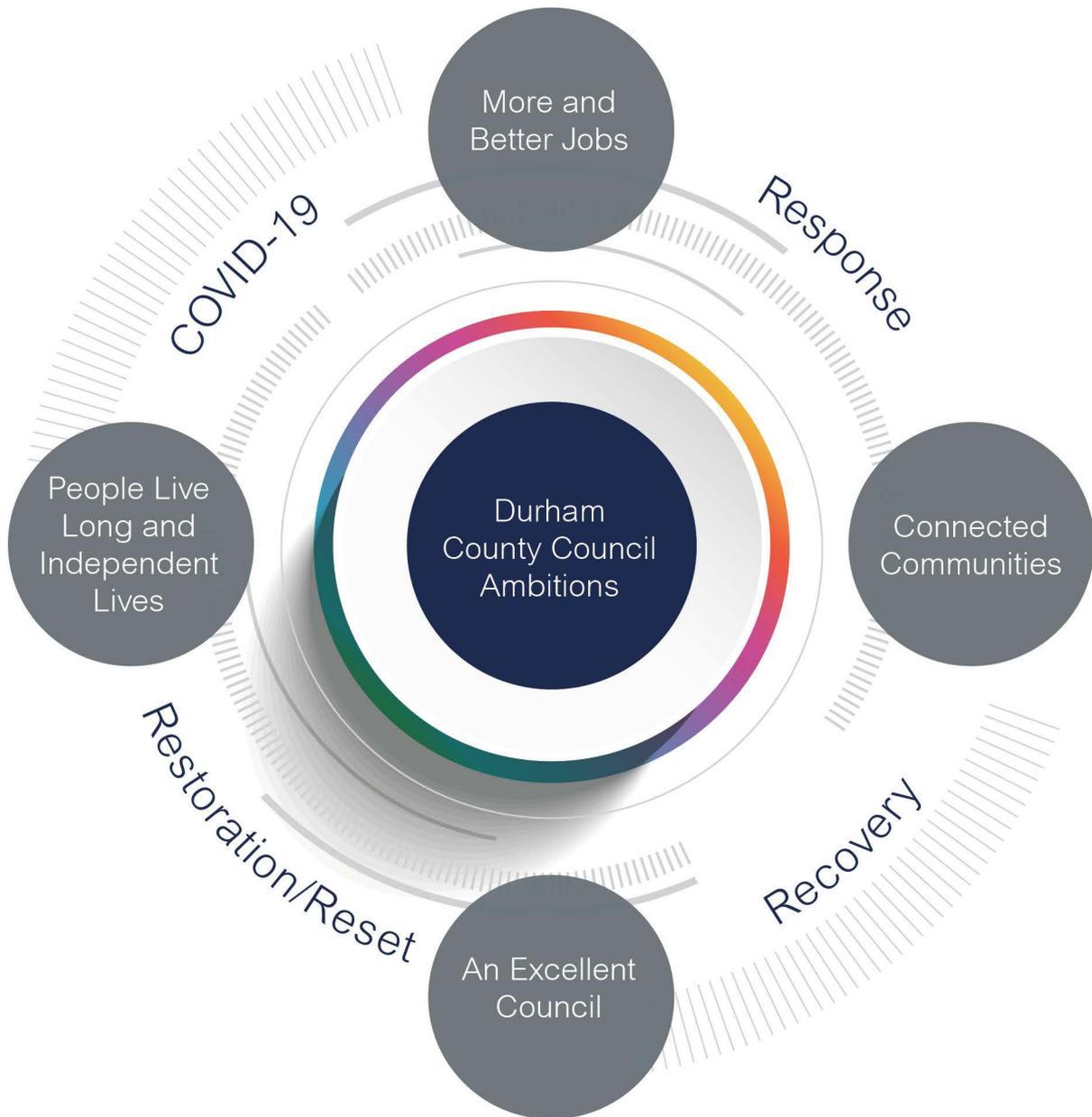
These three themes were developed following extensive public consultation with almost 30,000 pieces of consultation evidence having fed into the development of the vision. As well as being of key importance to local people's long-term priorities, they remain key strategic ambitions in our response to the COVID-19 crisis, where key impacts relate to employment, health and wellbeing, and communities. This document sets out the contributions that Durham County Council will make over the next three years to help achieve those ambitions.

Durham County Council has already delivered £242 million of savings and lost just under 3,000 posts since the introduction of the Government's austerity programme in 2011 and these savings are forecast to exceed £280 million by 2024/25. Despite this, we will continue to aspire to work with partners to achieve our shared Vision for County Durham, which reflects the views of our residents and communities. The unprecedented financial challenges that we face, and uncertain times ahead mean that like many public sector bodies, we will have to consider delivering some services differently if we are to continue providing them at all. Therefore, in addition to the three ambitions set out in the Vision for County Durham, this plan contains a fourth ambition capturing our own organisational transformation agenda and this ambition is to be an excellent council.

This Council Plan aligns to both the council's Medium-Term Financial Plan which sets out how our priorities will be resourced and the County Durham Plan which is the spatial representation of our ambitions contained within the Council Plan around housing, jobs and the environment as well as the transport, schools and healthcare to support it.

## Durham County Council Ambitions

This document sets out the strategic framework for all of our plans and strategies. It sets out the council's contribution to achieving the Vision for County Durham as well as our own improvement agenda and the major programmes of work that Durham County Council will be undertaking over the medium-term to recover from COVID-19.



## Planning Assumptions

A whole range of factors will directly influence the delivery of this plan. The major issues are identified here.

Clearly, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) will dominate the planning and delivery of our services over the lifetime of this plan and frame everything that we do to support our recovery in County Durham and achieve our vision. Our ongoing response to the global COVID-19 outbreak, how we support recovery of business and the economy and our communities and the restoration of council services features strongly during the period covered by this plan. It affects our local economy, the health and wellbeing of our residents, our communities and the delivery of services by the council. The council is playing a key role in coordinating the response to the pandemic through its public health function and as a first responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. We want to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities such as older people and those with pre-existing conditions receive support and are best protected. We also want to ensure that we continue to provide essential services in the event of a local outbreak and deliver a range of programmes to help support business and individuals financially affected by the crisis.

Durham is a large and diverse county with a very dispersed settlement pattern which creates specific issues. A large proportion of the county, particularly to the west of the A68 is rural and has some of the sparsest population densities in the country. It is important to people that rural communities remain sustainable whilst maintaining those characteristics that make them distinctive. The particular challenges of rural communities are referenced throughout this Council Plan and rural proofing will be a major consideration in any policies that we develop.

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing humankind today. Whilst it is a global issue, there is a lot that can be done locally to respond to this challenge. Durham County Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. Our targets are to reduce carbon emissions as an organisation by 80% (from a 2008/09 baseline) by 2030 and contribute towards and work with others to achieve a carbon neutral county by 2050. These targets and the need to mitigate against the effects of climate change through a commitment to a low carbon future and a challenging action plan underpin the assumptions made in this document.

Everyone is justifiably proud of our beautiful countryside and coast. A large part of the county is of significant landscape value including the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (also a designated UNESCO Global Geopark) and the Durham Heritage Coast. Some parts of our county support unique combinations of plant and animal species. Our natural environment contributes significantly to our wellbeing and quality of life. Many feel that we need to commit to protecting this for future generations. These views have been incorporated into our plans.

The pace of change is accelerating. New technologies such as artificial intelligence and developing new insights from data have the potential to transform the global economy and business models across many sectors, automating processes, achieving efficiencies, enhancing service user experience and driving better decision-making. The county is well placed to develop new business opportunities in this area. The council is also looking to provide more effective services using technology whilst having regard to the ethical issues that they pose.

The UK's exit from the European Union (EU) will affect the whole country over the lifetime of this plan. County Durham benefits significantly from EU funding which is used to develop infrastructure and services, support economic and social cohesion, businesses, agriculture and the environment. The Government has announced a UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will replace farming subsidies and EU structural funding after Brexit. However, neither the terms of our future trading relationship with the EU or details of how the Shared Prosperity Fund will operate are known. This plan does not reflect any potential effects from the changing relationship with the EU or new government funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund. Our plans may need to be revised in the event of any changes having a significant impact on our future work programmes. There are a number of uncertainties around local government finance with a Comprehensive Spending Review which will set the quantum of funding available to local government and the Fair Funding Review which will affect the distribution of grant funding between local authorities and business rates retention. Assumptions around these uncertainties are built into our Medium-Term Financial Plan.

## Equality Objectives

It was apparent during the consultation on the County's Vision that residents have a tremendous sense of belonging and are rightly proud of their communities and the county. Whilst many visitors to the county have commented on the friendliness of its people, there have been a small number of examples where people have been less welcoming. More integrated communities where everyone can feel safe and included, regardless of their background or characteristics, was seen as important and in the tradition of tolerance and acceptance of the North East people and this thinking has helped shape our plans. Local authorities have a duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and promote good working relations between people. Following further consultation on our vision with a number of groups, the following equality objectives have been developed to help us achieve our vision and comply with our duties.

### **We will improve employment opportunities for disabled people**

As a Disability Confident Leader, we will improve recruitment and retention rates of disabled people within the council and work with businesses locally to improve disability employment rates countywide and through our approach to procurement.

### **We will build inclusive communities**

To connect our communities and improve levels of tolerance and integration for our diverse communities we will support better partnership working on equality. This work will support a series of events that foster good relations between groups.

### **We will build an inclusive and welcoming employee culture**

Through our transformation programme we will develop our culture to be welcoming and accepting of all, improving our staff engagement and support through the development of staff networks and improving how we collect, monitor, analyse and utilise staff diversity data.

## Monitoring

We will continue to monitor council performance against a comprehensive set of performance indicators to Cabinet and scrutiny committees on a quarterly basis. Key performance indicators are included within this plan for illustrative purposes. Progress against key programmes of work included in this plan will be reported every six months. The plan will be subject to an annual review process.

## Council Plan Ambitions and Objectives

### COVID-19: Response, Restoration/Reset, Recovery

#### More and Better Jobs

- Delivery of a range of employment sites across the county
- A strong, competitive economy where County Durham is a premier place in the North East to do business
- A broader experience for residents and visitors to the county
- Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment
- Helping all people into rewarding work
- Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county

#### People Live Long and Independent Lives

- Children and young people will enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional wellbeing
- Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes
- A physical environment that will contribute to good health
- Promotion of positive behaviours
- Better integration of health and social care services
- People will be supported to live independently for as long as possible by delivering more homes to meet the needs of older and disabled people
- We will tackle the stigma and discrimination of poor mental health and building resilient communities

#### Connected Communities

- All children and young people will have a safe childhood
- Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock
- Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe
- People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities
- Communities will come together and support each other
- Delivery of new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents

#### An Excellent Council

- Our resources will be managed effectively
- We will create a workforce for the future
- We will design our services with service users
- We will use data and technology more effectively
- We will actively performance manage our services

## Context: COVID-19 Response, Restoration/Reset and Recovery

The council's approach to the COVID-19 pandemic is threefold around response, restoration and recovery. As lockdown was announced, then a rapid response was required to support businesses and communities through the immediate crisis and to communicate public health messages to the people of County Durham.

The principles by which we will manage our response, restoration and recovery approach will be:

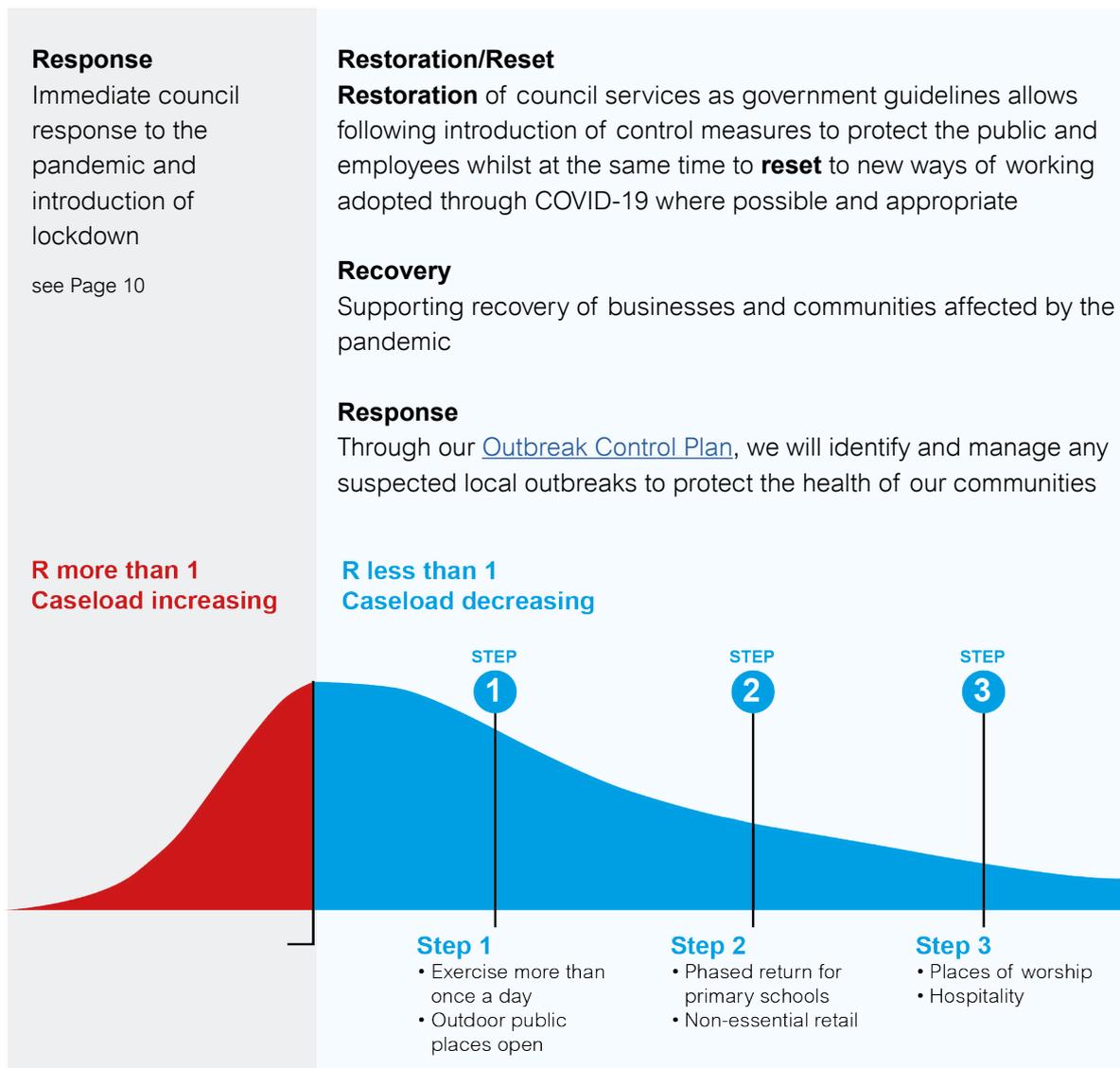
1. Close surveillance and management of the COVID-19 pandemic in County Durham;
2. Being responsive to where we are in our journey to recovery;
3. Taking a dynamic response to control the virus and to support businesses and communities;
4. Working in partnership with other statutory agencies on our Local Resilience Forum to coordinate our efforts.

As lockdown measures are relaxed, then it is anticipated that there will be an increase in cases of COVID-19. Together with partners, we have developed a COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan which sets out how a local outbreak of the virus will be identified and managed jointly by the council and Public Health England's North East Health Protection Team.

As the country takes a phased approach to the lifting of lockdown regulations, the council will follow government guidelines and restore council services that were previously restricted or suspended whilst at the same time reset some services to new ways of working adopted through the pandemic where possible and appropriate. Service restoration and the reopening of buildings will follow specific government guidance, a thorough assessment of risk and the introduction of necessary control measures to help protect the public and our employees. Innovative approaches to service provision that have either been developed in response to or enhanced because of the pandemic, such as online services, will be considered to see how they can transform our offer and culture of working in the future and reduce our environmental impact.

The pandemic will impact on businesses. We will need to closely monitor the economy and coordinate local, regional and national interventions to best support the business sector. Understanding the impact of the pandemic on our rural, urban and more deprived areas will be a core part of the council's recovery work and will inform the council's Poverty Action Strategy and how related council services respond. We will reshape our services to vulnerable groups such as older people and those suffering from poor mental health and those that are feeling lonely and isolated.

# COVID-19 Strategy: Response, Restoration/Reset and Recovery



## COVID-19: Council Response So Far



Provided over **18,000** households with an additional **£3.6 million** of support through our Council Tax Hardship Fund



Through smart use of ICT, enabled remote working for **5,000 staff**. Redeployed over **500 staff** into priority service areas



Allocated over **2,700 laptops** to disadvantaged children



Allocated an extra **£100,000** to each of our **14 Area Action Partnerships and an extra £100,000** for countywide projects to help community and voluntary groups adversely affected by the pandemic



Continue to be one of the few authorities in the country that offer up to **100 per cent discount** on council tax bills



Applied business rates reductions to over **2,400 businesses** totalling nearly **£51 million**



Suspended debt recovery for individuals in arrears and offered **three-month rent referrals** to business tenants



Supported over **9,600 businesses** with total COVID-19 related grant payments of around **£104 million**



Developed a virtual hub, County Durham Together, helping over **10,000 vulnerable residents** with access to essential services



Invested an **extra £1 million** in our Welfare Assistance Scheme providing short-term support to people in crisis



Over **£15m additional funding** given to adult social care providers and over 2 million items of PPE provided to care and primary health sector organisations



Continued to provide a range of services remotely such as employability sessions and our Library Online service

## COVID-19 Plan: Response, Restoration/Reset and Recovery

Our COVID-19 plan sets out how the council's future plan to manage restoration of council services and recovery of daily life in the county whilst helping us achieve our long-term vision set against national recovery strategy, government guidelines and our public health duty to protect our residents.

<b>Response</b> Response to the COVID-19 pandemic and outbreak control	<b>Restoration/Reset</b> Restart services and reset to new ways of working adopted through COVID-19 where possible and appropriate	<b>Recovery</b> Recovery of business and communities in County Durham
Coordinate the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic	Review the approach to care home commissioning, taking into account changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure a sustainable and high-quality care market	Assess the economic implications of the pandemic and assist businesses to restart and grow the economy in County Durham
Protect the health of local residents from COVID-19 and reduce any onwards transmission from the disease	Development of the County Durham Together community hub to promote and enable easier access to preventative services available in local communities	Provide employability support schemes and a programme to help alleviate financial hardship suffered by residents
	Assess risks, protect and support public and employees	Support mental health and wellbeing of residents
	Restoration of council services that have been interrupted by the pandemic	Provide additional support to community groups adversely affected
		Deliver a programme to support individuals, households and communities
Develop data and intelligence sharing and reporting arrangements to focus effort on restoration, recovery and response		

### County Vision

- More and Better Jobs
- Long and Independent Lives
- Connected Communities
- An Excellent Council

## Ambition: More and Better Jobs

We will continue our economic renaissance and ensure that people can enjoy a thriving economy with **more and better jobs**, and reduced levels of poverty and deprivation. We will build on our existing portfolio of businesses and will support the use of low carbon technologies and renewable energy.

Our county has some of the most beautiful countryside and coastal landscapes in Britain, a fascinating history, a wealth of attractions and a regular events programme. We have made great strides to improve our tourist economy. Our aim is to have Durham widely recognised as a leading centre for culture and the arts, with a range of experiences that match and exceed the best offered in the country.

Several of our villages were developed around collieries and homes which were built to house the population boom at the peak of coal production. Some of these communities have suffered a decline following the demise of these industries. We want to work with communities to address the underlying causes of deprivation and poverty.

## Achievements

- The employment rate in County Durham has steadily improved since a mid-recession low point in 2015 when it stood at 66.6% and rose to 74.1% in June 2019, just 1.6 percentage points behind the national average.
- Outstanding success in attracting county-wide private and public investment in enterprise and tourism.
- £25 million invested on the Jade Enterprise Zone and junction.
- £178 million invested by Citrus on Integra 61 warehousing facility at Bowburn, including facilitating internet giant, Amazon and £5 million junction works.
- £271 million has been invested in one of Europe's leading technology parks at NETPark, Sedgfield delivered by Business Durham.
- £14 million has been invested at Forrest Park in Aycliffe preparing for further investment of over £140 million.
- £90 million spent in Barnard Castle by Glaxo Smith Kline on a new manufacturing facility.
- Almost £1.5 billion in Durham City, £750 million by the University and over £240 million on the Riverside and other projects.
- The first two phases of the development of the Aykley Heads strategic employment site have the potential to create 4,000 jobs with an estimated 1,800 jobs being supported in the construction of the park.
- £100 million invested through Project Genesis in Consett.
- £17 million spent at Beamish Museum on the 1950s town, upland farm and Georgian coaching inn.
- Lumiere in Durham, the biggest light festival in Europe, celebrated its 10th anniversary with 37 separate artworks attracting thousands of visitors and boosting the local economy in Durham City.
- Successful food festivals held at Bishop Auckland and Seaham.

## Ambition: More and Better Jobs

### Issues to address

- The lockdown will adversely affect both local businesses and residents financially.
- Increased uncertainty and lower confidence make the size and duration of an economic downturn unpredictable.
- Businesses and individuals have relied on support arrangements put in place to limit financial impact, but these are only for the short-term and will be phased out.
- The ability of businesses to respond quickly to changes in demand may be limited in the short-term.
- Around 64,000 employments in County Durham have been furloughed and 14,000 of self-employed people have made claims under the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.
- A weaker global economy will reduce export demand and disrupt international supply chains.
- Income levels are low in County Durham. The county is the 42nd most income deprived out of 151 local authorities nationally. Gross disposable household income per head of population in Durham is 77% of the national average.
- The gap between the employment rate for people with a disability compared with those who are not disabled stands at 29 percentage points (June 2020) which is one of the highest differences in the country.
- GCSE results as measured through the average attainment 8 score for the county are below the regional and national average.
- As at October 2020, only 64% of secondary schools in County Durham are rated as good or outstanding.
- 1 in 4 of our school children are on free school meals as at January 2020, which is an indicator of the level of child poverty within the county.
- As at September 2020, 5.8% of 16-17 year olds within County Durham are not in education, employment or training which is above the regional and national average.
- According to the latest figures (2018), an estimated 9.8% of households are in fuel poverty. This is defined as where the householder, after paying fuel costs, would be left with a disposable income which is below the poverty line.
- Day visitors to our county spend an average of £22.07 in the local economy per day whilst overnight visitors will spend an average of £190.27 per trip. Only 8% of visitors will stop overnight within the county.
- Uncertainties around the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, whether the government will secure a favourable trade agreement with the EU and whether the UK ends up leaving on a no deal Brexit is impacting on the national and local economy.

## Ambition: More and Better Jobs

### Approach

The national restrictions introduced as part of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to temporary business closures and employees being furloughed. Priorities for the council are to protect businesses and jobs and to alleviate financial hardship suffered by our residents. The council has introduced a range of measures to support local businesses in the current crisis. The council has also worked hard to ease the pressure on residents suffering financial hardship.

We have developed a COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan to help support businesses being released from lockdown, manage the transition to stabilisation and to rebuild and grow our places, services and industries. We have developed a pipeline of projects which will serve as a roadmap to recovery and deliver investment plans to help rebuild our economy.

We recognise that there will be job losses and that these are anticipated to affect older people and the lower paid, which disproportionately impacts on women and young people. We will monitor changes in employment throughout the county and develop and deliver employability support programmes to help those who have lost their jobs back into employment.

Increasing employment in the county has a significant multiplier effect in terms of its contribution to a range of other quality of life issues such as improving mental and physical health and reducing crime. Our ambition is to create more jobs for our residents. Wages levels in the county lag behind the national average and the gap is widening. We need to address this by attracting high-quality jobs to the area. We want to create the ideal environment for businesses to thrive in the county through ensuring that our workforce and our young people entering the jobs market are equipped with the necessary skills to access the jobs of today and the future. The pipeline of investment projects in the county has never been so high and we want to build on this by further developing our strategic employment sites and supporting key employment sectors.

We will continue to deliver a range of programmes to help people into rewarding work who are finding it difficult to access the jobs market including reskilling our labour force. Our plans will support rural growth whilst preserving the quality of what makes these areas distinctive. Our county has a rich historic and cultural heritage, some enviable world class attractions and beautiful countryside.

We want to continue to develop the visitor economy for County Durham. The historic collapse of heavy industry and the impact that this has had on residents and communities is apparent when we look at some of our communities which have some of the worst indicators of deprivation in the country.

We want to address the gaps in inequality across our county and make sure that no one is left behind and that the benefits of a resurgent economy can be enjoyed by all residents. Further detail of the programmes we plan to implement to ensure that we create **more and better jobs** are provided in our delivery plan.

## Ambition: People Live Long and Independent Lives

Good health is central to people's happiness and has a significant impact on demand for services. Health is determined by several factors including the community we live in, access to a good natural and built environment, high-quality education and jobs and our network of friends and family. Both life expectancy and the number of years a person remains in good health are lower in Durham than in other parts of the country.

The proportion of people with long-term limiting conditions is also higher than national levels. An ageing society will create different demands for products and services including new care technologies and housing models. Central to our plans is to provide a more joined up service for health and social care. We also want to do everything we can with partner organisations to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our residents and prevent mental illness and suicide.

We want all people to lead independent and fulfilling lives and continue to contribute to society.

### Achievements

- Life expectancy has increased by three years for men and two years for women since 2001-02.
- 20,000 fewer people smoke now than in 2012.
- Teenage pregnancies have halved since 2012.
- Effective discharge planning and joint working between health and social care services means that County Durham is one of the best performing areas in the country at delayed transfers of care from hospital.
- We have excellent levels of satisfaction from clients in receipt of adult social care services compared to national figures.
- To date (September 2020), we have turned around the lives of over 5,100 families through our Stronger Families Programme.
- 100% of our maintained nursery education providers are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.
- The tonnage of carbon emissions from council operations has been reduced by 51% since 2008-09.
- The Council has actively worked to eliminate single use plastics from all its operations encouraging over 200 organisations to sign up to our plastics pledge and work to eradicate unnecessary plastics from their business.
- Less than 5% of the household waste that we collect now goes to landfill compared to over 60% in 2008.
- To facilitate greater investment, over 18,000 council houses were transferred to the social housing sector in 2015, one of the largest housing transfers in the country.

## Ambition: People Live Long and Independent Lives

### Issues to address

- The COVID-19 pandemic has led to challenges regarding sustainability within the care home sector.
- The risk of further waves of the virus or a local outbreak which will have major health impacts on vulnerable people and possibly result in the introduction of further restrictions.
- The virus has led to changes in demand for social care services.
- COVID-19 affects more severely those in poor health, those living with excess weight, those who are older, those less economically advantaged and those from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.
- Some environmental improvements in carbon emissions in air quality have occurred during lockdown.
- Life expectancy at birth is 1.4 years lower for males and 1.7 years for females in County Durham compared with the average for England.
- Healthy life expectancy, the number of years a person lives in good health, is around five years lower than national figures and there is a 10-year difference in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived communities in County Durham.
- A quarter of the population in the county will be aged 65+ by 2032.
- One in four children are overweight in reception year rising to over one in three at Year 6 and to two in three in adulthood. These figures are above national levels.
- Levels of women who are still smoking in pregnancy in County Durham is significantly higher than the national average. The rate in Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgfield area is one of the highest in the country.
- Breastfeeding prevalence rates amongst new mothers remain nearly 17 percentage points behind national figures.
- Increased responsibilities, changing needs and reducing government funding are placing greater pressure on our ability to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- The Council has declared a climate emergency and has set an ambitious 80% reduction in carbon emissions from the 2008-09 baseline by 2030 and become carbon neutral by 2050.
- Mental health is a priority. Indicators for hospital admissions for self-harm, suicide rates and patients registered with depression are high.
- We need to diversify the range of older persons' housing provision to meet growing demand from an ageing population and free up larger family accommodation.

## Ambition: People Live Long and Independent Lives

### Approach

A critical issue for the lifetime of this plan is to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak and how it affects our communities and residents. We want to develop our County Durham Together community hub to promote and enable easier access to preventative services available in local communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to challenges regarding sustainability within the care home sector. We also need to review the approach to care home commissioning, taking into account changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim of ensuring a sustainable and high-quality care market.

The county has a legacy of heavy industry and suffers from poor health across a range of measures. We intend to tackle this inequality through a number of programmes across the life course. We aim to support mothers to address tobacco dependency in pregnancy and increase breastfeeding initiation for newborn babies. We will implement a range of measures to tackle oral health inequality in children across the county and improve health protection by increasing take-up of vaccinations in children. We have a range of measures to support children with special educational needs and disabilities to achieve the best possible outcomes.

It is important that our environment is conducive to good physical health. Poor air quality is a major contributor towards early deaths globally. Levels of pollutants are low in the county but there are some hot spots where government standards are exceeded at certain times and we have a plan to reduce these. Climate change caused by carbon emissions is a threat to health and wellbeing. Through the council's Climate Emergency, we plan to become carbon neutral as an organisation by 2050 with an interim target to reduce our carbon emissions by 75% from a 2008-09 baseline by 2025. We recognise that we need to mitigate the effects of climate change that we are already experiencing and have a series of planned flood mitigation works in place. We want to encourage physical exercise in our residents and reduce unnecessary journeys by car. We will promote positive behaviours through becoming a smoke free county and reducing dependency on, and deaths caused by drug and alcohol addiction. We want to improve the mental health of young and old alike and tackle the stigma of mental health. We will provide a more integrated health and social care model and both specialist housing and assistive technologies for older and disabled people to allow people to live more independent lives into their old age.

Further detail of the programmes we plan to implement to ensure that **people live long and independent lives** are provided in our delivery plan.

## Ambition: Connected Communities

### Approach

Our residents are rightly proud of their county. We want to have caring and welcoming communities where everyone is valued, and can help and support each other. We want a county that gives everyone the opportunity to realise their potential.

People want a range and choice of housing which is accessible, well designed and meets their future needs. Our high streets and town centres retain an important place in our society, but they need to adapt to ensure that they remain vibrant, safe and attractive social hubs that people want to use.

People also expect local travel to be convenient, with good-quality direct links between centres of population, to employment locations such as business parks and leisure opportunities. Communities therefore need to be connected by appropriate transport and technological infrastructures.

### Achievements

- Significant investment in increasing workforce capacity both at a managerial and social worker level and effective workforce planning has led to reduced caseloads, better quality and timeliness in children's social care.
- Investment in new IT systems has transformed children's social care performance information available and management oversight has improved compliance in most areas of performance.
- Since 2016, the council in collaboration with a range of partner organisations has played its part in the UK's commitment to support some of the world's most vulnerable refugees and has been recognised nationally as best practice for its resettlement programme.
- A local lettings agency has been established to help secure suitable housing for homeless people and people who find it difficult to access the housing market.
- Durham County Council is only one of two local authorities in the country to achieve the maximum under the Department for Transport's incentive fund in recognition of its efficiency rating and has managed to prioritise and increase investment in its highways.
- The Council invests £3.7 million per year on town centre regeneration, purchasing derelict buildings and land and environmental improvements.
- Over the last 10 years, our Area Action Partnerships have completed over 7,000 community projects, benefiting over 30,000 people and helping to secure over £100 million funding.

## Ambition: Connected Communities

### Issues to address

- One of the biggest impacts on our communities is the COVID-19 pandemic and the range of restrictions that have been introduced by the Government to control the spread of the virus and minimise its impact on health and social care services.
- There has been an increased demand for services provided by voluntary and community sector organisations, just as the sector loses a significant proportion of its revenue.
- County Durham follows the national trend in seeing large increases in demand for children's social care, whilst at the same time, suffering budget cuts in this area.
- Children's social care services in Durham County Council have been judged as 'requires improvement' by Ofsted, although they have recognised that the local authority has taken swift and decisive action to strengthen services. Pace has increased and solid improvements can be seen in many service areas including at the front door and for children in care. They have acknowledged that firm foundations are in place to sustain and build on the improvements made.
- Low house prices have resulted in a high proportion of privately rented accommodation in the county and a need for greater regulation to ensure more consistent standards.
- The national issue of high street decline with the growth of online shopping and major retailers closing stores has affected our town centres.
- Internet sales as a percentage of total retail sales has risen nationally from 2.5% in December 2006 to 26.1% in September 2020. This poses increasing competition to high street shops leading to major changes in our high streets and town centres, the most visible effects are store closures, empty shops and fewer shoppers.
- The highly dispersed settlement pattern in County Durham with over 300 recognised settlements, 21 of which have a population of 5,000 or more, presents a challenge for the provision of transport and public services, particularly in rural areas.
- The county has good north-south transport links with the A1(M) and East Coast Mainline but east-west links are seen as an opportunity for development.

## Ambition: Connected Communities

### Approach

We want people in our communities to feel connected to, and supportive of each other. We want to build on the indomitable spirit of our people and ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities are supported. Whether this be children in need of support, victims of crime, people with a disability or different communities of identity.

The Council has teamed up with charities, local groups and volunteers to help with a range of requests for help through County Durham Together, a virtual hub to help those most at risk from coronavirus and has provided an additional £1.5 million funding to Area Action Partnerships to help residents and businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are developing plans to further integrate health, social and welfare support in a preventative way to help our local communities. This means looking more closely at individuals' and community needs to see where we can improve people's wellbeing and reduce inequalities in our county. We are undertaking a programme to improve social care services provided to children and young people and a range of initiatives to tackle antisocial behaviour in our communities in partnership with the police and others.

Some communities have been blighted by poor housing management practice, so we have plans to raise housing standards in the private rented housing sector and help improve these communities. We want to provide a range of new housing to meet the needs and aspirations of our residents. The design of new development in rural areas will be sympathetic to the environment and reflect local distinctiveness. We aim to deliver more affordable housing. We expect all homes to be connected digitally and for speed and capacity to keep pace with the latest developments. This is the aim of our Digital Durham programme. These issues are particularly acute in our rural areas.

High streets have seen some decline nationally and County Durham is no exception to this. We have developed a programme to regenerate our towns and villages and improve their use, making them a more attractive proposition to visit and spend time in. This includes a range of approaches varying from introduction of free WiFi, changing the mix of retail, leisure and residential use, making our centres more attractive and tackling community safety concerns. Residents and visitors need to be able to travel around our county and get to and from our towns and villages. We have therefore developed a pipeline of infrastructure projects and transport plans to improve accessibility.

Further detail of the programmes we plan to implement to ensure that **our communities are connected and supportive of each other** are provided in our delivery plan.

## Ambition: An Excellent Council

The government's programme of austerity has led to unprecedented reductions in public spending. Technology has also been developing at pace and residents have come to expect that our services will be provided digitally and on a 24/7 basis. This required us to rethink the way in which many of our services are delivered. There is a history of good partnership working in County Durham. In a time when resources are scarce, it is even more important that organisations work more collaboratively and that our efforts are focused on the right things. Working more seamlessly across organisational boundaries and delivering services differently that are designed with residents is at the heart of our ambitions. We need to equip ourselves with the skills to be able to achieve this and develop a workforce for the future. Delivering existing services in different ways and developing new services for the benefit of our residents is both challenging and exciting and something that we need to excel at in order to become recognised as an **excellent council**.

## Achievements

- Durham County Council has delivered £242 million of savings and lost just under 3,000 posts since the introduction of the Government's austerity programme in 2011.
- Durham County Council leads on Digital Durham, a £35 million initiative to transform broadband speeds for residents and business across the North East which has already provided access to fibre broadband to over 105,000 properties.
- Over 100 council services are available digitally and more than half of residents access our services this way.
- The Council has had almost 850 apprenticeship starts since 2017-18. We have 268 people employed in apprenticeship posts and 233 existing staff are accessing the apprenticeship levy to increase their skills.
- The Council holds gold status in the Better Health at Work Award, which recognises the efforts of employers regionally in helping to address health issues of its workforce. We also work with local companies and other organisations to help them achieve the award.
- The Council has 200 trained mental health first aiders and 82 'Time To Change' (mental health) champions.
- The Council has been awarded the Disability Confident Leader status by the Department for Work and Pensions in recognition of its commitment to be a good employer of people with a disability and will support local businesses to become Disability Confident.

## Ambition: An Excellent Council

### Issues to address

- Financial effects of the pandemic on the council in terms of additional expenditure pressures and loss of income are forecast to be around £75 million.
- There have been several changes to the delivery of frontline council services to comply with government regulations and to prioritise essential services. This has included the introduction or expansion of online service delivery.
- It is expected that the council will lose a further £10 million of funding as a result of the Fair Funding Review and that this will be transitioned over a five-year period from 2022/23.
- Anticipated changes to the public health grant apportionment methodology as part of the Fair Funding Review is forecast to result in a loss of £18 million (37%) of the council's public health funding from 2022/23
- Major redeployment of 1,850 staff working at Durham County Hall to the new headquarters in Durham City (1,000 staff) and other strategic sites throughout the county (850 staff)
- Superfast broadband and the national rollout of 5G networks will enable greater digital connectivity for our residents and offer opportunities for new digital services.
- Durham County Council has an ageing workforce with 42% of its staff at the end of 2020-21 being over the age of 50 which has an impact on sickness absence rates and requires effective workforce planning.
- Society is experiencing a technological revolution where progress is accelerating, and innovations can be identified and rapidly deployed making it difficult to keep pace and ensure that the skills of our staff are up to date.
- The Council should seek to maximise the value of every pound it spends and seek to deliver social value outcomes. Social, economic and environmental outcomes should be delivered for the local community by adopting a strategic approach during its commissioning, procurement, development and planning projects.
- The Council needs to recognise the data we hold is an asset and manage it more efficiently to better understand service users, generating benefits such as predicting and managing demand, providing the services that residents want and supporting better decision-making.

#### Age Profile of Durham County Council workforce

Percentage of staff under 25	2019-2020 Q2 <b>7.28%</b>	2020-2021 Q2 <b>7.14%</b>
Percentage of staff over 50	2019-2020 Q2 <b>41.64%</b>	2020-2021 Q2 <b>42.29%</b>

## Ambition: An Excellent Council

### Approach

The current COVID-19 national crisis has required the council to adapt working practices to continue to deliver services safely. We have had to close a number of our buildings such as leisure centres, theatres and libraries. Our ICT infrastructure is allowing many of our employees to work remotely. Many of our staff who cannot work in their substantive role have also been redeployed in priority areas. Several services have now moved online. In the immediate aftermath of lockdown, the council temporarily postponed the delivery of certain services while we ensured that the correct safeguards were in place to protect the public and our employees and ensure that our priority services were not affected. The pandemic has had a significant financial impact in terms of additional expenditure incurred and loss of income. However, there have been some unintended benefits such as reductions in carbon emissions. The council will look to build on this and use technology to reduce our impact on the environment.

The Council has faced significant cuts to its funding through austerity over the last 10 years. Uncertainties with future local government funding make financial planning extremely difficult. We still await both the government's Comprehensive Spending Review and Fair Funding Review which will determine our future funding. This means that we have been unable to plan for the long-term with most of our financial planning being limited to only one year of certainty. Key actions for us will be to assess the implications of these reviews when they are published and to amend our Medium-Term Financial Plan accordingly.

We want our workforce to be fit for any future challenges and so we need to ensure that our future plans recognise and address any risks such as skills shortages, ageing workforce, recruitment difficulties and changes in service user behaviour and demand. The health and welfare of our workforce is important, and we have a range of actions we plan to implement to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of employees and ensure that we have an inclusive staff culture.

Expectations of our residents are changing. People expect to be able to transact business with the council on a 24/7 basis and would like self-serve online. Our services should be co-designed with service users and we plan to improve our engagement mechanisms, particularly with children and young people. Managers need access to real-time data to support good decision-making and we have a programme to develop our business intelligence capability and provide better analysis to help understand our performance and facilitate better planning and service delivery. Some of our services are delivered in partnership with other agencies and we have plans to further join up our delivery to offer a more seamless approach for the benefit of our residents.

Further detail of the programmes we plan to implement to be **an excellent council** are provided in our delivery plan.

## Council Plan Key Performance Indicators



### More and Better Jobs

- Employment rate
- Jobs created
- Business space created
- Occupancy rates of strategic employment sites
- Productivity rates
- Gross value added
- Superfast broadband coverage
- Visitor economy numbers
- Educational attainment rates
- Inequality gap in educational attainment
- Secondary school Ofsted ratings
- Disability employment rate
- Average income levels
- Deprivation indices
- Child poverty rate
- Fuel poverty rate
- Benefit processing times



### People Live Long and Independent Lives

- Life and healthy life expectancy
- Smoking at the time of delivery
- Breastfeeding prevalence
- Childhood obesity rates
- Early years foundation stage
- Early years and childcare Ofsted ratings
- Primary school Ofsted ratings
- Key Stage 1 and 2 attainment
- Education and healthcare planning for SEND
- Attainment rates for children with SEND
- Adult obesity rate
- Mortality rates
- Smoking prevalence
- Drug and alcohol treatment rates
- Suicide rate
- Self-reported life satisfaction
- Older persons housing
- 80% reduction in carbon emissions (from 2009 levels) by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050

## Council Plan Key Performance Indicators



### Connected Communities

- Ofsted rating for children's services
- Children's social care assessment times
- Children's social care demand measures
- Care leaver progression
- Looked after children attainment and health assessments
- Youth offending rates
- Low housing demand
- Town centre vacancy rates
- Travel times
- Overall crime rate and sub-analysis
- Anti-social behaviour
- Hate crime rates
- New housing completions
- Affordable housing completions



### An Excellent Council

- Collection rates
- MTFP targets achieved
- Audit opinion
- Employee absence rates
- Employee satisfaction
- Service response rates
- Satisfaction levels
- Complaints
- Channel shift
- Self-service rates
- Transformation programme progress reporting

## Delivery Plan: More and Better Jobs

### Key programmes of work

#### Employment sites

- Preparation of the County Durham Plan (2020)
- Developing key locations for business including Aykley Heads, Forrest Park, Jade Enterprise Zone, NETPark Phase 3, Merchant Park, Peterlee Industrial Estate, Low Copelaw and Station Place (2023)
- Relocate council headquarters to facilitate development of Aykley Heads strategic employment site (2021)
- Development and delivery of pipeline of major transport infrastructure projects to support employment sites (2023)
- Develop key locations for business attraction and growth (2023)
- Deliver sites within Business Durham remit and enhance Business Durham Property Portfolio (2023)

#### Competitive economy

- Support business to achieve growth through the County Durham Growth Fund, Finance Durham, Business Durham key account management programme and enterprise and start up offers (2023)
- Develop an Economic Strategy for County Durham that integrates with national, regional, sub-regional and local strategies (2020)
- Support local businesses with regulatory issues associated with the exit of the UK from the European Union (2020)
- Develop online licensing products and further services under the 'Better Business for All' initiative to help reduce the burden of regulation on local businesses (2023)
- Assess and address the economic implications of the pandemic and provide assistance to business needs to restart and grow the economy in County Durham (2020-23)

#### Visitor experience

- Review the County Durham Tourism Management Plan (2021)
- Bring together the history and heritage of the county into the Durham History Centre (2023)
- Review the programme of events and festivals and prepare for lottery submissions for 2022-2026
- Support the delivery of a new visitor offer across County Durham (2023)

## Delivery Plan: More and Better Jobs

### Key programmes of work



#### Education, training and employment

- Implement an Inclusion Strategy following development of a new approach to inclusion and use of alternative provision in County Durham (2022)
- Ensure the effective delivery of the DurhamWorks programme to support 10,000 young people (2021)
- Support more young people with vulnerable characteristics into employment, including young people who are looked after, care leavers, young people who have SEND and young people supervised by the Youth Justice Service (2023)
- Support care leavers to achieve good education and employment opportunities, including work experience and apprenticeships (2023)
- Continuously review school organisation and the education estate across the county and develop options to help address school provision in areas where unsustainable financial issues are being experienced (2020-23)



#### Helping people into work

- Deliver employability programmes that help people access and sustain regular employment (2022)
- Focus on closing the gap in employment opportunities for those with a long-term health condition or disability, through the development of supported employment and the rollout of a pilot with learning disability day services to support people into volunteering and employment (2022)
- Support carers to gain and maintain employment across work sectors, through Job Centre Plus and the Adult Learning and Skills service (2023)
- Increase the number of businesses in the county achieving the North East Better Health at Work Award (2022)
- Increase the number of organisations involved in career development related to mental health (2022)
- Improve access to high-quality and impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools and further education settings to ensure young people are clear about progression pathways, including apprenticeship opportunities (2022)
- Through commissioned services, write into every contract that providers will commit to improving the health and wellbeing of their workforce, either through 'Thriving at Work' standards or by achieving the Better Health at Work Award (2022)

## Delivery Plan: More and Better Jobs

### Key programmes of work



Reducing  
deprivation and  
poverty

- Review the Poverty Action Plan Steering Group and coordinate delivery of the work programme (2020)
- Deliver initiatives that support rough sleepers, ex-offenders and other vulnerable people into accommodation (2021)
- Delivery of a range of initiatives to alleviate fuel poverty (2021)
- Increase income levels for the most vulnerable through greater awareness of and access to benefit eligibility (2022)
- Development of reducing parental conflict multi-agency working group, planning tool, training programme, County Durham Local Family offer and Reducing Parental Conflict Plan on Page (2021)
- Provide a programme to help alleviate financial hardship suffered by residents (2021)
- Implementation of Earned Autonomy Plan to help families achieve significant and sustained change as described in County Durham Family Outcomes as per Stronger Families programme (2021)

# Delivery Plan: People Live Long and Independent Lives

## Key programmes of work



### Best start in life

- Improve health protection for children and young people and reduce inequality by increasing immunisation levels (e.g. flu vaccine uptake) (2023)
- Introduce a healthy schools programme and health standards into early years and schools (2023). Reduce unintentional injuries in the 0-19 population, through the County Durham Prevention of Unintentional Injuries Framework (2022) Consider a range of population approaches to improve children's oral health (2023)
- Improve mental health support for children and young people through the implementation of the Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Local Transformation Plan (2023)
- Complete a Health Needs Assessment of further education, with a focus on 16 to 18 year-olds (2021)
- Develop a Sexual Health Strategy for County Durham, to ensure equitable access to services and focus on good contraceptive health (2023)
- Support women to achieve a smoke-free pregnancy through whole system change and tackling tobacco dependency in pregnancy as an addiction, not a lifestyle choice (2023)
- Increase the percentage of women who initiate breastfeeding and continue at 6-8 weeks, through the County Durham 'Call to Action' to change the culture of breastfeeding in the county (2023)
- Ensure children and young people residing in Aycliffe Secure Centre have access to high-quality emotional and mental health support, drug and alcohol services, physical health care and specialist health interventions (2020)



### Special educational needs and disabilities

- Co-produce a revised SEND Strategy for County Durham (2020)
- Embed and maintain a joint commissioning cycle that improves access to integrated support in Education Health and Care Plans (2020)
- Increase speech, language and communication skills in the early years to ensure that children are ready to learn at two and ready for school at five by improving access to local speech enrichment services across each locality, according to identified need (2023)
- Introduce a County Durham approach to improving the ability of young people with SEND to travel independently to access education, employment and training opportunities (2020)
- Develop and deliver a post local area SEND re-inspection plan (2021)
- Implement the High Needs Block Sustainability Plan (2020-23)

## Delivery Plan: People Live Long and Independent Lives

### Key programmes of work



#### Physical environment

- Implement the local Air Quality Action Plan and improve air quality within Durham City to meet the standards set within the National Air Quality Strategy (2021)
- We will review our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Surface Water Management Plan and deliver flood prevention schemes (2021)
- We will implement our Climate Change Emergency Response Plan (2023)
- We will develop a countywide strategy for woodland and trees (2022)
- Develop a countywide offer around physical activity and good nutrition, specifically targeting vulnerable communities (2022)
- Increase the use of active travel to encourage physical activity (including cycling and walking) to reduce traffic emissions related to respiratory illness and carbon emissions (2023)
- Work with a range of partners to increase physical activity by promoting Active 30 in schools (2022)
- Delivery of transport infrastructure projects to encourage more sustainable transport choices (2023)
- Deliver flood risk mitigation schemes (2021)
- Re-procure our waste contracts (2023)
- Coordinate the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic (2020)



#### Positive behaviours

- To support the ambition to reduce smoking in County Durham to 5% by 2025, ensure that the redesigned Stop Smoking Service is effectively reaching people in our local communities (2023)
- Encourage people to reduce the amount of alcohol they drink through targeted campaigns for council staff and our local communities and by promoting and supporting Dry January and National Alcohol Awareness Week (2023)
- Deliver Making Every Contact Count training to staff, enabling every contact to be a health contact (2022)
- Complete a sector led improvement peer review on drug-related deaths, to inform service delivery (2022)

## Delivery Plan: People Live Long and Independent Lives

### Key programmes of work

#### Mental health

- Improve children and young people's emotional wellbeing and resilience by delivering the Durham Resilience Programme to schools and increasing the uptake of the Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) Initiative (2021)
- Develop and implement a strategy to support and sustain the Voluntary and Community Sector in County Durham, enabling resilience of our wider communities (2023)
- Deliver the key components of the 'Time to Change' programme and increase the number of mental health champions within the council, to encourage open conversations about mental health and signpost employees (2021)
- Support schools to develop their ability to promote the mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils (2020)
- Support mental health and wellbeing of residents following COVID-19 pandemic (2021)

#### Health and social care integration

- Implement an Integrated Strategic Commissioning Function for the county, to ensure more effective management of resources, joint contract monitoring and improved quality of service provision (2023)
- Further develop the Trusted Assessor model to facilitate smooth transfers of care between primary and social care and improve service users' and carers' experiences of these services (2022)
- Work with Primary Care Networks to ensure that social prescribing provides new opportunities for support within the community and the Voluntary and Community Sector (2023)
- Support providers through the changing, complex health and social care system to ensure that they are equipped to deliver the volume and standards of care required (2022)
- Identify gaps across the county regarding communities yet to become dementia friendly and provide support to help them achieve dementia friendly status (2023)
- Provide training and resources to staff in frontline services, to enable them to make reasonable adjustments for those with social, communication and sensory needs relating to autism (2021)
- People of all ages with autism are given inclusive access to initiatives such as the Wellbeing for Life Service and the Active Durham Partnership (2021)

## Delivery Plan: People Live Long and Independent Lives

### Key programmes of work



Homes for older  
and disabled  
people

- Deliver homes to meet the needs of older people within our communities and support people to live independently for as long as possible (2023)
- Work with partners and providers to reduce the incidence of falls and fractures in older people, through training and assistive / digital technologies (2023)
- Provide equipment to support reablement, progression and sustainable outcomes, including community equipment and provision in care homes (2023)
- Change our social care model and ensure that people have access to robust advice and information to enable them to live healthy and independent lives in their community, preventing delaying the need for formal service provision (2022)
- Engage with stakeholders to develop, test and deliver future provider / partner / service user portals for better information-sharing and to streamline processes (2023)
- Develop the Personal Assistants market for direct payment users (2022)
- Review the approach to care home commissioning, taking into account changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim of ensuring a sustainable and high-quality care market (2023)

## Delivery Plan: Connected Communities

### Key programmes of work



#### A safe childhood

- Deliver our Children's Social Care Improvement Plan to ensure we provide good and outstanding social care services to children, young people and their families who need social care support (2023)
- Improve support to children and families across our early help and social care services through the continued implementation and embedding of strength-based and relationship focused practice (Signs of Safety) (2021)
- Continue to recruit, develop and support a skilled, experienced and confident social care workforce (2023)
- Implement and embed a Quality Assurance Framework across our early help and social care services to ensure we provide high-quality practice (2021)
- Continue to promote the role and responsibility of the council as a corporate parent ensuring we are committed and ambitious for all our children in care and care leavers (2023)
- Target our resources on those young people committing the most offences (2023)
- Put victims, especially young victims and restorative justice at the heart of everything we do (2023)
- Develop and deliver a post Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services improvement plan (2021)
- Work in partnership with external providers to develop and shape the market to ensure the most appropriate, local and value for money placements are available which meet the needs of our children and young people who are looked after (2023)



#### Housing standards

- Raise standards across the private rented-sector through seeking greater licensing powers in order to tackle poor landlords as well as continuous engagement with landlords and the extension of the Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme for responsible landlords (2021)
- Deliver a range of targeted interventions to improve housing and living standards (2021)
- Work with those communities most affected by long-term empty properties including working with property owners and landlords with the aim of bringing empty properties back into use wherever possible (2023)

## Delivery Plan: Connected Communities

### Key programmes of work

#### Towns and villages

- Deliver a programme of regeneration within town centres and wider towns and villages by encouraging new town centre business, establishing a network of town centre WiFi systems, facilitating the reoccupation/re-use or clearance of vacant and vulnerable property (2022)
- Deliver the Auckland Castle, Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone, Future High Street Fund and Stronger Towns Fund (2023)
- Review and transform leisure facilities in line with the needs of our residents (2020)
- Review and transform library services in line with the needs of our residents (2020)
- Develop and deliver in collaboration with partners a programme of area- based initiatives to improve local environments and community safety (2021)

#### Access to services

- Construction of new bus station in Durham City (2021)
- Development of North East Strategic Transport Plan and supporting County Durham delivery plans (2020)
- Development and delivery of pipeline of major transport infrastructure projects to improve connectivity across the County (2023)
- Development of the County Durham Together community hub to promote and enable easier access to preventative services available in local communities (2022)

#### Community cohesion

- Extend the wellbeing approach across the council and within commissioned services (2023)
- Develop and deliver in partnership with other agencies a model to prevent and manage antisocial behaviour across the county (2021)
- Establish a multi-agency task force to deliver a local problem-solving approach within our most deprived are-as and through integrated working and community engagement restore cultural norms and build cohesive communities (2021)
- Provide additional support to community groups adversely affected by the pandemic (2021)
- Develop and deliver a programme to help manage individuals, households and communities through recovery from the pandemic

## Delivery Plan: Connected Communities

### Key programmes of work



- Maximise opportunities for North East One Public Estate Partnership to realise estates savings and delivery of shared objectives (2022)
- Delivery of the Chapter Homes Business Plan (2020)
- Delivery of the Housing Strategy (2023)
- Supplying Seaham Garden Village development with geothermal heat from mine water treatment scheme (2023)
- Manage and deliver the Housing Infrastructure Fund Newton Aycliffe Housing Growth Programme (2021)
- Maximise the delivery of affordable homes, both by securing developer contributions as part of new housing development and through close partnership with registered providers and Homes England (2023)
- Deliver community housing schemes through the Town and Village Centres Programme (see above) (2022)

# Delivery Plan: An Excellent Council

## Key programmes of work

### Resource management

- Review implications of anticipated legislation for the long-term reform of the social care system (2021)
- Support teams to develop smarter ways of working in preparation for the move to transformed strategic sites and new headquarters (2021)
- Complete the Polling Place Review (2021)
- Review the implications of the government's Fair Funding Review (2023)

### A workforce for the future

- Extend the mental health workforce development programme across the council, to increase awareness and support available for staff (2023)
- Achieve the Better Health at Work Award 'Continuing Excellence' status for the council (2022)
- Develop a strategy for employee health and wellbeing (2022)
- Support our staff to work flexibly by developing plans for modern ways of working (2021)
- Assess risks, protect and support public and employees during COVID-19 pandemic and through the restoration of services (2021)

### Services designed with service users

- Work towards the sharing of information about a person's assessments, treatment and care through the Great North Care Record, to ensure that staff, patients and service users can make informed decisions about services (2022)
- Review the assistive technologies offer for adult care and develop a new Assistive Technology Strategy (2023)
- Prepare to relocate the registration service to Mount Oswald whilst maintaining service delivery and income generation (2021)
- Increase self-service of performance data by developing business intelligence dashboards (2023)
- Produce a scope and outline plan for delivering the integrated service user service model (2021)
- Continue to deliver the digital transformation programme at a service level (2023)
- Further develop specific engagement mechanisms with children and young people to understand the voice of the child in service provision including development of a Youth Council (2022)
- Restoration of council services that have been interrupted by the pandemic as government guidelines allow (2021)
- Plan and deliver effective communications to build trust, support and keep stakeholders informed and promote safety messages (2020-23)

# Delivery Plan: An Excellent Council

## Key programmes of work



### Use of data and technology

- Implement and realise the benefits for staff and managers of a new adult care case management system (2021)
- Maximise the use of existing technology and trial new technologies to improve efficiency (2023)
- Work with NHS partners to roll out Health Call in care homes, to improve the transfer of information to health professionals (2022)
- Develop a strategy for a 'smart city' type infrastructure (2020)
- Develop a digital skills programme and invest in new ways of working (2023)
- Expand automation and self-service to employees (2023)
- Develop a road map for the comprehensive rollout of business intelligence capability across all services and systems within the council (2021)
- Develop a broadband services business plan (2021)
- Implementation of modern electronic systems and mobile technologies to help deliver operational efficiencies and high-quality services (2021)



### Performance management

- Implement a new management framework for Adult and Health Services, to enable more timely analysis of data, improved business intelligence and real time presentation of data (2022)
- Further develop the performance management framework for children and young people's services linked to the new case recording system to improve managers' grip on all areas of performance (2022)
- Develop a well-managed strategic planning framework (2020)
- Review performance management arrangements to focus on restoration and recovery from the pandemic (2020)

## Glossary of Terms

### **5G**

Fifth generation or latest iteration of telecommunications networks which is designed to greatly increase the speed and responsiveness of wireless networks

### **Attainment 8 score**

A measure of the average attainment of pupils in up to eight qualifications at KS4

### **Better Health at Work Award**

An award recognising the efforts of employers in the North East and Cumbria in addressing health issues within the workplace

### **Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone**

A regeneration area in Bishop Auckland's conservation area that has been agreed by Historic England and has been created to improve the town's historic centre and bring it back to be a vibrant market town for both locals and visitors

### **Brexit**

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union

### **Channel shift**

The degree to which residents are moving to dealing with the council through digital means from more traditional methods such as face-to-face and telephone

### **Council Tax Hardship Fund**

A reduction of £300 on your Council Tax bill awarded to people who have been significantly financially impacted by COVID-19

### **County Durham Together**

A virtual hub developed to help support people to stay in their own home and protect them from contracting the coronavirus by putting them in touch with people who can support with access to food and essential supplies, medicines, financial help and social interaction for those experiencing loneliness and isolation

### **COVID-19**

Coronavirus Disease 2019, the respiratory disease caused by the new strain of the coronavirus

### **Deprivation indices**

Widely used datasets used to classify the relative deprivation of an area. The latest Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) measures relative deprivation for small areas or neighbourhoods and ranks every area from the most deprived to the least deprived in England

### **Disability Confident**

A government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. Level 3 or highest level of the Disability Confident scheme which recognises the commitment towards disabled staff and acting as a champion for Disability Confident within local and business communities

### **Education and Health Care Plan**

A legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational needs, the support they need and the outcomes that they would like to achieve

### **Furlough**

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme operated by HMRC. All UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employee's salary for those employees that would otherwise be laid off during the COVID-19 crisis

### **GCSEs**

General Certificate of Secondary Education

### **Great North Care Record**

An initiative to allow healthcare practitioners from emergency departments, mental health, 111 services, ambulance and out of hours services access information from a patient's GP record

### **Hate crime**

A range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity

**Healthy life expectancy**

The proportion of life spent in good health or free from a limiting illness or disability

**HMRC**

Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue

**Homes England**

A non-departmental public body that funds new affordable housing in England

**MTFP**

Medium-Term Financial Plan. This is a three-year plan which sets out the council's funding outlook, spending priorities and planned efficiencies over the medium-term

**Ofsted**

The Office of Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. The organisation responsible for inspecting services providing education and skills for learners of all ages and inspection and regulation of services that care for children and young people

**Ofsted rating**

The rating scale that Ofsted use in their inspections of education providers such as schools and children's social care providers such as the council. There are four grades:

1. Outstanding; 2. Good; 3. Requires Improvement and; 4. Inadequate

**R number**

The reproduction number is the average number of secondary infections produced by a single infected person. An R number of 1 means that on average, every person who is infected will infect one other person meaning that the number of infections is stable. If R is greater than 1 then the epidemic is growing. If R is less than 1 then the epidemic is shrinking.

**Reablement**

Services for people with poor physical or mental health to help them accommodate their illness by learning or relearning the skills necessary for daily living

**SARS-CoV-2**

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 is the strain of coronavirus that causes COVID-19, the respiratory illness responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic

**SATs**

Standard Assessment Test

**SEND**

Special Educational Needs and Disability

**Signs of Safety**

A strength-based and safety-focused approach to child protection casework originally developed in Australia and now adopted and used by local authorities in many other countries including the UK

**Trusted assessor model**

Trusted Assessor schemes are a national initiative designed to reduce delays when people are ready for discharge from hospital.

**Welfare Assistance Scheme**

Short-term support for people in crisis. There are two types; daily living expenses for up to seven days when your circumstances change unexpectedly and settlement grants to help you stay at home or move back into housing

**WiFi**

A wireless network allowing computers, tablets, smartphones and other devices to connect to the Internet or communicate with one another wirelessly within an area

**Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) Initiative**

A programme for helping teenagers explore how to protect their own mental health and support those around them. YAM shows promising results. Groups that have completed the programme show with significantly reduced levels of moderate to extreme depression, and reductions in suicide attempts and ideation

# Durham County Council Strategic Planning Framework

