

Environment Sub-Committee

9 September 2015

Present: Councillor B Burdis (Chair)
Councillors D Drummond, E Hodson, W Lott and
M Thirlaway.

Also in attendance: Councillor J J Stirling, Cabinet Member
responsible for the Environment

E13/9/15 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Bell, G Bell, J Cassidy, P Brooks and G Madden.

E14/9/15 Substitute Members

There were no substitutes reported.

E15/9/15 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

E16/9/15 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2015 be confirmed.

E17/9/15 Councillor J J Stirling - Cabinet Member with Responsibility for the Environment

Councillor J J Stirling the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment attended the meeting to outline the steps being taken by the Authority to reduce the carbon footprint of its services and operations. He explained that the Authority was following the three key stages of the energy hierarchy: Energy Reduction, Energy Efficiency and Energy Generation.

At the end of 2014/15 the Authority had reduced its carbon footprint by 16% when compared to the baseline of 2010/11. He explained that it would have been around 22% but for a change in the way carbon from electricity taken from the National Grid was measured. He still expected that by the end of 2015/16 the Authority's carbon footprint would have been reduced by approximately 25%. The Authority had continued to invest in technology, including Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting at the Hadrian Leisure Centre, Quadrant East and the Lakeside Leisure Centre along with the installation of Solar Photovoltaics (Solar PV) and Combined Heat and Power Units at the Lakeside Leisure Centre.

He explained that the Authority would also be carrying out a strategic property review to reduce the number of buildings it used.

He explained that the Authority had:

- Introduced carbon budgets for the authority's buildings, nominated a responsible team member to manage the carbon budget and trained key staff members in the principles and practical application of energy management;
- Delivered environmental behaviour change campaigns across the Authority to promote energy efficiency;
- Introduced a hub and spoke service delivery model across the Authority which had enabled it to close 50 buildings. A strategic property review had also identified a further 30 building which could be closed;
- Reduced the vehicle fleet by 25% and improved fuel efficiency through route optimisation, zonal working and vehicle tracking; and
- Helped schools to implement the Eco School Programme.

The Authority had made use of modern technology to reduce the energy it used in delivering services for residents. It had delivered a number of LED lighting projects as part of an energy delivery plan in conjunction with Capita. In addition it had:

- Agreed a street lighting reduction programme which involved the replacement of 10,700 150W lamps in residential areas with more efficient 100W units. Each of the lamps had been fitted with the Mayflower control equipment which allowed the lamps to be dimmed and trimmed to save additional energy.
- Delivered a programme to switch off lights in non residential areas between midnight and 5.30am
- Replaced 400 lamps along the Coast Road which reduced energy consumption from 400W to 288W per lamp, making a saving of over 25%

All of the above had saved the Authority around £350K per year in electricity charges and reduced the carbon footprint by around 3,000 tonnes. The North Tyneside Living Sheltered Accommodation PFI which would build and refurbish 26 housing schemes had commenced and would reduce their carbon footprint by a third.

The Authority had installed 3 combined heat and power units in leisure facilities which would improve energy efficiency and generate electricity for use on the site. In addition the Authority had started to develop a key strategy and vision for future energy use and to investigate a range of potential energy generation schemes including district heat networks, Solar PV and wind power.

He explained that to reduce the carbon footprint of the borough the Authority had delivered a Warm Zone Scheme which had insulated 16,000 homes and the new scheme which commenced in 2013 had delivered 607 heating and insulation improvement to homes, which had saved residents £232K in their fuel bills. The Authority had also delivered one of the largest Solar PV schemes in the country. 1,500 council houses had had solar arrays installed and during 2014 these had generated up to 3,000 megawatt hours of electricity, which had saved nearly 1,700 tonnes of carbon.

In addition the Authority worked with a number of partners to train young people in household energy efficiency and to develop a bespoke North Tyneside Carbon Award Scheme to help businesses to reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions. Work had also started with a number of community groups and voluntary organisations to explore the use of community energy generation schemes.

Members sought clarification on the payback times for the various energy saving measures. It was explained that LED lights fitted to buildings had a very short payback time of around 3 years. Swimming pool covers on the other hand were not yet viable due to the long payback time. It was noted that whilst the cost of Solar PV panels had reduced the Government had recently reduced the feed-in tariff paid to resident. This could have an impact on firms willing to work with the Authority to install further solar panel schemes.

Reference was also made to the benefits of planting trees in the borough which could be used to offset the use of carbon.

The chair thanked Councillor Stirling for his presentation and for responding to Members' questions.

It was **agreed** that the presentation be noted.

E18/9/15 North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership – Progress Update

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update of the activities of the North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership at its meeting held on 15 July 2015. These activities included:

- Considering progress being made in respect of the Killingworth and Longbenton Sustainable Drainage Partnership scheme. It was noted that the next phase of the scheme would involve targeted engagement with residents and landowners;
- Receiving an financial update on the schemes associated with the Flood Risk Implementation Plan;
- The review of the flood season plan;
- An update on community preparedness and resilience and;
- An update on the work of the Local Flooding Authority

It was **agreed** that the report be noted.

E19/9/15 Report of the Cycling Strategy Sub Group

The Sub-committee received a report from the Cycling Strategy Sub-group which had been established to examine whether the current cycling strategy and the 2030 Vision to make North Tyneside the cycling borough of the North East were still appropriate and to identify steps which could be taken to improve the cycling experience in North Tyneside.

The remit of the Sub-group had been to ensure that the 2015-19 Cycling Strategy could be used to improve cycling in North Tyneside and that it could also be used to maximise investment in cycling facilities in the borough.

The Sub-group had met on five occasions and had undertaken desk based research to identify examples of best practice. In addition the Sub-group had been assisted by representatives of a number of cycling groups who made use of the cycling network in the Borough.

The Sub-group had identified 4 recommendations which, if implemented, would result in ensuring that infrastructure for cycling was designed and delivered in line with international best practice and the health and environmental benefits of cycling could be supported across the authority.

It was **agreed** that the report of the Cycling Strategy Sub-group be accepted and referred to Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee with a request that the report be referred to the next available meeting of the Cabinet.

E20/9/15

Public Rights of Way Report

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the Cabinet's response to the Rights of Way Sub-group's report on the Public Rights of Way Network following its meeting held on 8 June 2015. The report had given consideration to the implications of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which provided a cut-off date by which all public rights of way not recorded on the Definitive Map would be extinguished.

The Cabinet had accepted all 6 recommendations and Members were invited to give consideration on how they wished to monitor the implementation of those recommendations.

It was **agreed** that the sub committee would commence monitoring the implementation of the various recommendations of the report after 18 months and thereafter on an annual basis.