



Electoral division(s) affected:

All

Purpose of the Report

To provide information to the Council on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 10 July 2024 to enable Members to ask related questions by no later than midday 3 working days before the day of the meeting.

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Item 1 - Climate Emergency Response Plan 3 - Key Decision: NCC/2024/002

Item 2 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029
and Delivery Plan

Item 3 - 2023/24 Final Outturn for the General Fund and Collection Fund

Item 4 - Adoption of the County Durham Housing Strategy and Delivery
Plan

Item 5 - Home to School Transport Services – Proposals and Policy
Update

Item 6 - Productivity Plan

Item 7 – County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations

1. Climate Emergency Response Plan 3 - Key Decision: NCC/2024/002

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which provided a final update on progress of the Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP2). The report also presented a third Climate Emergency Response Plan for the period 2024-27 (CERP3) for adoption.

On 20th February 2019 Durham County Council declared a Climate Emergency and following extensive consultation developed a Climate Emergency Response Plan (2020-22) which detailed a two-year costed delivery programme to chart key early actions towards meeting Council and countywide targets.

Progress against the first CERP was significant (and notwithstanding the additional temporary reductions in emissions from transport and buildings arising from the covid pandemic), allowed the Council with partners as part of CERP2 (2022-24) to raise the level of challenge to new targets of Net Zero emissions from operations, with at least an 80% actual reduction in emissions (from a 2008/09 baseline) for Council activities, as well as bring forward the countywide achievement of net zero from 2050 to 2045 (from a 1990 baseline).

The CERP2 contained 150 detailed and costed actions (with 124 either complete or on track) that the Council with partners would be undertaking to meet its targets, and the progress reported to Cabinet on 11th October 2023 has been maintained and was summarised in the report.

Decision

We noted progress against CERP2 projects which had helped to achieve a Council 61% reduction in tCO₂e (2022/23) since 2008/9 and a Countywide 54% reduction (2021) in tCO₂e from 1990 levels.

We agreed to the adoption of CERP3, the success of which will be reliant on a combination of national, regional and local funding. We noted that as part of the development of CERP3 the performance measurement for the Council has been refined in line with the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol to focus just on those elements that the Council has operational control. This had adjusted Council performance in 2022/3 to 62.7% reduction from baseline; and agreed that further refinement in line with the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol would be needed if the 2008/09 baseline exceeds a 3% quantitative threshold.

2. Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24 – Period to 31 December 2023 and Update on Progress towards achieving MTFP (13) savings

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided the final revenue and capital outturn for the General Fund and the final outturn for the dedicated schools grants and schools for 2023/24.

We also considered the final outturn for the Council Tax and Business Rates collection fund for 2023/24, the use of and contributions to earmarked, cash limit and general reserves in 2023/24 together with the closing position regarding balances held at 31 March 2024.

The achievement of Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) (13) savings targets for 2023/24 was set and the outcome of a review of all earmarked reserves, which had resulted in set of proposals to repurpose a range of these reserves was also set out in the report.

Decision

We noted the detail in the report which included the:

- 2023/24 final revenue outturn underspend position;
- 2023/24 overall cash limit overspend position;
- overall net council underspend in 2023/24;
- closing General Reserve balance which was within the council's general reserves policy of retaining a balance of between 5% and 7.5% of the net budget requirement;
- closing balance on earmarked reserves (excluding cash limit and schools reserves) at 31 March 2024;
- Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools outturn position and closing balances on DSG/ Schools reserves;
- performance against the various prudential indicators agreed by Council in February 2023;
- outturn position the Collection Funds in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates; and
- amount of savings delivered against the 2023/24 targets and the total savings that will have been delivered since 2011.

We approved the transfer of reserves as part of the review of reserves and the revised capital budget £645.123 million for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28.

3. County Durham Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which sought our approval to recommend the adoption of the County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS) and the accompanying twelve month delivery plan to the Council. The current housing strategy was adopted in 2019. The wider economy has changed significantly since then, with the impact of covid, the cost of living crisis, and rising levels of homelessness requiring a new strategy and vision for housing in County Durham. The CDHS has been developed to consider housing issues across County Durham up to 2035. The strategy provides a strategic framework to inform the actions and investment of the council and its partners and has been developed to ensure the council is well positioned to maximise future opportunities for funding support. The CDHS 2024 will replace the current housing strategy adopted in 2019. The strategy has been developed following two rounds of consultation with partners and stakeholders, including local residents, which was undertaken in parallel with the Homelessness Strategy.

A review of progress of delivery of the strategy will be carried out annually. This will include and address any policy or funding changes from work relating to devolution, and differences in demand to the service. The delivery plan will be updated accordingly following the annual review.

Decision

We recommended that County Council adopt the County Durham Housing Strategy and the associated twelve month delivery plan.

4. Home to School Transport Services – Proposals and Policy Update

We considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth and the Corporate Director of Resources which presented proposals in relation to the Maintained Concessionary scheme, a revised Personal Travel Budget offer and an updated Home to School Transport policy.

Decision

We agreed to a new Personal Travel Budget provision which included two payment rates of 45p per mile at the standard rate and an enhanced payment of 75p per mile where young people have additional support needs on transport. We also agreed the updated Home to School Transport Policy.

However, we are to give further consideration to the proposals concerning the maintained concessionary scheme.

5. Productivity Plan

We considered a report of the Chief Executive which sought approval of the Council's Productivity Plan which demonstrates how the council plans to improve service performance and reduce waste. Productivity Plans were a new requirement for all local authorities in England to produce a Plan which should reference pre-existing plans and strategies. Councils are required to approve and publish a Productivity Plan on their website, to forward a copy to the government by 19 July and to regularly monitor the plan.

Decision

We approved the Productivity Plan for Durham County Council.

6. County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which asked use to recommend the adoption of the County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document (MWPAD) to the Council. This followed the conclusion of an independent examination by planning inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State. The MWPAD has been prepared to supplement the County Durham Plan (CDP). It includes high level strategic policies and allocations relating to minerals and waste and replaces the remaining saved policies of the County Durham Minerals Local Plan (CDMLP) and County Durham Waste Local Plan (CDWLP), both of which are now outdated. The MWPAD covers the whole of the administrative area of County Durham and contains 24 policies.

Decision

Having considered the contents of the inspector's report into the examination of the County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document (MWPAD), we recommended that County Council adopt the Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document, incorporating the main modifications (MMs) and other additional modifications.

We also recommend that the County Council approves the updating of the County Durham Plan (CDP) policies map tiles 22 and 29 and authorise the making of any necessary minor textual, presentational or layout amendments to the County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document (MWPAD).

We noted the content of the adoption statement prepared in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Background Papers
Cabinet Agenda and Reports

[Cabinet - 10 July 2024](#)

Councillor A Hopgood
Leader of the Council
17 September 2024