

**2 October 2014**

**Update: Reducing the Council's  
Carbon Emissions Scrutiny  
Review**

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**Joint report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive  
and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and  
Economic Development**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The attached Appendix 2 describes the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained within the 'Reducing the Council's Carbon emissions' Scrutiny review report published in January, 2013.

**Background**

- 2 The work programme of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2012-13 reflected the five objectives set out in the 'Altogether Greener' section of the Council Plan 2012 – 16. One of these Objectives is to mitigate the impact of climate change which will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in County Durham.
- 3 Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered that as a local authority, Durham County Council is well placed to drive and influence carbon emission reductions through the services it delivers and its regulatory and strategic functions and it has been part of the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme since 2009. It was therefore agreed that a Scrutiny Review would be undertaken by the Committee focusing on reducing the Council's carbon emissions.
- 4 'Reducing the Council's Carbon Emissions' Scrutiny Review report was considered by Cabinet at the meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2013. At that meeting Cabinet agreed the recommendations contained within the review report which included a recommendation for a six monthly update on progress against recommendations contained in the report. The last update was provided to the Committee at the meeting on the 24 October, 2013 and it is therefore considered timely for a further update to be given to members at the October meeting of the committee.

## **Terms of Reference of Review**

- 5 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2012 agreed to undertake a review of the Council's Carbon Management Programme to assess whether the Council is on course to:
- Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by a minimum of 40% from the Council's 2008/09 baseline of 105,816 tonnes by 2015.
  - Deliver savings in energy costs of at least 20% against business as usual predictions by 2015.
  - Quantify the direct carbon emissions from the Council's activities and allocate ownership of those emissions to Service Groupings and services by 2012 to allow emissions reduction targets and carbon budgets to be included in Service Plans and monitored by 2013.
  - Create a 'low carbon culture' within the Council by raising awareness, providing formalised training and gaining support from staff and senior management.

## **Recommendations of the Review**

- 6 The Scrutiny review report made recommendations in respect of:-
- The importance of a corporate and co-ordinated approach in relation to reducing carbon emissions and the need for service groupings to continue to proactively engage with the Council's Carbon Management Programme Board.
  - That the Council/Cabinet continues to explore opportunities for 'invest to save' that will result in significant reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions and ultimately lead to savings and efficiencies.
  - That Elected Members be provided with detailed information on any trials/schemes in relation to street lighting in their area prior to residents.
  - That more Eco Champions be recruited to promote simple energy saving changes. As part of the corporate induction programme Elected Members be provided with information on the Council's Carbon Management Programme and that volunteers are sought from elected members to act as Eco Champions.
  - That the use of innovative technology be looked at to reduce business travel.

- That the Committee continues to monitor the progress being made to achieve the Council's carbon reduction targets through the current quarterly performance monitoring reports and receives regular updates by members of the Council's Sustainability, Carbon and Climate Change Team and Carbon Management Programme Board.
- That all staff and Elected Members be made aware of the Council's carbon reduction targets, the financial impact and energy use and the savings that can be made by using energy more effectively

### **Current position**

- 7 The attached Action Plan (Appendix 2) provides information on the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny review report.

### **Next steps**

- 8 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the systematic review process will receive a further update of progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in the review report at a future meeting of the Committee.

### **Recommendations**

- 9 Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and comment upon the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny Review report.
- 10 That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a further report detailing progress made against the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny Review report at a future meeting of the Committee.

### **Background Paper(s)**

Reducing the Council's Carbon Emissions Scrutiny Review report – January, 2013.

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Update: Reducing the Council's Carbon Emissions Scrutiny Review report – 24 October, 2013.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – None

**Staffing** – None

**Risk** - None

**Equality and Diversity** – An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in respect of the Scrutiny Review recommendations.

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** - None

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** – None

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Discrimination Act** – None

**Legal Implications** –None