

Environment Sub Committee

Tuesday, 12 July 2022

Present: Councillor D Drummond (Chair)
Councillors G Bell, L Bell, B Burdis, M Fox, M Hall,
C Johnston, L Marshall, P McIntyre, M Murphy and
J Shaw

E1/22 Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

E2/22 Substitute Members

There were no Substitute Members reported.

E3/22 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

E4/22 Overview of the Environment Directorate

The Sub-committee received a presentation which outlined the various parts of the new Environment Directorate which fell within the remit of the Environment Sub-committee. The service covered waste collections, street cleansing, fleet and winter maintenance, horticulture and parks and bereavement services. It was explained that the teams worked to the Authority's environmental maintenance standards to ensure that the borough had a tidy appearance and provided a safe environment for the public. It was also explained that this contributed to a positive image of the borough for residents and visitors. Details of the key priorities for the service were outlined along with the key challenges. These included the delivery of a food waste collection and the electrification of the fleet with specific issues in relation to the larger vehicles such as refuse collection vehicles.

The Authority's 10-year plan for waste was outlined together with how it fitted in with the Government's Our Waste, Our Resources Strategy for England. Reference was also made to the recent consultation exercises in relation to food waste collections, deposit return scheme and extended producer responsibility and the impact that the introduction of those schemes could have on the Authority's waste collection and recycling services. It was explained that no authority in the North East currently had a dedicated separate system for the collection of food waste. Reference was also made to the introduction of additional bring sites for glass which had proven to be very popular. Sites were also being looked at for the installation of additional bring sites, such as for small electrical items, and once installed would be added to the borough wide map of bring sites

Reference was also made to the various plans and strategies which contributed to the

Authority's work in relation to protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the Borough including the Biodiversity Action Plan, the Local Plan 2017, the Tree Planting Strategy 2021/2024 and the Green Space Strategy 2015. Details of the recent legislative changes in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain were also outlined.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation.

It was **agreed** that the presentation be received

E5/22 Draft Carbon Net Zero Action Plan

Consideration was given to a presentation which provided details of the work being undertaken to support the Authority's aim to be carbon net zero by 2030. It was explained that 27% of the borough's carbon footprint in 2020 had been attributable to business, 39% to domestic use and 33% for transport, with an overall reduction of 47% to 767,200 tonnes. Almost half of the Borough's carbon footprint has been down to the use of gas for heating, with 33% down to transport and 18% for electricity. Significant progress had been made in reducing the Boroughs use of electricity, down by 74% in 2020, whereas in the same period the reduction in the use of gas had been 32%.

It was explained that the Authority's carbon footprint only amounted to 2% of the Borough's overall carbon footprint. In 2021/22 the Authority's carbon footprint had been broken down as follows:

- Electricity 19%, down by 71%
- Gas 48%, down by 9%
- Street Lighting 15%, down by 79%
- Fleet 16%, down by 15%
- Business miles 2%, down by 66%

A Carbon Net Zero 2030 Board had been set up to co-ordinate the Authority's work to achieve the aim of making North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030. The Board, co-chaired by the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Director of Environment met on a monthly basis and had identified 10 individual work streams. A key part of the work involved engagement with residents, stakeholders and the business and public sector. As part of the strategy an external board had been set up to consisting of a number of local businesses, utilities and public sector organisations to work to address the borough's carbon footprint. The board's work programme was outlined.

Reference was made to the works already undertaken to reduce the use of single use plastics within the Authority. It was noted that the recycling of drinks containers was a major problem and it was anticipated that the roll out of producer responsibility would encourage the market to address the issue.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation.

It was **agreed** that the presentation be received

E6/22 Work Programme 2022/23

Consideration was given to a report which invited the Sub-committee to consider suitable topics for inclusion in its work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. The topics for consideration had been suggested by members of the public, elected members and officers. In addition members made a number of further suggestions of topics of interest during the course of the meeting.

The following topics were put forward for inclusion in the Sub-committee's work programme:

- Biodiversity and the involvement of the planning service in delivering biodiversity net gain;
- Facilities for the recycling of soft plastics;
- Flooding preparedness;
- Approaches to dealing with and discouraging littering and dog fouling in the borough;
- Issues around Marine Conservation Zones, rivers and watercourses;
- Updates on the individual work streams of the climate emergency board.

Reference was made to the collection of food waste and it was explained that guidance was awaited from the Government before a scheme to collect food waste from households could be developed. Once the guidance had been received a suitable scheme would be put in place.

Resolved that (1) the above topics be included in the Sub-committee's work programme for 2022/23; and
(2) the Chair and Deputy Chair be authorised to determine a suitable timetable for the consideration of the items in the Sub-committee's work programme and the inclusion of additional topics as appropriate.