



Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date **Friday 17 April 2015**
Time **10.00 am (Please note the later start time)**
Venue **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham**

Business

Part A

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

1. Apologies.
2. Substitute Members.
3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 20 January, 4 February and 5 March 2015
(Pages 1 - 22)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Any items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.
6. Neighbourhood Services Revenue and Capital Outturn 3 2014/15 - Overview:
(Pages 23 - 26)
Report of the Neighbourhood Services Management Team.
7. Quarter 3 2014/15 Performance Management Report. (Pages 27 - 38)
Report of the Corporate Management Team.
8. Air Quality Management Plan for County Durham - Update: (Pages 39 - 46)
 - (a) Joint Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director
Neighbourhood Services.
 - (b) Presentation by Pollution Manager, Neighbourhood Services.
9. European Structural and Investment Funds - Low Carbon Economy - Update:
(Pages 47 - 52)
Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic
Development.

10. Council Plan 2015-18 - Refresh of the Work Programme. (Pages 53 - 66)
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive.
11. Minutes of the County Durham Environment Partnership Board held on 10 December, 2014. (Pages 67 - 72)
12. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
9 April 2015

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

Councillor B Graham (Chairman)
Councillor D Hall (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors E Adam, J Armstrong, D Bell, E Bell, J Clare, J Clark, D Freeman,
J Gray, G Holland, K Hopper, I Jewell, C Kay, P May, O Milburn, S Morrison,
J Shuttleworth, P Stradling, L Taylor and S Zair

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bolton and Mrs P Spurrell

Contact: Lucy Gladders

Tel: 03000 269712

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1A, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 20 January 2015 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor B Graham (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Armstrong, E Bell, J Clare, J Clark, J Gray, G Holland, K Hopper, I Jewell, P May, P Stradling, L Taylor and S Zair

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bolton

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Adam, D Bell, D Freeman, D Hall and Mrs P Spurrell.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members in attendance.

3 Minutes

The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager advised that an email had been received on behalf of two members of the public who had attended the meeting held on the 25 November 2014 on Underground Coal Gassification. It was agreed that a copy of the minutes from that meeting would be forwarded to the Easington Action Group with the Committee's approval.

The email referred to a presentation by J Gluyas, Chair of Geoenergy and Carbon Capture and Storage at Durham University and J McKewon, Spatial Policy Team, and it was claimed that the presentation was bias towards underground coal gasification. In response, the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager confirmed that when seeking an expert on the subject, there had been consideration given to the independence of the advice and as a result, two of the candidates which had been short-listed had been cancelled due to having links with companies who were progressing underground coal gasification.

As Chair of Geoenergy and Carbon Capture and Storage at Durham University, Mr Gluyas had admitted that he was in favour of any form of renewable energy which would reduce the reliance on sources produced by other countries, however his professional opinion was

not bias towards a particular type of energy and he had discussed all types of renewable energy throughout his presentation.

The minutes of the meetings held on 10th, 17th and 25th November 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Any items from Co-opted Members or interested parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.

6 Media Relations - Updates on Press Coverage

The Committee received a presentation from the Overview and Scrutiny Officer on recent press articles relating to the remit of Environment and Sustainable Communities;

New Report on butterflies published – a book was published which described the status, distribution, habitats and future outlook for butterflies that were regularly found in the region. Members had attended a site visit which was populated by some species of butterfly due to its environment.

Crackdown on County's Environmental Crimes – over 200 people had received fixed penalty notices during October and November 2014 for littering, dog fouling and failing to respond to requests to tidy gardens or yards.

Wear harnessed as huge water turbine kicks into gear – this article related to the Archimedes Screw which was located at the Freemans Reach and which Members had observed at a recent site visit in November.

Work to stop flooding in Chester-le-Street means town centre restrictions – the second phase of work carried out by Northumbrian Water would see new sewer pipes built between Front Street and Riverside Park, however the work would impact on traffic on Front Street, which was a key bus route.

7 Environment Improvement Campaigns/Projects

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhood Services which provided an update on the development and implementation of environmental improvement campaigns and projects.

Members received a presentation from the Head of Direct Services which provided them with information regarding campaigns or projects which had either been planned or had taken place in the previous 12 months, such as;

Dog Fouling – Green Dog Walkers Scheme, Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign (February 2014), Mini Dog Fouling Campaigns

Open Space Involvement – Big Spring Clean, It's Your Neighbourhood, Northumbria In Bloom, Green Flag
School Activities – Education Sessions, Junior Neighbourhood Watch, Safety Carousels, Tidy Ted Awards (December 2014).

The Chairman referred to the extensive amount of work being carried out to tackle the problems and in reference to fly-tipping, confirmed that Spennymoor AAP would be investing in CCTV equipment, which would hopefully deter incidents or result in prosecutions. Councillor Armstrong requested that all AAP's were sent information regarding this scheme as some were still unaware. The Head of Direct Services confirmed that Town and Parish Councils were also being invited to invest in this scheme and in addition, there were plans to release the video footage of people fly-tipping to raise awareness and serve as a deterrent in order to reduce the number of incidents.

In response to a question from Mr T Bolton in relation to publicising prosecutions as a result of fly-tipping, the Head of Direct Services confirmed that all successful prosecutions were shared by a press release and on social media, however Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN's) were not a criminal conviction and could therefore not be disclosed. In addition, Crimestoppers had chosen to publicise fly-tipping for the first time and social media would be used to show advertisements, targeting people of a certain age range who lived in hotspot areas and were therefore most likely to commit an offence, or have information relating to offences being committed.

In reference to the power of social media, the Neighbourhood Protection Manager confirmed that a photograph found in some rubbish which had been dumped was shared on social media and within half an hour, information had been received to identify the two people in it.

With regards to the CCTV operations, Councillor Bell queried the installation of the cameras and whether RIPA was applied. The Head of Direct Services confirmed that the cameras were well-hidden however were sometimes discovered - footage sometimes showed people pulling up in vehicles and then looking around for cameras. Wherever cameras were placed, signage was also erected to ensure that the public were aware of the CCTV and therefore as the surveillance was not covert, there was no need for the use of RIPA powers.

In addition, Mr Bolton commented that award schemes for youngsters were commendable, however he referred to a scheme which was ran by the former Sedgefield Borough Council, pre LGR, which gave youngsters the opportunity to earn free sessions in leisure centres. The Head of Direct Services agreed that this suggestion could be considered as it could be an incentive for more young people to take part in the scheme.

In response to a query from Councillor Stradling regarding the recycling centre at Horden, the Head of Direct Services confirmed that although Horden was for household waste only, the vehicle in the film was not a van, pickup, or minibus and would therefore not have been turned away from the site. Further still, commercial waste could be disposed of nearby in Thornley, however, services continued to be reviewed to see if there was an opportunity to dispose of other types of waste. With regards to opening hours, it was highlighted that a review of the service had found that certain sites were not required as frequently on Fridays and were therefore closed, however this would continue to be reviewed.

Councillor Hopper referred to dog fouling which was particularly bad in her area and queried the working hours of wardens and the probability of people taking their dogs for a walk outside of those working hours. The Neighbourhood Protection Manager confirmed that all wardens were expected to start work at 7am one morning per week and there were also late shifts finishing at 10pm on weekends, dealing with anti-social behaviour. The wardens relied on intelligence to identify hotspot areas, however sometimes residents were not confident in coming forward. He confirmed that should Councillor Hopper report the details of the area, they would send somebody there outside of normal working hours, to investigate.

Councillor May queried the cost of waste disposal for traders and queried whether the Council were distributing their campaign leaflets in trader warehouses in order to warn people of the consequences of fly-tipping. The Head of Direct Services confirmed that Corporate Communications had plans to promote the cards and a wide range of premises had been selected for distribution. The Neighbourhood Protection Manager confirmed that in addition, anyone who used the services at building control was supplied with a card.

Councillor Clark referred to the Community Group, Horden in Bloom, which was serviced entirely by volunteers. She expressed her disappointment that the Group had never received any support from the Council for the various campaigns it had been involved in. The Head of Direct Services replied that he was aware of the Group, apologised on behalf of the service and offered the Group support in the future, should it be required.

In response to a further query from Councillor Clark, the Head of Direct Services confirmed that Waste Recycling Centre's carried out automatic clean-up operations when waste was dumped outside of the site and incidents were reported.

Councillor Clare queried the agreement with Parish and Town Councils who funded CCTV as he was under the impression that the cameras may not be used for the areas which had funded them and this was a possible reason for them not to sign up to the scheme. The Head of Direct Services confirmed that cameras were located in areas of identified need and not dependent on the source of funding for the camera and there were occasions when they would be moved between communities. While a CCTV camera which had been funded by a Parish or Town Council could be moved to another area, the opposite could also arise whereby multiple cameras from other Parish or Town Councils could be brought into an area when needs were identified.

Councillor Clare also queried why Primary School children were targeted with regards to the various campaigns as older children may be more likely to commit these types of offences. The Head of Direct Services confirmed that Primary Schools were more accessible, however there were programmes which were also tailored for teenagers.

In response to a comment from Councillor Jewell regarding the possible use of signage to dissuade dog walkers from walking on football pitches or playgrounds, the Head of Direct Services replied that this was a consideration. The Neighbourhood Protection Manager referred to the former Newcastle United Football Club player, Olivier Bernard, who had been involved in publicising the campaign last year after becoming the new owner of Durham City Football Club, which had helped the public to recognise the extent of the problem.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the Committee would receive a further update in six months.

8 Quarter 2 2014/2015 Forecast Outturn Report

The Committee considered a report of the Neighbourhood Services Management Team which set out details of the forecast outturn as at Quarter 2 for 2014/15 and highlighted variances against revenue and capital budgets for Neighbourhood Services and the Finance Manager, Neighbourhoods, gave a presentation (for copies see file of minutes).

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9 Quarter 2 2014/2015 Performance Management Report

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Management Team which presented progress against the Councils corporate basket of performance indicators for the Altogether Greener theme and report other significant performance issues for the second quarter of 2014/15 covering the period July to September 2014 (for copies see file of minutes).

The Customer Relations, Policy & Performance Manager gave a presentation (for copy see file of minutes) which gave an update of the performance indicators relating to;

- Achievements
- Performance Challenges
- Carbon Emissions
- Domestic Energy Efficiency
- Fuel Poverty
- Fuel Poverty Actions
- Natural Environment
- Reuse, Recycling and Composting
- Fly-tipping incidents/variance between Q1 and Q2/Task Force
- Focus on Highways and current major schemes
- Environment Awards 2014
- Altogether Greener Performance Indicators 2015/16

Councillor Holland was concerned that only 143 referrals had been received by Warm Up North, yet many people in County Durham were unable to afford to heat their homes. The Customer Relations, Policy & Performance Manager responded that Warm Up North had recently been liaising with Public Health to ensure that Community Health Workers and housing providers were referring vulnerable people to the scheme.

Councillor Holland was interested in the number of people who were applying and benefiting from the scheme and the Customer Relations, Policy & Performance Manager suggested that the Senior Housing Development & Delivery Officer could provide more information at a future meeting, should it be required.

Councillor May referred to the discussions which took place before any reduction in waste services were agreed and in particular when Members were assured that there would not be an increase in fly-tipping due to the proposals. In response, the Head of Direct Services confirmed that there were a number of factors which could not be identified as a result of the reduction in services and there had been an increase nationally. As previously mentioned, all incidents were reported, however the system recorded incidents of household rubbish as fly-tipping, therefore it had been identified that the figures were being misrepresented. There was now a system for reporting incidents which was more robust and gave an accurate representation of the number, location, and type of incidents.

In response to a question from Councillor Stradling, the Head of Direct Services reiterated that there was no evidence that there had been a direct impact from the reduction in services.

Councillor Armstrong requested that Members had information regarding the volume of waste which was processed in County Durham.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

10 Review of the Council Plan and Service Plans

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which updated Members with progress on the development of the Altogether Greener section of the Council Plan 2015-18.

Councillor Clare referred to the proposed performance indicator set for 2015/16 and identified that some of the indicators were not appropriate when considering the success of the most recent performance indicators and therefore could possibly not be set high enough, or set too high. The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager confirmed that the targets set out in the table were current targets which the council were operating to and had not been modified following the recent performance indicators, however the Council Plan was refreshed annually and was currently being revised to cover 2015-18.

The Customer Relations Policy and Performance Manager confirmed that the recent proposal to remove indicators relating to kerbside waste, may have an impact on other indicators and the Council Plan would be adjusted accordingly.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 Verbal Update on EU Funding Programme 2014-2020

The Sustainability and Climate Team Leader gave a verbal update on EU Funding Programme 2014-20.

The national EU Programme was not yet operational, and still in a preparatory phase, as the UK Government remained in negotiation with the

EU Commission over the content of the English Operational Programmes for both ERDF and ESF.

The Operational Programmes contained the rules and parameters of spending that the EU Commission would agree to in the UK and until they were agreed, it was not possible to give certainty over the eligibility of specific projects, and this meant that programmes of activity were still in a preparatory phase.

Timescales were still unclear, however since the funding programme was from 2014, there was a clear delay which meant that access to money was still not possible.

The North East LEP had appointed a consultant who had pulled together a wide pipeline of projects from across the NELEP area. The consultant had suggested that the Low Carbon funding could be oversubscribed, however was fairly confident that a clear programme of activities had been prioritised for County Durham.

There were currently schemes under consideration such as a geothermal project in Eastgate, District Heating opportunities for Durham City and elsewhere, third generation photovoltaics at Net Park and the biomass supply chain. There was also the potential for green infrastructure and flooding, however the guidance was still unclear. There was potential for a Council led energy efficiency programme, however this could not be used in conjunction with Green Deal or ECO, which seemingly ruled out most domestic energy efficiency measures. In addition, guidance referred to public buildings with a non-statutory function, which also excluded schools, however, there were energy efficiency schemes which could be offered to businesses (which had been highlighted as a high priority), community and public buildings, with a view to reduce energy costs. In addition, it was highlighted that the Oakenshaw Community Wind Turbine which was fully operational and now generating income for the community.

The Sustainability and Climate Team Leader confirmed that a report would be proved for the meeting on 17 April 2015 which would hopefully be able to give Members a clearer picture of the timescales and confirmation of some guidance.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

12 Verbal Update on Woodlands Project

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer gave a verbal update with regards to the Woodlands Project.

Members of the Woodlands Scrutiny Review Group had attended a site visit on 4 December 2014 at Croxdale Wood. The Senior Forestry and Landscape Delivery Officer had provided Members with an overview of how felling contracts were carried out and the Group was able to see work in progress on site.

The Group had met again on 5 January 2015 and received a brief introduction to the team from the Landscape Delivery Officer who focused upon community woodlands. In addition the Group received a presentation from the Head Ranger on how the Countryside Service

carried out woodland management. Members had heard how Durham Wildlife Trust promoted volunteering opportunities via funding received from trustees.

Members were informed that the next meeting would be held on 2 February 2015.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

13 Minutes of the County Durham Environment Partnership Board

The minutes of the County Durham Environment Partnership Board held on 25 September 2014 were noted by Members.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Special Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 4 February 2015 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor B Graham (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors E Adam, J Armstrong, D Bell, J Clare, J Clark, J Gray, D Hall, G Holland, I Jewell, P May, S Morrison, P Stradling, L Taylor and S Zair

Also Present:

Councillors K Henig, T Smith, J Turnbull and M Wilkes

1 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Bell, K Hopper and Mrs P Spurrell.

2 Substitute Members.

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Any items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.

There were no items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.

5 Flooding Scrutiny review report - Update on recommendations: Joint Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Assistant Chief Executive and the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which gave details of the progress made with regards to the recommendations contained within the Flooding Scrutiny Review report published in September 2014.

The Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) Programme Office Manager gave the Committee an update on work which had been or was being undertaken since the Flooding Scrutiny Review;

- County Durham's 14 AAP's had received a presentation
- A bus had visited major settlements in County Durham
- 5 Community Engagement Plans were in the process of being drafted
- 30 volunteers recruited
- Engagement with Durham University
- Members training to raise awareness
- A conference in London had been attended to promote resilience
- Liaising with neighbouring Authorities, Cleveland, Redcar, Middlesbrough to share knowledge and experience
- Junior Neighbourhood Warden Scheme had been established and work was being undertaken with Girl guides and Scouts
- Promotion in Libraries were planned in 2015
- Durham Carers Forum to identify vulnerable people
- Business Hubs, to help build their own resilience

Councillor Clare complimented the training given to Members, which he had attended, however he queried the decision not to introduce a flooding hotline number during flooding emergencies. In response the Head of Projects and Business confirmed that the Council had a responsibility to ensure that people could access services as soon as possible and had therefore reduced the number of telephone numbers customers needed to know in order to provide the best service possible. This had resulted from a Customer First Task and Finish Group which had recommended the rationalisation of core Council Telephone numbers advertised. There was now one main switchboard number and calls would be directed to key service areas. In addition, it had been agreed that during emergencies when high call volumes were expected, a message would direct users to press "0" for flooding and they would be instantly directed to the correct call handlers.

Councillor Armstrong reminded Members of the amount of work which had been previously undertaken by the Council to ensure that the switchboard was able to respond quickly and efficiently to customers via the one main telephone number. However, a detailed written response could be given by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to the member.

RESOLVED

- i. That the progress in relation to the recommendations contained in the scrutiny review report be noted.
- ii. That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a further report detailing progress made against the recommendations contained in the Flooding Scrutiny Review report at a future meeting of the committee.

6 Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham - Updates:

The Head of Technical Services provided members with a presentation regarding the Flood and Coastal Protection Team and detailed the following;

- Schemes which the Council were undertaking during 2014/15 – a further 17 schemes for County Durham via the Environment Agency six year programme,

including the review of schemes to put forward for the 2021/27 programme. In addition, the development of the Local Flood Risk Management Plan and schemes for DCC capital funding for 2015/16

- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Going Forward – the development of the interim Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) Policy and the establishment of a payment mechanism
- Current issues – regarding the highway drainage network and the build-up of silt in pipework which led to increased flood risk

Councillor Adam queried the lack of commitment with regards to establishing the appropriate mechanisms to enable the Council to collect charges in relation to adopted SuDS. The Head of Technical Services confirmed that the Council were not obliged to adopt SuDS, however they would be an asset in the future and he confirmed that money would be collected as an additional charge to Council Tax. If people refused to pay, the Council had liaised with Legal Services to ensure the system to recover the costs was within their powers and robust enough to recover them effectively.

Members queried the Councils maintenance regime and in particular whether they would be working towards a proactive level of service in order to minimise flood risks. The Head of Technical Services confirmed that the Council were responsible for 80000 km of gullies and therefore had allocated maintenance on a risk basis. The maintenance was carried out as frequently as quarterly up to once every 2 years and the average clean was every 1.5 years. The £250k cost of the service had been funded previously on an annual basis and that current funding ended at the end of the year. The service was investigating various funds in order to continue with the maintenance plan.

Councillor Wilkes, local Member, suggested that planning should insist that all surfaces were constructed from soak away materials and in response the Principal Policy Officer confirmed that the Council was awaiting a decision from the Planning Inspector following the inspection of the County Durham Plan. The County Durham Plan included Water Management in Policy 46, which ensured that there was no net increase in surface water runoff for the lifetime of the development on all new development. Where greenfield sites were to be developed the runoff rates would not exceed current greenfield run off and where possible would reduce the existing runoff rates on brownfield sites were by 50%. The New Development Manager, Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) confirmed that Durham did not have the opportunities that other areas of the Country had with regards to SuDS and Policy 46 dealt with surface water runoff by ensuring it was reduced or at the least, there was no additional flow following new development. He continued that Policy 46 was regarded as an example of good practice for the rest of the region.

Councillor Turnbull, local Member, had experienced flooding in his local area, Brandon. He referred to a new development at Browney which had been granted planning permission for the inclusion of a 2.4m deep pond and he queried who was ultimately responsible for ensuring it was safe and maintaining its safety. Councillor Clare referred to a similar development at Cobbler's Hall and queried why there was a need for any standing water at all. In response the Drainage and Coastal Protection Manger confirmed the safety of SuDS were incorporated into the design and would aim to reduce accessibility. In relation to Cobbler's Hall, this was a haven for wildlife, which tapered gradually down to the water, however it was surrounded by weed beds which would not be easily accessible by children.

The ponds were not designed to be at full capacity, only in during bad weather would they fill up.

In response to a query from Councillor Holland regarding the consideration of road surface materials, the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that under Policy 17 there was an additional opportunity to attach a supplementary planning documents which would include details for the construction materials of new development.

The New Development Manager, NWL, gave a presentation which provided Members with the following information;

- An update on current schemes within County Durham – including the £8.5m investment in Tudhoe Mill and Chilton and Windlestone Sewage Treatment Works and other sewer flooding projects throughout the County.
- Asset Management Plan 6 – investment within County Durham – sewage treatment schemes 2015-20 – an additional £18.6m was to be invested in upgrading Sewage Treatment Works in East Tanfield, Barkers Haugh, Wolsingham, Durham University, Witton Gilbert, Bear Park/Aldin Grange, Tow Law and Aycliffe. In total the plan contained £109.5m investment in sewer flooding projects in County Durham and included strategic projects, property level protection, tree root removal new drainage area studies model and proactive risk reduction of sewer flooding.
- Drainage Area Studies were to be developed according to identified need and this was a proactive step in reducing the risk of sewer flooding before it occurred. Flood risk reduction – identifying work undertaken by NWL to reduce flood risk, which included collaboration and investment with a number of partners.

In addition a document entitled, Summary of Flooding Projects in Durham November 2014, was circulated and contained specific details regarding ongoing work or work to be undertaken.

Councillor T Smith, local Member, Chester le Street queried whether land owners were being reminded of their responsibilities regarding the maintenance of land as some of the flooding in her local area was as a result of surface water runoff from farmers' fields. The New Development Manager, confirmed that although steps were taken by farmers' in order to ensure they were ploughing in accordance with the guidelines, new horticultural machinery was having an impact on the drainage as heavy vehicles were effectively steam rolling the land and causing the soil to compact, whereas old style ploughing would enable water to be absorbed into the earth. The Head of Technical Services confirmed that the Council liaised with Natural England who were responsible for issuing farmers with grants towards the maintenance costs of land. In addition, the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee were potentially going to provide funding in order to look at the issue of farm land in more detail. The Vice-Chairman referred to the flooding review Group recommendation regarding work with private landlords and the Senior Advisor Partnerships from the Environment Agency confirmed that he would be able to provide members with detail of work being undertaken with private landowners within the County.

In response to a query from Councillor Turnbull regarding inadequate drainage at the former opencast quarry at pit house, the Drainage and Coastal Protection Manager confirmed that adequate drainage would have been installed under the conditions of the

planning permission and that there were likely to be alternative reasons why flooding was worse than it had been previously.

Councillor Wilkes had not been made aware of the Drainage Area Study which had been produced for Durham and Newton Hall and as a local Member this was something that he was very interested in. The New Development Manager recognised that although they did try and communicate information to local Councillors, it was sometimes overlooked. The Head of Technical Services confirmed that a dashboard was updated prior to every Flood Prevention Management Meeting and could be made available for Members to view.

Councillor Adam referred to the plans to upgrade Aycliffe Sewage Treatment Works and queried whether flood water would be alleviated by diverting it into the River Skerne. The New Development Manager confirmed that the Drainage Area Study model enabled a number of scenarios to be investigated and any risks to be identified. There were a number of rivers which had been identified as having poor quality areas, and since combined sewer overflow would impact further, they would be inspected and any flooding programme would be built around risk.

The Vice-Chairman referred to Schedule 3 of the Flood Water Management Act 2010 which contained standards for SuDS but had not yet commenced. The Council would have the responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority a seminar should be arranged for Members which focused on Government regulations in relation to SuDS and the relevant policies and procedures put in place by DCC. The New Development Manager confirmed that SuDS were intended to be dealt with at the planning stage and indicated as before, that NWL were always consulted and their response was confirmed in the report, they were also willing to attend Planning Committees to reassure Members, or answer any questions relating to applications. The Vice-Chairman commented that flooding was a huge issue in relation to planning and asked if it would be possible for the committee to be advised of the supplementary planning detail sitting under Policy 16 once it is developed. The Principal Policy Officer confirmed that it would take in excess of 18 months to develop the supplementary planning document policy however this could be shared with the committee when it was available.

Councillor T Smith commented that there had been a lack of communication with regards to the ongoing scheme at Chester-le-Street Front Street and highlighted the effect it was having on businesses.

The Senior Advisor, Partnerships and Strategic Overview from the Environment Agency gave a presentation regarding the following;

- Update on EA Flood Alleviation Schemes in County Durham
- Update on the Six Year Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Investment Programme
- Identifying and reducing potential flood risks – without continued work to identify flood risks there was a risk that the government would reduce the budget

The presentation included information which related to the overall Capital Programme for 2014/15 and also information which related specifically to County Durham. Work which was being delivered in 2014/15 included temporary works at Chester-le-Street, computer modelling at Staindrop and West Auckland (Tindale Beck), emergency repairs to the Dam

at Spring Gardens due to old mine workings, PLP for Menceforth Cottages at Chester-le-Street and improvements to the Bayhorse culvert entrance at Wolsingham. In addition 98 properties had benefited from the flood defence improvements at Stanhope.

In the six year plan there were 17 schemes planned by Durham County Council, 7 by the EA and they included Grant in Aid contributions and local levy.

With regard to land at Brasside, Councillor Wilkes confirmed that he had been requesting drains to be repaired but had found that the land was part of HMP Frankland and owned by the Home Office. The Head of Technical Services confirmed that in usual circumstances the Council had powers to force land owners to carry out work, however as the land belonged to the Crown, it had been granted immunity and could therefore not be forced into repair works.

The Vice-Chairman reiterated the importance of identifying flood risk areas with regards to further funding, reminding the Committee that the Council needed to be proactive with regards to reporting flood incidents.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations as outlined in the report be approved and the content of the report be noted.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 5 March 2015 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor B Graham (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors E Adam, E Bell, J Clare, J Clark, J Gray, D Hall, G Holland, I Jewell, C Kay, O Milburn, S Morrison, P Stradling, L Taylor and S Zair

Co-opted Members:

Mr T Bolton and Mrs P Spurrell

1 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Armstrong, D Bell and K Hopper and P May.

2 Substitute Members.

There were no substitute members.

3 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Any items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.

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

5 Media Relations

The Committee received a presentation from the Overview and Scrutiny Officer on recent press articles relating to the remit of Environment and Sustainable Communities;

The first article related to the completion of the Coastal Project which had seen the installation of new easy access paths and signs on Durham's Heritage Coast around Blackhall Rocks along with fencing, car parks and grassland restoration.

The second article looked at the importance of our woodlands and forests in helping to tackle climate change. The article suggested that 10% of Europe's carbon emissions were sequestered or stored by trees. The article suggests that architects and builders should

look to using more wood in house building and gives an example of Norwegian builders use much more wood in this way in Bergen where Europe's tallest wooden structure is situated, a 14 storey block of flats is being built with no steel or concrete.

The third article relating to young volunteers from the youth conservation group – The Dene, finishing woodland work in the heart of Durham City who had planted trees and shrubs to help biodiversity as part of Durham Cathedral's Woodland and Riverbanks Project.

The final article related to the benefit of extra CCTV cameras in catching fly-tippers. It was reported that cameras were becoming an increasingly useful tool to successfully prosecute people who spoil the environment by dumping their rubbish in country lanes and beauty spots

6 Update on the Waste Programme

The Committee considered a report and presentation of the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods which provided an update on the progress of the waste programme (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Projects and Business Services advised that to date 45,026 sign ups to the garden waste service had been received, 32 % of which had signed up for a period of 3 years. First collections were due to start on 17 March 2015 and there was still time for those households who had not yet signed up to join the scheme. It was further reported that 77% of signups had been undertaken via the fully automated web process and as a result had negated the requirement for staff intervention.

With regard to the one year pilot of a Mobile Household Waste Recycling site at Frosterley it was reported that to date this had proved successful and over 34 tonnes of waste had been received at this site. 60% of which was recycling and 94.6% had been diverted from landfill. A reassessment of the scheme would take place in July 2015.

Moving on the Head of Projects and Business Services reported that the 'Bin it Right' campaign had also proved successful and promising results were starting to be seen. Further details were reported regarding clean waste and the benefits that this had in achieving a better price from the supplier.

Further details were reported in respect of the student recycling campaign, which in partnership with Durham University was working to improve city waste management including end of term move out, focused on the student let terraces in the City.

In conclusion the Head of Projects and Business Services reported upon the procurement process for the new contract for the receipt, sorting and onward delivery of mixed dry recyclables and glass. The contract which would be for a period of 6 years would be performance based. Further details were reported regarding the security of supply and it was explained that global economics did impact upon recycling levels and this had resulted in one company who was one of three in the country who recycled newspaper being no longer in operation due to an over capacity in processors and a drop in volumes.

Councillor Bell commented that high winds were common in his area and with such problems with lids blowing off recycling bins caused issues on bin days. With such he queried whether the service had considered supplying some form of lock to prevent this from happening. In response the Head of Projects and Business Services advised that it was known that this was a problem at this time of year, however it was known that this type of devices could add time to waste rounds and there were potential safety issues. The matter was however been investigated further.

Councillor Jewell asked whether it would be possible for the waste operatives to simply put the glass bins inside the blue bins to prevent them from being blown away or damaged. It was agreed that this suggestion would be taken back to the team.

Councillor Holland raised a query regarding the economics of the green collection and he asked how dispersed were the collections and how much the collection of this waste was worth to the council. In response the Head of projects and Business Services advised that the take up so far had been fairly uniform with some areas with more dense coverage. The team had been tracking sign ups and redesigning rounds. It was reported that the green waste was worth around £20/£25 composted.

Councillor Adam in referencing glass asked why there was no mention of the recycling of hard plastic. The Head of Projects and Business Services advised that hard plastics were pulled out from residual waste and taken to another centre who were able to process it.

In response to a question from Councillor Kay in relation to recycling of newsprint the Head of Projects and Business Services advised that the volume of newsprint had declined and that it was still holding its income stream but this was dropping.

Further discussion took place regarding the garden waste scheme and it was asked whether bins which were not being used by those who did not take up on the scheme were being collected and reused. The Head of Projects and Business Services advised that bins were being reused where possible. No leaflets were being put out at last minute to encourage take up, however it was expected that further signups would occur once collections began.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and presentation be noted.

7 Local Nature Partnerships

The Committee received a report and presentation of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development which provided an update on the work of the Local Nature Partnerships and the 3Rivers Local Nature Partnership (for copy of report and slides of presentation see file of minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that Steve Bhowmick was unable to attend however had forwarded his comments as follows:-

LNP arrangements over County Durham continue to develop and consolidate in terms of their roles and support mechanisms towards our environmental regeneration plans and programmes. As we are committed to achieving a more prosperous County Durham, we

will be looking for the LNPs to help demonstrate the economic and market advantage that comes with a healthy and vibrant natural environment.

We will therefore continue to work with both LNPs in our area in promoting the important role of our natural environment in this respect. We look forward to our LNP bodies taking forward further opportunities for supporting the work of the County's Landscape Scale Partnerships; attracting funding for future projects and working in collaboration on projects which are based on strengthening relationships with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Boards.

The Chair welcomed Chris Woodley Stewart who provided a presentation which detailed how the partnerships were formed as strategic bodies a result of the Natural Environment White Paper 2011 and built to focus on conserving and enhancing the natural environment and the many goods and services that nature provides to society.

The presentation further provided detail regarding the partnerships objectives, the boards themes, benefits of healthy peatlands, high nature value farming, woodlands and hay meadows.

Claire Thompson then went on to deliver a presentation on the work of the 3Rivers Local Nature Partnership including their aim and work themes, varied mix of projects, the HLF Bright Water River Skerne bid and timetable for the application and delivery phase. The presentation also provided detail on landscape area action plans, health and wellbeing, joint working and natural capital investment plans.

Mr T Bolton asked whether the large areas of common land in the County were being included in the partnerships work. In response Chris Woodley-Stewart advised that common land was included in plans.

Further discussion took place regarding peatland and its regeneration. It was reported that over many years peatland had been depleted by the insertion of drainage ditches extensive work now had to be done to reblock those ditches in order to regenerate and create functional wetland. The Committee were advised that more carbon is stored in peatlands of UK than the woodlands of France and Germany.

Councillor Adam made reference to offshore working and asked what the benefits were to this. Chris Woodley-Stewart advised that this was only at research stage and satellite data was being looked at which indicated that there was potentially huge economic benefits to offshore work. It would take around 6 months to identify any potential projects.

Councillor Bell in making reference to minewater which could be found along the coast commented that he would like to see more support from partnerships along this area of the coast with a view to being awarded a blue flag. In response Claire Thompson advised that the partnership would work with Durham Heritage Coast to assist filling in gaps and enhancing the coast line.

In making reference to meadowlands, Councillor Clare commented that he felt that more could be done on a community level to encourage the development and maintenance of meadowland and asked if there was anything that the council or indeed the parish and town councils could do to assist and was advised not to cut the grass as often.

The Climate Change and Sustainability Team Leader advised that the team were working with schools and she suggested that it may be useful for her team to bring a presentation on this work to a future meeting of the committee.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and presentation be noted.

8 Delivery of Clean Bus Technology

The Committee considered a report and presentation of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development which provided an overview of Clean Bus Technology in County Durham (for copy see file of minutes).

The Public Transport Network Manager provided detail on:

- European vehicle emission standards
- Emissions standards for new buses
- Development of low emission bus technologies
- 2013 Clean Bus Technology Fund and the Durham bids

It was reported that since the introduction of Euro standards there had been a striking difference in the amount of noxious particulates generated by buses. The current fleet used in County Durham had seen a reduction of 60% of nitrous oxides since the standards were introduced in 1992.

The council had obtained £77m worth of grants for innovative new buses which would benefit over 1200 vehicles. Electric buses could now be seen being used on the Cathedral bus in Durham City and Go North East had introduced hybrid power buses on the Angel 21 bus route. These changes significantly impacted upon fuel economy.

Moving on to the Clean Bus Technology Fund it was reported that funding was available in order to retrofit older buses in order to bring them up to higher Euro standards. The presentation outlined the various bid proposals and the likely timescales for each.

Councillor Jewell added that in his opinion the current strategy although good was not well joined up, with it being clear that certain routes were still using very old buses. He therefore asked what effect this has upon reliability. In addition he raised a query regarding engine re-builds and whether modern engines could be used instead of retrofitting add on technology on older engines. In response it was reported that many of the buses used in County Durham were of Euro IV or V fleet. Those vehicles were fairly low maintenance and the service were fairly happy with their current reliability.

Councillor Jewell raised a question in relation to modifications of older buses such as engine rebuild or exchange and was advised that the vast majority of the fleet in County Durham is new and the older buses were in the process of being renewed.

Councillor Kay asked whether the energy produced by flywheel braking used on the electric vehicles in the City was used to power other elements on the vehicle. The Public Transport

Network Manager advised that the energy generated simply supplemented the electric motor rather than replacing it in full.

Councillor Adam asked what the cost would be, if any, to Durham County Council as a result of grant funding. In response it was advised that there would be no other cost to the authority other than officer time.

Mr Bolton raised a query to the commissioning of services and the contract process in obtaining higher specification of Euro buses. The Public Transport Network Manager advised that this was solely driven by cost and the economy.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and presentation be noted.

9 Climate Change Delivery Plan

The Committee received a joint report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development which provided an update on the County Durham Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan (for copy see file of minutes).

The Senior Sustainability and Climate Change Officer provided a summary of the key points of the consultation and provided detail relating to emissions for County Durham, noting that there was a slight increase, however this was in line with national trends resulting from a harsher winter and the increase in the use of coal power stations for generating electricity.

Further details were then reported with regard to ongoing projects and the year ahead. It was noted that the final draft Strategy was scheduled to be reported to cabinet for adoption in Q1 of 2015/16. Further work was ongoing with the Climate Change Strategy Group in order to address education and awareness, community energy and adaption / flood resilience.

It was also reported that the council was working on developing a bid to deliver action for community buildings and other funding sources were further being explored for a number of other projects.

The Sustainability & Climate Change Team Leader further added that there had been some complications arising from the progress of the County Durham Plan but the Climate Change Strategy will be progressing whilst the future of the County Durham Plan is decided.

In response to a questions from Mr Bolton, the officers responded that they were working specifically with the Teesdale Action Partnership board on the Toastie in Teesdale project. They are also working with other AAP's such as the Weardale AAP, where they are partnering with Northern Powergrid to work on energy demand management.

Further discussion took place regarding Biomass and it was reported by the Sustainability & Climate Change Team Leader that a lot of research was ongoing relating to this subject and the team were working closely with Sue Mullinger. A more detailed presentation on this

subject was to be given to the Woodland Review Group which was taking place the following day. The presentation would provide details regarding current issues and problems and where potential funding streams and business cases could be built.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and presentation be noted.

10 Update on Management of Woodland Estate

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer provided an update on the findings of the group to date. She advised that the next meeting of the group was scheduled to be held on 6th March when the working group would receive information on policies and strategies in relation to timber extraction and the development of woodland by DCC for use as biofuels.

In addition Andrew Kitching from Northwoods would be in attendance to provide an overview of the management of privately owned woodlands and some of the initiatives, opportunities and current schemes.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

11 Minutes from Durham Strategic Flood Group

The minutes of the Durham Strategic Flood group held on 20 November 2014 were noted.

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17 April 2015



**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES QUARTER 3
REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014 / 2015**

Report of Neighbourhood Services Management Team

Purpose of the report

- 1 To set out details of the forecast outturn as at Quarter 3 for 2014/15, highlighting variances against revenue and capital budgets for Neighbourhood Services.

Executive Summary

- 2 The Q3 forecast for the 2014/15 Revenue Outturn for Neighbourhood Services was under budget against the cash limit by £1.105m. This takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as redundancy costs which are met from the strategic reserves, and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.
- 3 The Q3 forecast for the 2014/15 Capital Outturn identified schemes to the value of £8.222m which are required to slip in to 2015/16.

Neighbourhood Services Revenue 2014/2015

- 4 The summary of the revenue outturn position, is shown in the following table analysed by Head of Service:

Head of Service	Revised Base Budget 2014/15 £'000	QTR 3 Report			Cash limit Variance Over/ (Under) £'000
		Quarter 3 Forecast (Apr-Dec) £'000	Variance Over/ (Under) £'000	Reserves / outside cash limit £'000	
Central Costs	2,781	2,991	210	0	210
Direct Services	38,503	37,503	(1,000)	276	(724)
Env, Health & C. Prot	6,165	5,886	(279)	78	(201)
Proj & Business Serv	16,415	14,903	(1,512)	1,775	263
Culture & Sport	23,892	22,114	(1,778)	1,603	(175)
Technical Services	28,482	26,100	(2,382)	1,904	(478)
Total	116,238	109,497	(6,741)	5,636	(1,105)

- 5 The forecast revenue outturn for 2014/15 is under budget against the cash limit by £1.105m, after taking account of the forecast use of reserves, and items outside the cash limit. This compares to the previous forecast at Quarter 2, which was under budget by £0.820m.

- 6 Since Quarter 2 the Neighbourhoods revenue budget has been adjusted to take into account the movement in reserves that were agreed at the end of September 2014.
- 7 The forecast variance is a managed position, reflecting the proactive management of activity by Heads of Service across Neighbourhoods to remain within the cash limit.
- 8 The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are as follows:
- Within Direct Services, premises costs relating to Admin Buildings are under budget by £0.293m. In addition there are additional savings of £0.440m throughout Direct Services due to the early delivery of 2015/16 MTFP savings.
 - The outturn forecast within Technical Services is under budget by £0.478m. The trading areas in Highway and Design Services are generating increased surpluses of approximately £3m but these are offsetting increased policy led expenditure on highway maintenance in relation to Category 1 and Category 2 defects along with general maintenance around patching, drainage and footways (£0.900m). The trading surpluses are also covering off increased expenditure on Bridge Inspections (£0.400m), gully cleansing (£0.300m) and Street Lighting Column Replacements (£1m). Category 1 and Category 2 defects are identified from Highway Safety Inspections and repairs are required in accordance with our Highway Safety Inspection Manual and our Highway Maintenance Plan which are aligned with national standards. Similarly, the increased expenditure on bridges inspections and gully cleansing is to meet the Highway Maintenance Plan which is aligned with national standards.
 - Environment, Health and Consumer Protection is under budget by £0.201m and this is associated with savings on employees and supplies and services. Some of these variances relate to early achievement of 2015/16 MTFP savings requirements.
 - Projects and Business Services is forecast to be over budget by £0.263m. Strategic Waste is forecast to be over budget by £0.319m mainly due to additional costs associated with the Materials Recycling Facility contract for processing of Dry Kerbside Recycling materials, and increased repairs and maintenance costs associated with Power Generation equipment, but this is partially offset by savings within Business Support and Policy, Performance and Communications.
- 9 Taking the projected outturn position into account, including items proposed to be treated as outside the cash limit, the forecasted cash limit reserve to be carried forward for Neighbourhood Services is £3.236m.

Neighbourhood Services Capital 2014 / 2015

- 10 The following table sets out details of forecast spend for 2014/15 analysed by individual Heads of Service areas within the Neighbourhoods capital programme against the revised budget.

Head of Service	Revised Budget £'000	Outturn £'000s	Variance £'000s
EH&CP	0	0	0
Direct Services	5,799	4,464	(1,335)
P & B Services	9,566	6,639	(2,927)
Culture and Sport	3,785	823	(2,962)
Technical Services	28,191	27,193	(998)
Total	47,341	39,119	(8,222)

11 As at Q3 it was identified that there was a need to slip £8.222m in to 2015/16 as a result of delays in a variety of schemes. The details behind this are as follows;

- Vehicles, Plant & Equipment £1.0m
- Bereavement Services £0.4m
- Waste Disposal Infrastructure £2.9m
- Consett Academy – Leisure Centre £0.5m
- Wharton Park £0.4m
- Libraries £1.3m
- Outdoor Play £0.5m
- Seaham Pier £1.1m

Recommendations

12 It is recommended that:

- Overview and Scrutiny note the Quarter 3 forecast outturn position on Revenue and Capital for 2014/15.

Contact:	Terry Collins	Tel:	03000 268080
	Phil Curran	Tel:	03000 261967

APPENDIX 1 - Implications

Finance

To set out details of the Q2 forecast outturn, highlighting areas of over / underspend against the revenue and capital budgets for Neighbourhood Services, at each Head of Service level and for the whole of Neighbourhood Services.

Staffing

There are no implications associated with this report.

Risk

There are no implications associated with this report.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no implications associated with this report.

Accommodation

There are no implications associated with this report.

Crime and Disorder

There are no implications associated with this report.

Human Rights

There are no implications associated with this report.

Consultation

There are no implications associated with this report.

Procurement

There are no implications associated with this report.

Disability Issues

There are no implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

There are no implications associated with this report.

17 April 2015



**Quarter 3 2014/15
Performance Management Report**

**Report of Corporate Management Team
Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader**

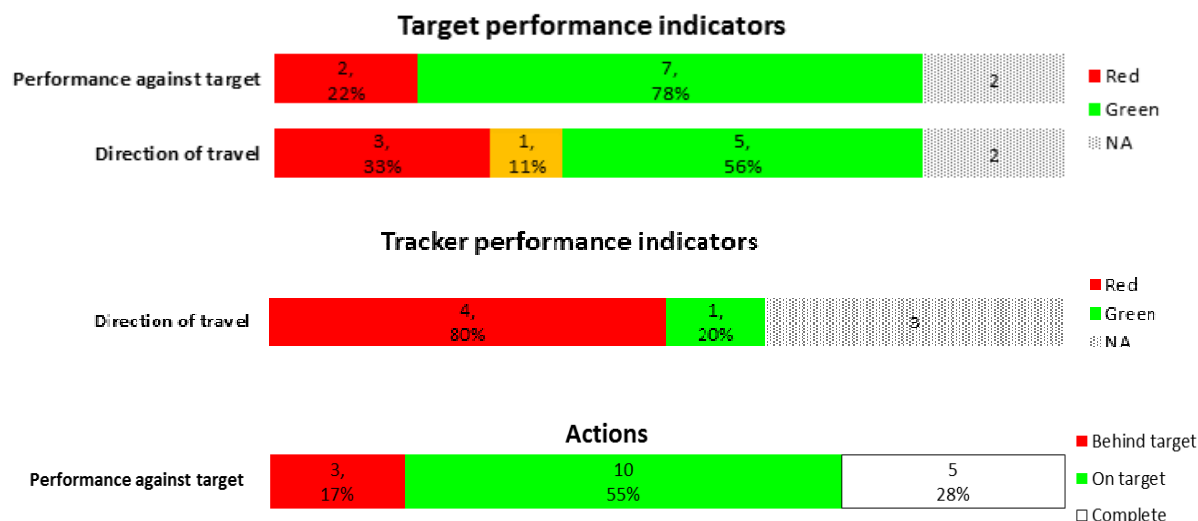
Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators for the Altogether Greener theme and report other significant performance issues for the third quarter of 2014/15 covering the period October to December 2014.

Background

2. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress by Altogether priority theme. Key performance indicator progress is reported against two indicator types which comprise of:
 - a. Key target indicators – targets are set for indicators where improvements can be measured regularly and where improvement can be actively influenced by the council and its partners (see Appendix 3, table 1); and
 - b. Key tracker indicators – performance will be tracked but no targets are set for indicators which are long-term and/or which the council and its partners only partially influence (see Appendix 3, table 2).
3. The report continues to incorporate a stronger focus on volume measures in our performance framework. This allows us to better quantify productivity and to monitor the effects of reductions in resources and changes in volume of activity. Charts detailing some of the key volume measures which form part of the council's corporate basket of performance indicators are presented in Appendix 4.
4. A corporate performance indicator guide has been produced which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources. This is available to view from the intranet or can be requested from the Corporate Planning and Performance Team at performance@durham.gov.uk.

Altogether Greener: Overview



Council Performance

5. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. During the 12 months ending November 2014, 97.7% of municipal waste was diverted from landfill. This exceeds the target set of 85%.
- b. Street and environmental cleanliness achieved targets this period. The results of the second survey relate to the period August to November 2014 and indicate that of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter, 6.2% fell below an acceptable level. Performance was better than the target of 7% but deteriorated from 5.9% reported at the same quarter last year. Of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of detritus, 8.2% fell below an acceptable level. Performance was better than the target of 10% but deteriorated from 7.3% reported at the same quarter last year. Of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of dog fouling, 2.3% fell below an acceptable level. Performance deteriorated from 1.1% recorded at quarter 3 2013/14.
- c. Between October and December 2014, there were 380 renewable energy feed in tariff installations registered and approved, including 379 solar photovoltaic (PV) installations and one wind installation equating to installed capacity of 1.591 megawatts (MW). The period target of 375 installations was exceeded. In relation to renewable energy generation, the installed or installed / approved capacity within County Durham was 215.61MW at December 2014; 187.25MW operational capacity and 28.358MW approved through planning.

6. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- a. During the 12 months ending November 2014, 42% of household waste was re-used, recycled or composted. Performance is below the 45% target and is lower than the 44% reported 12 months earlier but is comparable to the 42% reported in quarter 2 and quarter 1. This can be attributed to contamination of recycling bins and changed legislation in relation to street sweepings. Recycling Assistants continue to educate residents, targeting areas with contamination issues. The Environment Agency has changed legislation in

relation to street sweepings so they can no longer be classed as recycling. This applies to all local authorities across England and Wales and has impacted on the recycling performance indicator. Street sweepings are currently being deposited at the Waste Transfer Stations and are being mixed in with refuse to go for waste treatment. SITA are developing a system to treat separated street sweepings resulting in them being able to be recycled for reuse (stones/gravel/sand).

- b. The tracker indicator for fly-tipping shows there were 9,661 incidents reported in the 12 month period to December 2014. Although incidents have reduced from last quarter (9,922) there was an increase of 22.5% compared to 12 months earlier, when 7,889 incidents were reported (see Appendix 4, Chart 1). An increase in fly-tipping incidents was also observed nationally. Work continues on a review of the fly-tipping and a range of actions are in place to tackle the issue, including campaigns/communications, deployment of CCTV cameras and stop and search operations. Recent outcomes include 23 interviews conducted under The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, four fixed penalty notices, seven duty of care warnings, 26 ongoing investigations (eight submitted to legal), one pending arrest, and one vehicle seized for suspected stolen goods.
- c. The key Council plan actions that have not achieved target are as follows:
 - Delivery of the Waste Transfer Stations Capital Improvement Programme at Annfield Plain, Stanley and Heighington Lane, Newton Aycliffe has been delayed from December 2014 until March 2015. Work is progressing and Heighington Lane (Newton Aycliffe) site is close to completion. The improvement programme was scoped out and planned in, and once commenced, additional out of scope work was identified on the sites. At Annfield Plain a high voltage cable was found underground and had to be dug up. At Heighington Lane, it was thought that only part of the roof needed replacing. Once work commenced it was evident that the whole roof needed replacing. Discussions also took place with Zurich insurers about works they required around fire alarms for insurance purposes.
 - Increased community ownership and involvement in the management of allotments has been delayed until December 2015 from December 2014. Briefing sessions have been carried out with associations and interested parties. There is more work to be done around allotments and the new service plan reflects these challenges. This is an ongoing project and some new community ownership has been established. Working with the voluntary sector has meant some community ownerships are taking longer to establish than others.

7. There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.

Recommendations and Reasons

8. That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the report and consider any performance issues arising there from.

Contact: Jenny Haworth, Head of Planning and Performance
Tel: 03000 268071 E-Mail jenny.haworth@durham.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Implications

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

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

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

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - Corporate health PIs are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Accommodation - Not applicable

Crime and Disorder - A number of PIs and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Human Rights - Not applicable

Consultation - Not applicable

Procurement - Not applicable

Disability Issues - Employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Legal Implications - Not applicable

Appendix 2: Key to symbols used within the report

Where icons appear in this report, they have been applied to the most recently available information.

Performance Indicators:

Direction of travel

Latest reported data have improved from comparable period



Latest reported data remain in line with comparable period



Latest reported data have deteriorated from comparable period



Performance against target

Performance better than target

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Performance >2% behind target

Actions:



Complete (Action achieved by deadline/achieved ahead of deadline)



Action on track to be achieved by the deadline



Action not achieved by the deadline/unlikely to be achieved by the deadline

Benchmarking:



Performance better than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available



Performance in line with other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available



Performance worse than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

Appendix 3: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Table 1: Key Target Indicators

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Greener											
53	NS14a	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level	6.17	Aug - Nov 2014	7.00	GREEN	5.91	RED	11.00		2013/14
54	NS14b	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level	8.21	Aug - Nov 2014	10.00	GREEN	7.33	RED	31.00		2013/14
55	NS10	Percentage of municipal waste diverted from landfill	97.7	Dec 2013 - Nov 2014	85.0	GREEN	74.0	GREEN			
56	NS19	Percentage of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted	42.0	Dec 2013 - Nov 2014	45.0	RED	44.0	RED	42.0	37*	2013/14
57	REDPI53	Percentage of conservation areas in the county that have an up to date character appraisal	41.00	As at Sep 2014	37.00	GREEN	39.00	GREEN			
58	REDPI48	Percentage change in CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations [1]	-9	2013/14	-5	GREEN	5.5	GREEN			
59	NS08	Percentage reduction in CO ₂ emissions from the DCC fleet	3.35	2012/13	Not set	NA	2.01	GREEN			

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
60	NS36	Average annual electricity consumption per street light (kilo-watt hour (KwH)) (estimated)	388.6	2013/14	Not set	NA	New indicator	NA			
61	REDPI49	Number of registered and approved feed in tariff installations	1,095	Oct - Dec 2014	375	GREEN	844	GREEN			
62	NS04	Percentage of recorded actionable defects on carriageways and footways repaired within 24 hours (category 1)	96	Oct - Dec 2014	90	GREEN	96	AMBER			
63	NS05	Percentage of recorded actionable defects on carriageways and footways repaired within 14 working days (category 2.1)	86	Oct - Dec 2014	90	RED	New indicator	NA			

[\[1\] Indicator description amended to accurately reflect how performance is measured](#)

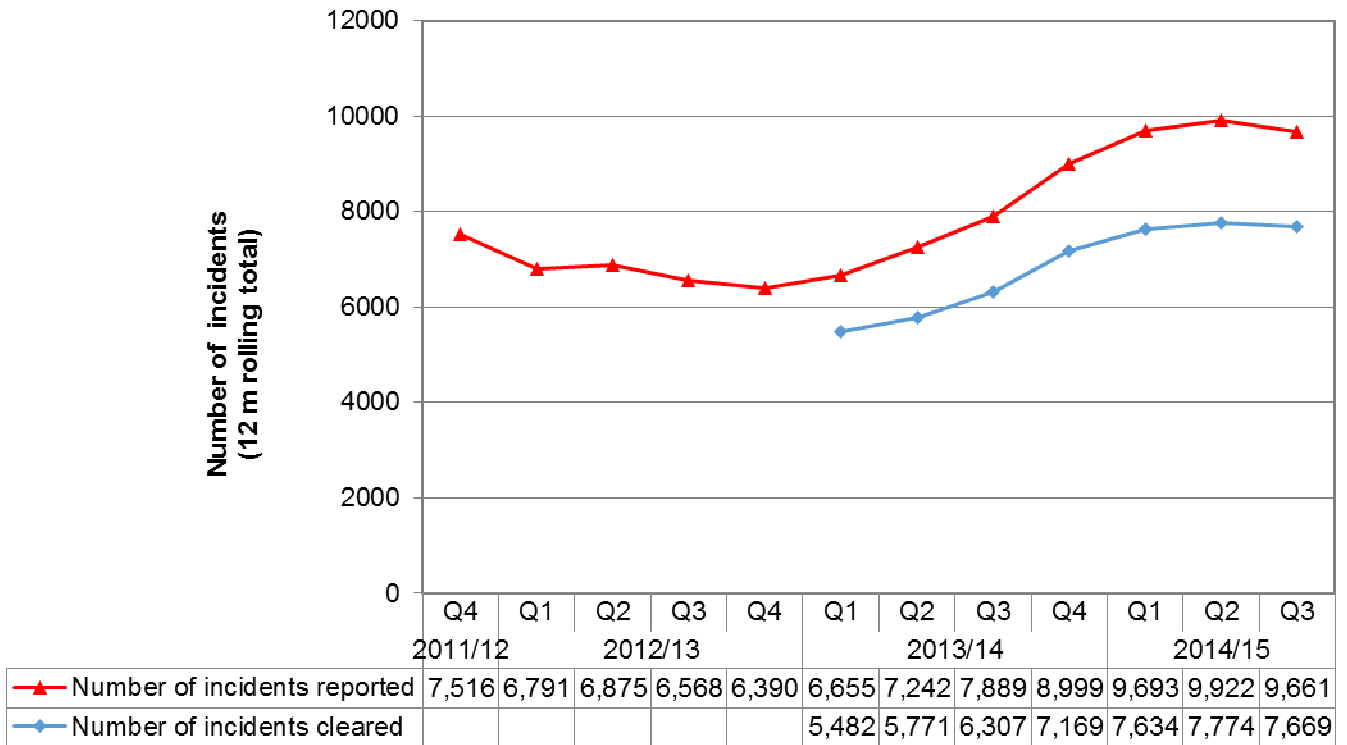
Table 2: Key Tracker Indicators

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Greener											
175	NS14c	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of dog fouling that fall below an acceptable level	2.33	Aug - Nov 2014	0.33	RED	1.11	RED	8		2013/14
176	NS15	Number of fly-tipping incidents reported	9,661	Jan - Dec 2014	9,922	GREEN	7,889	RED			
177	NS16	Number of fly-tipping incidents cleared	7,669	Jan - Dec 2014	7,774	NA	6,307	NA			
178	NS17a	Percentage of household waste collected from the kerbside and recycled	20.8	Dec 2013 - Nov 2014	20.8	AMBER	22.2	RED			
179	NS17b	Percentage of household waste collected from the kerbside and composted	11.2	Dec 2013 - Nov 2014	11.2	AMBER	10.4	GREEN			
180	NS09	Megawatt hours (MWh) of energy produced from municipal waste sent to Sita's 'Energy from Waste' plant	57,743	Dec 2013 - Nov 2014	38,930	GREEN	New indicator	NA			
1	REDPI 46	Percentage reduction in CO ₂ emissions in County Durham	39.0	As at Dec 2012	41.2	RED	41.2	RED	14.0	20*	2012

Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
182	REDPI 47	Renewable energy generation - mega watts equivalent (MWe) installed or installed/approved capacity within County Durham	215.61	As at Dec 2014	213.46	Not comparable [1]	205.13	Not comparable [1]			

[\[1\] Data cumulative year on year so comparisons are not applicable](#)

Chart 1 – Fly-tipping incidents



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



17 April 2015

**Air Quality Management within
County Durham – Update**

**Joint report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive and
Terry Collins, Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the development of the Air Quality Management within County Durham.

Background

- 2 Members will recall that at the meetings of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 10 April and 2 October 2014 information was provided on various air quality management projects undertaken across County Durham for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements of Local Air Quality Management.
- 3 It was agreed by members at the meeting on the 2 October 2014 that the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive a further update at a future meeting detailing, in particular:
 - The progress on the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City. This was identified as the most important of the Local Air Quality Management projects that are currently ongoing within the County. The air quality work recently undertaken by the Pollution Control Team has primarily focused on the development of the Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City.
- 4 Arrangements have been made for Denyse Holman, Pollution Control Manager and David Gribben, Senior Air Quality Officer, Neighbourhood Services to attend the meeting on the 17 April, 2015 to deliver a presentation focusing on:
 - The progress on the completion of the work milestones to prepare the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City. This will include an outline of timescales for the completion of the remaining stages of the project including reporting requirements.
 - The Durham City Draft Air Quality Action Plan: Air Quality Improvement Options Appraisal.

- The strategy and plan for consulting on the draft Air Quality Action Plan.
- The progress and development of the draft Air Quality Action Plan once it is established. This will include details of how we will implement and then evaluate the action plan measures.

Air Quality Management - Background

- 5 The Environment Act 1995 requires the Council to undertake review and assessment of local air quality across County Durham. This has identified areas of Durham City and Chester le Street where the assessed concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, a pollutant that occurs from vehicle emissions, are above the National Air Quality Standard.
- 6 The EC has formally launched infraction proceedings against the UK for breach of the nitrogen dioxide air quality limit values under the EU Air Quality Directive. The Government has discretionary power under the Localism Act 2011 to transfer all or part payment of the fine imposed following infraction proceedings on to Local Authorities that have failed to carry out responsibilities under Local Air Quality Management.
- 7 The Council declared an Air Quality Management Area within Durham City for nitrogen dioxide on the 9th May 2011. This extended across the city centre from Highgate, over Millburngate Bridge to the Hild and Bede roundabout and then along Gilesgate to the junction with Dragon Lane. The boundary of the Air Quality Management Area was extended in July 2014 to include the West End of the city following the route of the A690 to Neville's Cross and down to Stonebridge roundabout together with sections of Claypath and New Elvet.
- 8 The review and assessment of air quality elsewhere has not identified any other areas within the County where the concentrations of air quality pollutants have exceeded the National Air Quality Standards.
- 9 Once an Air Quality Management Area has been declared the Council is required to establish an Air Quality Action Plan. The Action Plan comprises of air quality improvement measures that, when implemented, will reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations towards achieving compliance with the National Air Quality Standards.
- 10 The review and assessment of air quality is continuing across County Durham. An extensive network of non-continuous monitors is now established at all locations where elevated levels of an air quality pollutant may occur. In addition, there are portable and stationary continuous monitors at selected locations within Durham City that measure concentrations of nitrogen dioxide twenty four hours a day.
- 11 The projected and planned development detailed within the County Durham Plan for the county will inevitably have an impact on air quality pollutant emissions. An Air Quality and Planning Guidance Note can now be used for providing advice to developers. The use of the guidance in

dealing with pre-planning requests for advice and for planning applications will ensure the air quality impacts from developments will be assessed and minimised.

Current position

- 12 Air Quality Technical Working and Corporate Steering Groups have been set up to fulfil the tasks of completing the work project of establishing a draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham city by March 2015. A structured programme for the project has been prepared in the form of four work milestones against which progress can be monitored and assessed.
- 13 The Air Quality Technical Working Group identified a list of options for improving air quality in Durham city taking into consideration the outcome of the completed Further Assessment and information on measures that had been incorporated by Councils into Air Quality Action Plans elsewhere. The options were reported and approved by the Air Quality Corporate Steering Group in July 2014.
- 14 The air quality improvement options have now been appraised by determining the reduction in air quality pollutant (nitrogen oxide) achieved by each option. A prioritisation of the options has then been undertaken by allocating a score based upon how beneficial they are in reducing levels of air quality pollutant and on other applicable criteria. The completed Air Quality Improvement Options Appraisal forms an essential part of the draft Air Quality Action Plan document.
- 15 A draft consultation strategy has been prepared and approved by the Air Quality Corporate Steering Group. The strategy sets out the scope, the format of and what we want to achieve from the consultation. It provides opportunity of raising the profile of air quality in Durham city and should not, therefore, be viewed as a single, isolated exercise but instead as an initial stage that can be progressed as the Air Quality Action Plan is developed and implemented.
- 16 A revised schedule of timescales for the completion of the work project, the Draft Air Quality Action Plan document, has been established. These revisions have been necessary to take into consideration delayed comments received on the Air Quality Improvement Options Appraisal. The period for the consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan document has also been set back so that it does not coincide with 'purdah' and the repairs to Milburngate Bridge that are scheduled to commence in July.
- 17 The declared Air Quality Management Area in Chester le Street has been revised to solely include the row of terraced properties known as Menceforth Cottages on Pelton Fell Road.

Next Steps

- 18 Following the establishment of the Air Quality Action Plan the evaluation of the implementation of the measures will be required. This will involve monitoring of 'indicators' e.g. changes in traffic volumes or

congestion/queuing of traffic at strategic locations or of the levels of air quality pollutant (nitrogen dioxide) at receptors. The network of both continuous and non-continuous monitors will therefore be reviewed as the measures are implemented to ensure they are targeted to those locations within the city where improvements are most likely to occur.

- 19 The Air Quality Action Plan will be reviewed and where necessary revised. This is important since it is recognised that changes are likely to occur within and on the periphery of Durham city that potentially will have an impact on local air quality. The Council is required to report progress on the implementation, the outcome of further evaluation and any revisions by the submission of a Progress Report to DEFRA annually.
- 20 The measures included in the Air Quality Action Plan are wide ranging and are the responsibility of other service areas within the Council and not solely the Pollution Control Team. Going forward, therefore, the implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan will be important if it is to be successfully delivered. For each measure, an officer within the Council will be given designated responsibility that will be included within an implementation plan for the project. The carrying out of further evaluation will be dependent on the progress with which measures are implemented. Since the air quality monitoring network within Durham city is operated by the Pollution Control Team it is necessary that the Senior Air Quality Officer is regularly kept updated on the progress on the implementation of each measure.
- 21 The outcome of the monitoring will be periodically reviewed and where there are grounds for doing so the Air Quality Management Area and the Air Quality Action Plan will be revised.
- 22 The Council is required to prepare an Air Quality Action Plan for the Air Quality Management Area in Chester le Street to solely cover Menceforth Cottages on Pelton Fell Road. It is proposed to use the Air Quality Technical and Corporate Steering Groups to complete the project.

Recommendations

- 23 That the members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee note and comment upon the information provided in the attached report and presentation.
- 24 That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive as part of the refresh of the work programme for 2015-16 a further update on the development of air quality management within County Durham.

Background Papers

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Report – 10
April 2014.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There are financial implications associated with the work project that involves the drafting of the Air Quality Action Plan. These include the costs of an external air quality consultancy to undertake an appraisal of the air quality improvement options to prioritise these in order of cost effectiveness. It is also intended that the air quality consultants assist with the consultation on the prepared draft Air Quality Action Plan.

In addition there are cost implications with the implementation of air quality improvement measures incorporated within an Air Quality Action Plan. However as traffic is the source of elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide emissions in the declared Air Quality Management Area in Durham City then it is likely that traffic improvement measures will be necessary and the capital for these should be met from the Local Transport Planning budget.

Further monitoring requirements to assess the impact of air quality improvement measures incorporated into the Air Quality Action Plan may be required. This may include the expansion of the existing non continuous monitoring network and/or the installation of further continuous monitors.

Staffing

Corporate and Technical Working Groups have been set up to establish, develop and implement a draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City.

The delivery of the project will involve the Senior Air Quality Officer and a Public Protection Officer within the Pollution Control Team carrying out the majority of the technical work involved in maintaining and extending the monitoring network across the City. Further the Senior Air Quality Officer will be involved in liaising with the external air quality consultant and also with key individuals both within and outside the Council to establish and develop the draft Air Quality Action Plan.

As well as assisting with the establishment and development of the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City the external air quality consultants will undertake the further assessment of air quality for the additional areas included in the Durham City Air Quality Management Area that was amended in July 2014. Much of this work has been completed as it was necessary for the completion of the Air Quality Improvement Options Appraisal.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Local Air Quality Management focusses on improving or reducing the impacts of air quality. Therefore the Air Quality Action Plan will have a beneficial impact irrespective of the background of the residents of the properties of the areas to which the Air Quality Management Area covers.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out prior to the reports for the designation of the Air Quality Management Areas in Durham City and Chester le Street.

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Human Rights

None

Consultation

A consultation involving residents and Councillors together with other interested parties was undertaken prior to the designation and extension of the Air Quality Management Area in Durham City.

The Council is required to undertake a more detailed form of consultation exercise once a draft Air Quality Action Plan has been established and prior to it being finalised. A strategy and plan for consulting on the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City have been established

Procurement

It may be necessary to purchase further monitoring equipment and/or consultancy services to enable the Council to complete the preparation of the Air Quality Action Plan. The purchase of further monitoring equipment or consultancy services, if required, will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable Council procurement policies and procedures.

Disability Issues

None

Risk and Legal Implications

Once an Air Quality Management Area has been declared there is a legal requirement to establish an Air Quality Action Plan consisting of measures to improve the air quality towards achieving compliance with the National Air Quality Standards for pollutants within the designated Air Quality Management Area.

Failure to undertake Local Air Quality Management responsibilities may lead to judicial review proceedings being progressed against the Council. If faced by a judicial review the Council could not substantiate a case of failing to carry out its legal responsibilities. In addition the Government has discretionary power, under the Localism Act, to require responsible authorities to pay all or part of a fine imposed by EU infraction proceedings.

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



17 April 2015

**European Structural and
Investment Funds – Low Carbon
Economy**

**Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and
Economic Development**

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the latest developments with regard to European Structural and Investment Funds Low Carbon Economy funding and set out the opportunities that are available to County Durham.

Background

2. European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) represent a single growth programme combining European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). For the North East LEP area the 2014 – 2020 ESIF Programme incorporates £250 million of ERDF and £212 million of ESF including £135m for County Durham. This money must be match funded but because County Durham is a Transition area, 60% of total costs can be drawn down, with a requirement to find a minimum of 40% match.
3. The ESIF Growth Programme's top priorities are:
 - support for small and medium-sized businesses
 - Innovation and research and development
 - low carbon economy
 - skills
 - employment and social inclusion

Of most relevance to the Committee is the low carbon economy element which is ring fenced as 15% of County Durham's total ERDF allocation (around £18m). Low carbon economic growth has not featured in previous rounds of ESIF and so very little experience or knowledge existed across the NELEP area to support the development of a pipeline of potential projects.

4. Consequently, Durham County Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Team contributed significantly to the NELEP low carbon submissions to Government and led the development of a portfolio of potential low carbon economy projects for the whole NELEP area. A significant amount of work has been led by this Team over the past 16 months, both in County Durham

and at LEP level, to build new partnerships and identify good low carbon projects. This has put the Council in an excellent position to ensure that projects that could benefit County Durham fit well within the programme.

Current Position

5. The Government is continuing to negotiate the England Operational Programme with the European Commission. Pending final agreement and formal adoption, anticipated in June 2015, the Government advised that an early round of calls for projects would be launched in March 2015. Within the North East the early ERDF calls focus on innovation and SME competitiveness. Owing to low carbon being a new activity for ERDF and the questions remaining over the eligibility of activities and outputs, it favours later project calls to be issued, once the Operational Programme has been approved.
6. On 20th March 2015 a revised, draft English ERDF Operational Programme was circulated. This important document sets out the areas of activity that can be supported under the ESIF programme and the rules and the parameters of spending that the EU Commission will agree to in the UK. Projects must have a defined start and end date and must meet the eligible activity. A minimum of 40% match funding needs to be secured by the project sponsor (50% match is required in the rest of the north east which does not qualify as 'Transition') and records of activity, spend and outputs must be kept for up to 10 years following project completion. It is anticipated that the full programme will commence in summer 2015.
7. Full details of each of the ERDF priority axes are still being negotiated with the European Commission with final certainty anticipated when the England Operational Programme is formally adopted. Under the current, draft document Priority Axis 4, the low carbon economy, is described as 'supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors'. The investment priorities are:
 - **Investment Priority 4a** : Promoting the production and distribution of energy from renewable sources
 - **Investment Priority 4b** : Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises
 - **Investment Priority 4c** : Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings and in the housing sector
 - **Investment Priority 4e** : Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures
 - **Investment Priority 4f** : Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies
8. Two other relevant Priority Axis areas in the Operational Programme are:
 - Priority Axis 5 'Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management'

- Priority Axis 6 ‘Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency’

These are not included in the ring fenced low carbon economy allocation but are loosely linked in the NELEP ESIF strategy under ‘low carbon and sustainable growth’. There is still a lack of clarity as to what measures could be included under these two but there is potential for Green Infrastructure, climate change adaptation and flood alleviation projects, depending on eligibility issues.

9. A great deal of work has taken place over the past 16 months to engage key partners in County Durham and develop eligible project opportunities. Active partners include Durham University, especially the Durham Energy Institute; the Altogether Greener and Local Nature Partnerships; Northern Power Grid; VONNE; the Environment Agency, the Federation of Small Businesses and Chamber of Commerce. Extensive support has been received from directorates across DCC.
10. Key project opportunities have been identified and work is now progressing to develop these. The following section sets out projects currently being explored although these should be seen as a snapshot in time since each is complex and constantly changing.

11. Project Opportunities

- a. Durham Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP)
This project could meet several of the ERDF low carbon outputs and is under consideration as a project that could be led by the Council. A website will present easy to understand case studies and information about energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and actions for businesses, especially SMEs. Business pilots are under development and appropriate financial instruments & mechanisms are being explored to supply both energy surveys and assistance with implementation.
- b. Community Energy
A Community energy project is under discussion with VONNE, which could link to the BEEP project to support community buildings to reduce energy consumption. The project will also explore community owned renewable energy schemes.
- c. Housing
There is significant potential for energy efficiency housing schemes to be developed following the successful model delivered in Craghead, which benefits home owners and private and social rented tenants. However, in order to progress the project proposal, clarification is required on the Government’s output indicator definitions, which appear to exclude any project that could receive ECO or Green Deal funding.

- d. Biomass
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has recently been involved in discussions about using ERDF to develop the biomass supply chain in County Durham. Such a project appeared to be ineligible but the new draft Operational Programme emphasises biomass so exploration of this issue will continue.
 - e. District Heating
District heating is also heavily featured in the Operational Programme and is an aspiration for Durham City, especially as a benefit for the Aykley Heads site. The DECC Heat Networks Delivery Unit has provided a grant of £77,000 to explore the opportunities, including heat pumps from river water and minewater.
 - f. Geothermal Energy
Eastgate is the best site for geothermal electricity generation in the UK but ownership issues and grid problems mean that it is highly unlikely that a project will be developed under the current EDF programme. There is potential for using the hot water for agriculture, however, so this and other potential geothermal sites are still being explored.
 - g. Water Science Hub
A virtual water research centre is under discussion, led by the Environment Agency and Durham University, as nothing similar exists in the UK. This would enable skills and training, the sharing of good practice and new research and development opportunities across the water economy.
 - h. Low Carbon Strategies
The new, draft Operational Programme emphasises 'low carbon strategies' for all types of territory but discussions with DCLG and DECC suggest that there is no clarity over what such a strategy would involve. Durham has a Climate Change Strategy and a Sustainable Energy Action Plan in place but may need to develop an additional document, depending on future guidance. Sustainable transport appears to be central to the Government's plans for such strategies and discussions are therefore being held with the Council's Sustainable Travel Team.
12. Work on the low carbon economy has highlighted the need for funding to assist with developing the detail of potential projects to explore compliance, state aid, match funding, financial instruments, etc. It is hoped that Technical Assistance money might become available for this now that the negotiations between Government and Europe have enabled the first calls to go out.
13. At NELEP level, a consultant was appointed to build on the work that Durham has led over the past year and develop a pipeline of projects across the region. His work has once again highlighted the lack of any leadership on the low carbon economy at regional level, which is a significant gap and missed opportunity, given the £70 million available.

14. The Team is also exploring various European transnational programmes which are currently encouraging projects that address the low carbon economy. These include Horizon 2020 which is 100% funded, where a community energy scheme is being developed with Durham University; Interreg Europe! which attracts 85% funding and could be used to fund a low carbon partnership scheme; and Interreg North West Europe which offers 60% funding opportunities and could possibly be used for both Biomass and Business Energy projects.

Recommendations

15. The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of the report.
- Offer views as to direction of travel of the emerging programme.
- Receive further reports as the programme progresses.

Background Papers

North East Local Enterprise Partnership European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy 2014-20.

England draft Operational Programme 2015

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APPENDIX 1 - Implications

Finance – None

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty - None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation - None

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications - None

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



17 April 2015

**Refresh of the Work Programme
for the Environment &
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide members with information contained within the Council Plan 2015 – 2018, relevant to the work of Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This allows the opportunity for members to refresh the Committee Work Programme to reflect the three objectives and subsequent outcomes identified within the Council Plan for the Altogether Greener priority theme.

Background

2. The current Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programmes focus on the priority areas identified within the context of the Council Plan, Cabinet's forward plan of key decisions, Sustainable Community Strategy, Partnership plans and strategies, performance and budgetary control data and changes in Government legislation.
3. In relation to the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Members will recall that the Work Programme was refreshed at the Committee meeting held on the 3 July 2014, ensuring that areas of focus were in line with current and forthcoming priorities within the Committee's remit. Further areas of focus for the Committee have been added throughout 2014 to reflect changing Government policy and at the request of Members.

Council Plan 2015 – 2018

4. The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council, which covers a four year period and is updated on an annual basis. The plan sets out how the Council will consider the corporate priorities for improvement and the key actions the Authority will take in delivering the long term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's own improvement agenda. Attached at Appendix 2

is the Altogether Greener section of the Council Plan for members' consideration.

5. Within the Council's Altogether Greener priority theme, the focus is ensuring an attractive and 'liveable' local environment and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges.
6. To help address these issues the Council has rationalised the structure of our objectives and outcomes framework to concentrate on three objectives. The "Reduce waste" objective has been removed from the Plan. Whilst this remains an important area to monitor, as all work in this area such as the introduction of the new waste management contracts has now been implemented. The objective around Durham's built environment has also been removed from the Plan as it was felt that there are no significant Council actions for the future in this area. However, this objective has been retained by the Environment Partnership as it is a big area for change for several partner organisations. The rationalised set of objectives and outcomes are set out below:

Deliver a cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment

G1 – Reduce environmental crime

G2 – A sustainable approach to waste management

Maximise the value and benefits of Durham's natural environment

G3 – Enhance mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

G4 – Natural assets are valued and conserved.

Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change

G5 – Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events

G6 - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient

G7 - Improved infrastructure to support sustainable transport

7. Over the next four years, the Council will strive to ensure an attractive and 'liveable' local environment and will contribute to tackling global challenges, by focusing on the actions required to achieve the above objectives.
8. The Council Plan also identifies a series of actions detailing the work which needs to be undertaken by the authority in order to deliver the areas identified above.

Current Work Programme

9. During 2014/15, the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, in depth Scrutiny Reviews, systematic 6 monthly reviews of progress against recommendations and overview presentations in relation to the following areas:

In Depth Scrutiny Reviews

- Management of the Woodland Estate Owned by Durham County Council – Maximise the benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4 – Natural assets are valued and conserved.

Systematic Review

- Flooding - Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G5 – Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events
- Reducing the Council’s Carbon Emissions – Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change – G6 The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient.
- Development of Renewable Technologies - Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change – G6 The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient.

Overview Activity

- Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4 – Natural assets are valued and conserved.
- Clean and Green Teams – Deliver cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment G1 –Reduce environmental crime.
- Air Quality Action Plan and consultation strategy – Deliver cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment G1 - Reduce environmental crime.
- Landscape Scale Projects – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4 – Natural assets are valued and conserved.
- Waste Programme Update – Deliver cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment G1 –Reduce environmental crime; G2 – A sustainable approach to waste management.
- Community Action Team use of targeted interventions – Deliver a cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment G1 - Reduce environmental crime.
- Winter Maintenance Plan Update – Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G5 – Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events.
- European Structural and Investment Funds – Low Carbon Economy Update – Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G6 – The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient.
- Limestone Landscape Programme Update – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4 – Natural assets are valued and conserved.
- Underground Coal Gasification – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G3 – Enhance mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

- Environment Improvement Campaigns – Deliver cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment G1 – reduce environmental crime; G2 – A sustainable approach to waste management.
- Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham Updates – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G3 –Enhance mitigation and adaption to climate change. Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G5 - Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events.
- Local Nature Partnerships – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4- Natural assets are valued and conserved.
- Delivery of Clean Bus Technology – Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G7 – Improved infrastructure and support to transport.
- Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan – Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change G6 - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient.
- Warm Up North - Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change G6 – The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient.
- Tyne and Wear Aquifer Protection Scheme – Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment G4 - Natural assets are valued and conserved.

Budgetary and performance monitoring

- Quarterly budgetary and performance monitoring for Neighbourhood Services Service Grouping.

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

10. Having considered the Altogether Greener section of the Council Plan for 2015 – 2018 it is suggested that the following action areas could be considered in the update of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

Deliver a cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment

- Waste transfer station capital improvement programme/strategy – An overview of the programme and strategy.
- Fly-tipping – Overview of the work of the Task Force.
- Countywide campaigns to tackle environmental crime – Update.
- Garden waste – Update on the collection scheme.
- Revision of refuse collection routes – Overview.
- Environmental initiatives - Overview of schemes undertaken with communities, colleges and schools and volunteering opportunities.

Maximise the value and benefits of Durham’s natural environment

- Allotments – Overview of work undertaken to maximise the use of allotments within the County.
- Contaminated Land Strategy – Update on strategy and detail of how it is delivered across the county.

Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change

- Fuel poverty – Overview of fuel poverty within the County.
- Geothermal energy – Overview of technologies available.
- Strategic cycle route network and walkways – Overview of work undertaken in relation to cycle routes and walkways within the County.

Council Plan

Cross Cutting Themes

11. Below are areas which have a cross cutting issues from other ‘Altogether’ themes that link into Altogether Greener

Altogether	Objective	Outcome	Link to Altogether Greener
Wealthier	Thriving Durham City	Improved infrastructure to support economic growth. W3	G7 - Improved infrastructure to support sustainable transport.
Safer	Reduce Anti-social Behaviour	Reduce incidence of anti-social behaviour and low level crime. S2	G1 – Reduce environmental crime
	Protect vulnerable people from harm	Community and organisational resilience for emergency preparedness, response and recovery. S5	G5 – Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events.
Healthier	Improve the mental and physical wellbeing of the population	Increased physical activity and participation in sports and leisure. H15	G4- Natural assets are valued and conserved.
Better for Children and Young People	Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life	A range of positive activities are available for children and young people. C7	G4 - Natural assets are valued and conserved.
Altogether Better Council	Working with our communities	Communities and stakeholders are	Cuts across all Greener objectives and

		engaged and communicated with ABC4	outcomes.
		Effective Partnership Working ABC5	G5 - Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events.

Next Steps

12. The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the appropriate section from the Council Plan, Appendix 2 (copy attached) to inform the Committee work programme for 2015 - 2016, reflecting on the current work programme detailed in paragraphs 9 and 10 above.
13. Members will receive a further report at the next Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirming/agreeing the Committee's work programme for 2015-2016 based on today's discussion and agreement.

Recommendations

14. That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny note the information contained in Altogether Greener priority theme of the Council Plan 2015-2018. Appendix 2 (copy attached)
15. That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee refresh the work programme for 2015-2016 by discussing and considering those actions identified under the 'Altogether Greener' priority theme of the Council Plan 2015-2018 Appendix 2 and reflected in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the report.
16. That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 8 July 2015, receive a further report detailing the Committee's work programme for 2015-2016.

Background papers:

Council Plan 2015-18 – Cabinet report – 18 March 2015

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Appendix 1: Implications (The following implications are taken directly from the report to Cabinet on 18 March 2015, re the Council Plan and Service Plans 2015-2018.)

Finance - The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next 3 years. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan

Staffing - The Council's strategies are being aligned to achievement of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Risk - Consideration of risk is a key element in the corporate and service planning framework with both the Council Plan and Service Plans containing sections on risk.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - Individual equality impact assessments have been prepared for each savings proposal within the Council Plan. The cumulative impact of all savings proposals in total has also been presented to Council and will be updated as savings proposals are further developed. In addition a full impact assessment has previously been undertaken for the Council Plan. The actions in the Council Plan include specific issues relating to equality and aim to improve the quality of life for those with protected characteristics. The Plan has been influenced by consultation and monitoring to include equality issues. There is no evidence of negative impact for particular groups.

Accommodation - The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan is aligned to the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Crime and Disorder - The Altogether Safer section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to tackling crime and disorder.

Human Rights – None

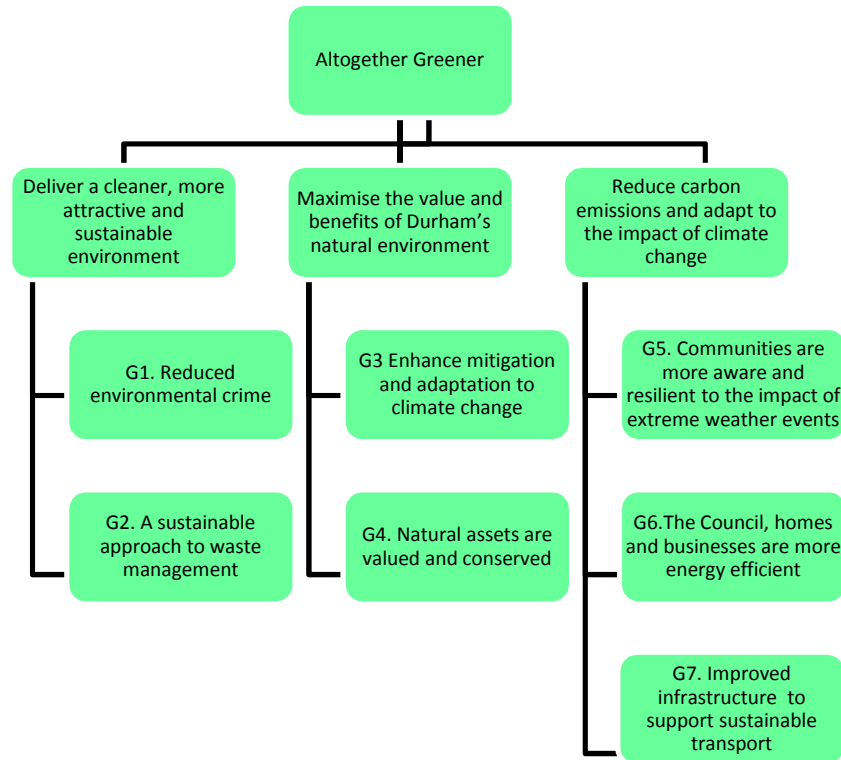
Consultation - Council and partnership priorities have been developed following an analysis of available consultation data including an extensive consultation programme carried out as part of the development of the interim Sustainable Community Strategy and this has been reaffirmed by subsequent consultation on the budget. Results have been taken into account in developing our resourcing decisions.

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None

Altogether Greener



Our Vision

The key aims of the Altogether Greener priority theme are to make environmental improvements and drive sustainable development across the authority area. Key areas of focus include tackling the negative impacts of climate change; encouraging sustainability and energy efficiency; and improving the quality of our local environment.

The Altogether Greener agenda has had to be reconsidered and balanced in line with our diminishing resources and the priorities of our local communities. The need to work with collaboratively with partners, residents and businesses to build collective ownership and action has never been greater.

To help achieve our vision Altogether Greener has the following high level objectives:

1. Deliver a cleaner, more attractive and sustainable environment

Research shows a person's local environment has a profound impact on their quality of life and wellbeing, with neglected environments creating a sense of unease which can create and/or intensify problems of anti-social behaviour. Our local communities recognise this link and consistently rank the quality of their local environment as important.

Over the next three years, we will be **reviewing our operational procedures in relation to street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance**, to ensure that streets and open spaces are consistently well-maintained and free of litter, dog fouling, graffiti and dumped rubbish. We will **reduce environmental crime** by continuing to target those who deliberately blight our environment using multi-agency countywide programmes of improved intelligence, greater education and awareness, and tougher enforcement measures.

Delivery of the **Waste Programme** remains a key area of focus. The Waste Programme underpins our Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which places an emphasis on sustainable waste management, prioritising waste reduction, re-use and recycling. It will deliver significant cost and environmental savings through operational changes, reduced contract costs, elimination of landfill tax payments, increased recycling and energy generation.

Future improvement projects include: maximising the potential of our Waste Transfer Stations following significant capital investment; reviewing our approach to business waste in Durham City to improve cleanliness, harmonising collection arrangements for clinical waste, and implementing both the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) provision plan and the garden waste collection scheme.

However, success will not be achieved by us alone. To be truly successful we need to build a strong sense of community and increase the number of people engaged in the improvement of their own communities, for example, participation in 'in-bloom' initiatives. We will continue to build on environmental initiatives within schools and colleges, promote our environmental awareness programmes and encourage local volunteering.

2. Maximise the value and benefits of Durham's natural environment

Our natural environment is incredibly important. It provides employment, education, areas to enjoy, relax and reflect, as well as the resources and raw materials essential for life. In addition, research has consistently shown that engagement with 'green' environments by, for example, visiting the countryside, enjoying green spaces in towns and cities, watching wildlife or volunteering can provide significant physical, mental and social benefits. Therefore, as a society we need to value the natural environment and ensure it is protected for future generations.

We will continue to work with our partners and communities to deliver projects that will conserve and enhance the unique biodiversity, geo-diversity, landscape, rich heritage and cultural assets of County Durham. Through **landscape scale projects** delivered by various partnerships, we also work to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of specific landscape areas such as the North Pennines AONB and Durham Heritage Coast. We are also aware that resilient and healthy ecosystems across our rural and urban landscapes play a crucial role in absorbing and storing carbon, and thus helping to protect us from climate change.

Where budgets allow, and in line with community requirements, we will carry out improvements to enhance our urban parks and open spaces, for example, the commencement of an improvement programme for **Wharton Park** in Durham

City. We will also be working with our communities to **maximise the use of allotments** and encourage sustainable food production.

We will continue to support delivery of the **Contaminated Land Strategy**, which outlines how we will identify historic sources of contamination and work with land owners to prevent, remedy or mitigate any harm or pollution that may have resulted, as well as **Air Quality Action Plans**, which set out how we will reduce air pollution levels and improve standards of air quality.

3. Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change.

The reality of climate change is now generally accepted and although it may bring some localised benefits, such as fewer winter deaths in temperate climates and increased food production in certain areas, the overall effects are likely to be overwhelmingly negative. In recent years, we have experienced more extreme weather events and we expect more major flooding incidents as well as hotter summers in the future.

As a reflection of the seriousness of climate change, European targets have been set that oblige us to achieve a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. Our **Carbon Management Strategy** not only sets out how we will achieve this target but also how we will lessen the impact of the unavoidable consequences of climate change. Improvement projects underway include increasing the energy efficiency of our buildings, reducing the carbon footprint of our operations, retrofitting 41,000 street lights as part of the 6 year **Street Lighting Energy Reduction Programme** and incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS) to reduce surface water flooding and improve water quality at a local level. We are working through the North East partnership scheme **Warm Up North** to help households with energy saving improvements, for example central heating, double glazing and wall or loft insulation. The scheme can help private homeowners, rented property owners and those on low incomes meet upfront costs of making their properties more energy efficient.

We will continue to invest in a programme of improvements that will encourage and enable people to commute to work, education and services by sustainable modes of transport. One of such initiatives will be to develop and improve the **strategic cycle route network** across County Durham to provide improved links and access to main towns and rural locations. Not only would this enhance the environment, it would also contribute to the quality of people's lives, fitness, health and well-being.

Summary

Going Well:	Look Out For:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our Street Lighting Energy Reduction Programme is 50% complete; more than 20,000 street lights retrofitted to date reducing energy costs by £450,000• Over 1,100 households received installations to improve energy efficiency through 'Warm Up North' Scheme• 1,700 people volunteered as part of the 2014 Big Spring Clean campaign. During the 3,000 volunteer hours, 1,200 bags of litter were collected and, trees and debris were removed from the River Wear in Durham City.• Work is progressing with the development of a new cycle/walk multi user route between Shildon and Newton Aycliffe (Note: moved from 'Going Well' in Wealthier section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A shared-use walking and cycling path in Aycliffe industrial estate (between Heighington station and Hitachi);• Resurfacing of the national cycle network route 14 (Durham City Riverbanks);• Construction of the next phase of the Great North Cycle Way between Chester le Street and Durham and a new shared use route between West Rainton and Carrville, which will become Cycling Super Routes.• 2015 Heritage Open Days which will allow free access to nearly 70 venues across the county for 4 consecutive days in early September 2015• Volunteering opportunities to help improve the local environment and make neighbourhoods a cleaner and greener place to live;• Opportunities to make a valuable contribution to improving our countryside as a Volunteer Countryside Ranger• 2015/16 Community Action Team Programme identifying the 10 locations across the county which are most in need of targeted interventions to tackle local housing and environmental issues• 2015 Big Spring Clean (28th February to 18th April)

<p>Cause for Concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in severe weather events; including prolonged winter snow, heavy rain storms, high winds	<p>Did you know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 97.1% of municipal waste is now diverted from landfill• More than 2,200 tonnes of furniture and household items were saved from disposal and provided for families on low incomes as part of the DCC's Reuse Scheme. The County Durham Refuse forum received a prestigious best Partnership Award in 2014 from the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee• DCC were awarded 15 green flags for our parks, open spaces, countryside sites and cemeteries• Durham City and Sedgefield were both being awarded a gold gilt award for their entries in Britain in Bloom 2014.
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**County Durham Environment Partnership Board
Minutes**

**Tuesday 10th December 2014
Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham**

Apologies

Julian Carrington - Environment Agency
 Julie Form - Groundwork North East
 Gordon Elliott - Durham County Council
 Stuart Timmiss - Durham County Council

Attendees:

Chair: Terry Collins - Durham County Council

Adrian Vass - Natural England
 Tara Duncan - Durham University
 Jim Cokill - Durham Wildlife Trust
 Claire Thompson - Durham Wildlife Trust
 Councillor Barbara Graham - Durham County Council
 Diane Close - Durham County Council
 Oliver Sherratt - Durham County Council
 Steve Bhowmick - Durham County Council
 Peter Dunn - Durham County Council
 Jayne Watson - Durham County Council
 Victoria Burrell - Durham County Council
 Stella Hindson - Durham County Council
 Beverley Clark (Minutes) - Durham County Council

Item No.	Subject	Action By
1.	Welcome and Introductions The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted. Introductions were given.	
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising Consideration was given to the minutes of 23 rd September 2014. The group was informed that Tara Duncan had accepted the role of Chair to The Climate Change Group. It was reported that The Limestone Landscape Project had been extended.	
3.	Flooding Scrutiny Report Councillor Graham provided an overview of The Flooding Scrutiny Report which was agreed on 10 th September 2014. The report provided the Board with the key	

	<p>findings and recommendations of the Environment and Sustainable Committee review report on flooding.</p> <p>Councillor Graham thanked members of the Environment Board who had contributed towards the report and asked that members of the Board note the key findings and recommendations contained within the report.</p> <p>It was noted that severe weather is causing more issues and devastation therefore it is in our interest to support this work in order to protect and look after the environment.</p> <p>It was stated that surface water flooding is a big issue – there is a 80% risk from surface water flooding and 20% from rivers and streams. There is a need to look at land use. The infrastructure around the country and county is no longer fit for purpose. It is necessary for farmers to manage streams and ditches.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Heritage Open Days</p> <p>Peter Dunn circulated copies of the Heritage Open Days booklet. He then delivered a presentation where the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Open Days were held between 11th and 14th September 2014. • This year was the 20th year anniversary. • Heritage Open Days is a national event celebrating England’s architectural and cultural sites. • Free entry. • 7,500 copies of the 2014 booklet printed. • 69 venues in 2014. • Venues included Escomb Saxon Church, East Durham Heritage & Lifeboat Centre, DLI Memorial, Old Durham Gardens, Auckland Castle & Park, Binchester Roman Fort, Soho Engine Shed- Locomotion and Raby Park & Gardens. • 9018 visitors showing a 235% increase since 2009. • Heritage Open Days nationally – over 2.1 million visitors in 2013 and over 3 million visitors in 2014. • 376 English Heritage feedback forms returned by visitors at venues. • Feedback postcards returned indicate that 84 visitors are from outside County Durham (22%) and 3 visitors are from overseas. <p>Peter reported that funding had ended in July this year for the support officer.</p> <p>It was proposed that Bowes Museum could be a possible future venue for Heritage Open Days.</p> <p>A discussion took place as to whether a booklet or leaflet should be printed for the event next year. It was reported that a leaflet would have website addresses and this could perhaps limit people who do not use the internet. It was pointed out that if a booklet is produced there would</p>	

	<p>be an opportunity for sponsorship within it. A suggestion was raised of adding age profiles to the feedback form to ascertain the ages of attendees. Adrian Vass made Peter aware of The Heritage Environment Forum. Booklets are circulated in libraries, council offices, Durham University and the venues themselves. Information is also available on the internet. It was stated that there is a greater need to promote Heritage Open Days. Peter requested members of the Board assist with the wider circulation of next year's booklets.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Presentation – Natural Environment, Health and Wellbeing Claire Thompson delivered a presentation on the Natural Environment, Health and Wellbeing which looked at opportunities to influence The Joint Needs Assessment and The Joint Health and Well-being Strategy. She gave background information on the work and role of the Local Nature Partnership. Claire has had a busy 6 months working on scoping and planning, relationship development, promotional and communications planning and mapping. A workshop was held in September regarding improving communications. Claire is exploring the link between health and the natural environment. She is looking at how the natural environment can create more daily movement in people. The Government suggests that LNPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to shaping the priorities in 'joint health and wellbeing strategies' (JHWS). • Incorporating the value of the natural environment to people's health and wellbeing in 'joint strategic needs assessments' (JNSA). • Contribute to local delivery of Public Health Outcomes Frameworks. <p>Claire is to circulate the Health and Wellbeing document electronically to all for feedback. Jayne Watson to liaise with Victoria Burrell regarding the JNSA.</p>	<p>Claire Thompson Jayne Watson/Victoria Burrell</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Updates from Group Chairs and Questions <u>Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group</u> Oliver Sherratt circulated copies of The Coastal Heritage and Landscape Steering Group Newsletter. He reported The North Pennines AONB have been granted over £400,000 by The Heritage Lottery Fund for a new five year programme to begin in early 2015. The project is called 'Cold Blooded and Spineless' and will deliver training to improve identification skills and understanding of invertebrates in the North Pennines. The group is working on refreshed projects which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending wildflower meadows – extending to 	

road verges.

- A pilot programme in the AONB looking at reducing highway verge cuttings.
- Woodlands – woodland estate. Scrutiny committee looking at their management.
- River Skerne – now called bright Water. Initial approval has been received from Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Heritage at Risk.
- Durham City Riverside and Riverbanks.
- Destination development plans – opens up tapping into tourism.
- Launched 'Operation Stop It' which is a new flytipping campaign. Leaflets regarding this were circulated by Oliver as well as a 'Caught on Camera' poster.

Environment in Your Communities

Victoria Burrell stated that the group is realigning its focus and looking at its membership. A meeting was held on 25th November where it was decided that the key focus should be on two themes.

1. Growing Projects – community allotments.
2. Waste – which includes commercial waste, flytipping, recycling, litter, etc. The group will be focused on the waste hierarchy and litter projects.

Julian Carrington will lead on the Waste group and Ian Hoult will lead on the Growing Projects. The group is much more positive and focused.

Local Nature Partnership

An update was given by Jim Cokill who reported that:

- He had recently attended a meeting with the LEP.
- The LNP is working with the Sustainability group to look at the funding application process.
- Liaising with Natural England and Durham County Council on mapping.
- Working on the River Skerne Project.

DEFRA

Adrian Vass reported that he had attended a meeting last week regarding the Upland Chain and 70% of farmers had issues with the scheme.

DEFRA has £100 million shortfall this year and the year after.

The Environment Agency is looking at the Rural Base Management Plan.

In terms of Natural England there is a national audit on the red squirrel programme being carried out.

Climate Change Group

Tara Duncan provided an update on the work of the group. She has had meetings with key members of the

	Sustainability group and the Environment Partnership Chairs. The group is trying to keep focused on the strategy document and aiming to involve the community more. They are concentrating on community buildings and looking at building surveys. Looking to build up ideas.	
7.	Environment Partnership Communications Stella Hindson presented the winter edition of The Environment Partnership newsletter. Stella is to circulate the newsletter electronically to all for comment. Send all positive news items to Stella to include in future editions.	Stella Hindson
8.	Environment Awards Feedback Terry Collins reported that the Environment Awards event was very successful and positive. The event was enjoyed by all and there was a great deal of publicity. There were three outstanding awards presented. Steve Bhowmick stated that the Environment Awards are in the service plan for next year but sponsorship is required. A retrospective publication charting the improvement of the environment of the County over 25 years of the Awards is still in the pipeline but further discussion is needed. Steve and Stella to discuss.	Steve Bhowmick/Stella Hindson
9.	AOB Terry Collins informed the Group that Lumiere will be taking place on 12 th to 15 th November 2015. Terry to bring more information to the next meeting. For Lumiere it was suggested that a map giving walking distances to the installations could be used for around the city.	Terry Collins

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