



North Tyneside Council

Environment Sub Committee

Monday, 4 July 2022

Tuesday, 12 July 2022 0.02 Chamber - Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY **commencing at 6.00 pm.**

Agenda Item

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1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. **Declaration of Interests and Dispensations**

You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.

You are also invited to disclose any dispensations that you have been granted in relation to any items on the agenda.

3. **Substitute Members**

To be informed of the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. **Minutes**

5 - 8

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2022.

5. **Overview of the Environment Directorate**

The Director of Environment will provide an overview of the work of the new Environment Directorate.

Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and receive information about it. North Tyneside Council wants to make it easier for you to get hold of the information you need. We are able to provide our documents in alternative formats including Braille, audiotape, large print and alternative languages.

6. **Draft Carbon Net Zero Action Plan**

To receive a presentation on the key areas of the draft Carbon Net Zero Action Plan.

7. **Work Programme 2022/23**

9 - 14

To give consideration to the formulation of the Sub-committee's work programme for 2022/23.

Circulation overleaf ...

Members of the Environment Sub Committee

Councillor Davey Drummond (Chair)
Councillor Gary Bell
Councillor Brian Burdis
Councillor Margaret Hall
Councillor Gary Madden
Councillor Jane Shaw

Councillor Martin Murphy (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Linda Bell
Councillor Michelle Fox
Councillor Chris Johnston
Councillor Pam McIntyre
Councillor Louise Marshall

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Environment Sub Committee

Tuesday, 8 March 2022

Present: Councillor B Burdis (Chair)
Councillors G Bell, L Bell, M Green, M Hall, J Harrison,
C Johnston, J Kirwin, G Madden, P McIntyre, J Mole and
J Shaw

E17/21 Substitute Members

There were no Substitute Members reported.

E18/21 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

E19/21 Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

E20/21 Cabinet Member responsible for Environment

Councillor Sandra Graham, Cabinet Member for the Environment provided an update on the various elements of her portfolio including Environmental Services, Waste, Climate Change, Highways and Cycling.

It was explained that Environmental Services was responsible for the delivery and maintenance of parks, open spaces, amenity grass and spring and summer bedding displays. The service was also responsible for the maintenance and cleanliness of streets and estates in the borough.

The community protection team dealt with anti-social behaviour, littering, flytipping and dog fouling and had recently been brought back into the Environment Directorate as it was considered that this was a better fit due to the nature of the work in ensuring that the local environment was a nicer place for residents.

The fleet and winter maintenance service managed and maintained over 400 authority vehicles and provided winter maintenance services on over 240 miles of priority routes across the borough.

The horticulture and parks service managed the parks and open spaces of the borough and carried out regular maintenance including grass cutting, floral planting and maintenance of trees within the borough. It was explained that the department had dealt with over 750 reports of fallen and damaged trees following Storm Arwen. Reference was also made to the work undertaken with other authorities in relation to the roll out of the Great North

Forest.

The Authority had a 10-year plan for waste which was central to its plans to be carbon neutral. Plans were being made for the collection of food waste and to improve the levels of recycling. Reference was made to the impact that Covid had had on recycling generally including an increase in the amount of waste generated due to more people being at home. It had been noted that the markets for recycled materials had been extremely volatile recently. It was also suggested that the booking system at the household waste recycling centre had been well received by residents. Plans were also in place for a “shop” to be set up at the recycling centre to allow residents to be able to re-use goods which would otherwise end up in landfill.

In relation to climate change the Authority’s Our North Tyneside Council Plan 2021-25 set out the ambition for North Tyneside to be carbon net-zero by 2030. A climate emergency board had been set up, with 10 workstreams. Details of which were outlined along with some of the existing actions already taken, including for example the provision of £450K for electric bin wagons.

The presentation also included the various strategies in relation to highways and encouragement to increase cycling for recreation and commuting. Details of the various cycling initiatives were outlined, including the active travel scheme in relation to the seafront.

Members sought clarification on how residents and small businesses could become involved in the work of the Climate Board. It was suggested that the involvement of the community and businesses would evolve over time but the initial plan had been to gain momentum and quick wins through the involvement of the larger businesses at the beginning.

Members referred to advantages of recycling but it was acknowledged that this came at a cost to the Authority. It was suggested that the cost of recycling would be reduced if more materials were reused rather than being recycled. It was explained that the cost associated with recycling did not only relate to a financial cost but also to an environmental cost. Reference was made to the high carbon cost of the disposal of textiles and it was suggested that there was a need to look at the issue of recycling in carbon terms rather than tonnage of material and the monetary cost of recycling or disposal.

Reference was made to the plans to collect food waste from homes and businesses and whether it was possible for this to be expedited. It was explained that guidance and funding was awaited from the government to enable the roll out the collection of food waste. In the meantime the Authority encouraged residents to reduce the amount of food that was wasted.

Members queried the possibility of installing sunken waste bins in certain areas of the borough, such as at the coast. It was explained that such a scheme was not viable at the current time but that the technical constraints were being addressed and this would continue to be monitored.

Members commented that the wildflower planting at the side of roads had been variable, with some areas being impressive whereas others less so. Clarification was sought on whether teams continued to seed the wildflower areas. It was suggested that this would be taken up with the relevant teams.

Members suggested that much of the environmental work carried out was government funded and that community involvement in environmental projects should be encouraged. It was explained that the Authority supported many local groups to improve their local environment and would welcome more community groups requesting assistance for projects in their area. Reference was made to the work of a number of “friends of” groups which was supported by the Authority.

Reference was made to the major housing developments in the borough such as Murton Gap and the need to try to get in first with appropriate landscaping and biodiversity schemes before the development was put in place. It was suggested that the installation of such elements as woodlands, ponds and grass meadows at the beginning of the process would improve and preserve the biodiversity of the area rather than just putting in less biodiverse grassed areas. It was suggested that a representative the Planning Department be invited to a future meeting to set out how this could be achieved.

The Chair thanked Councillor Graham for her report.

It was **agreed** that (1) the report and presentation be noted;
(2) a representative of the planning service be invited to a future meeting in relation to improving biodiversity in the borough through the planning process

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Meeting: Environment Sub-Committee

Date: 12 July 2022

Title: Work Programme 2022/23

Author: Dave Parkin

Tel: 643 5316

Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the sub-committee with potential topics for inclusion in the 2022/23 Environment Sub-Committee work programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The sub-committee is recommended to agree a work programme for 2022/23 and identify any further topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that could be included in the work programme.

3. Details

- 3.1 The sub-committee is invited to give consideration to determining its work programme for the year ahead. In doing so members may wish to take into account the following suggestions and framework.
- 3.2 The sub-committee is one of a number of overview and scrutiny sub-committees. The role of overview and scrutiny is described in the Council's Constitution as follows: "Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development involves councillors of all political parties, as leaders of their communities, examining the delivery of services and influencing decision makers to ensure that they meet the needs, and improve the lives, of people in North Tyneside.

It does this by:

- a) reviewing and challenging the impact of decisions and actions taken by the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and partner organisations;
- b) carrying out investigations into services and policy areas of interest and concern to communities in North Tyneside;
- c) involving communities in its work and reflecting their views and concerns; and
- d) supporting and assisting the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and partner organisations in the formulation of their future plans, strategies and their decision making by making evidence based recommendations to them on how services can be improved."

- 3.3 The Environment Sub-Committee has responsibility to perform these roles in relation to the following areas:
- The Environment;
 - Energy Use;
 - Climate Change;
 - Flood Risk Management; and
 - Waste Management
- 3.4 To ensure that the work programme is effective it is suggested that when evaluating topics for inclusion in the work programme the following criteria should be considered:
- Is it timely?
 - Will it duplicate any other work ongoing within the Council or the North East Combined Authority scrutiny work programme?
 - Will it add value/contribute to policy development?
- 3.5 A draft work programme has been formulated in consultation with the Chair and relevant officers. This is attached as Appendix A. It is based on the topics identified by members of the Council who have all been invited to suggest topics for examination by the overview and scrutiny committees and issues discussed at a meeting of scrutiny chairs and deputies held on 20 June 2022.
- 3.6 The sub-committee has the option of establishing sub-groups (of around 4/5 members) to carry out in-depth investigations. The sub-groups operate in a more informal way and can consult with a wide range of witnesses in various settings, often over a shorter period of time. When dealing with a specific topic, this focused way of working is often more productive than trying to achieve the same in a formal committee setting. Whilst more than one topic can be prioritised across the municipal year, only one sub-group can be established at any one time due to resourcing restraints. As yet a suitable topic has still to be identified for in-depth investigation by a sub-group.
- 3.7 The sub-committee is invited to raise any other topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that they think should be included in the work programme. Additional topics may be included in the work programme now and throughout the year in consultation with the Chair and the Deputy Chair.

4. Appendices

Draft Environment Sub-Committee work programme 2022/23

5. Background Information

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author:

- North Tyneside Council Constitution
- Environment Sub-Committee minutes and work programme 2021/22

Environment Sub Committee Work Programme 2022/23

Chair: Councillor D Drummond

Deputy Chair: Councillor M Murphy

DSO: Dave Parkin

Agenda Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Outcome/Issues
12 July 2022			
Work programme 2022/23	To formulate/approve the sub-committee's work programme.	Dave Parkin	
Environment Directorate	To receive an overview of the work of the Environment Directorate	Sam Dand	
Carbon Net Zero	To examine the key areas of the draft Carbon Net Zero Action Plan	Paul Nelson	
6 September 2022			
Biodiversity Action Plan	To give consideration to the draft updated Biodiversity Action Plan, the Environment Bill and the annual report on the BAP Delivery plan for 2020/21. To also consider biodiversity net gain and the local nature recovery strategy.	Jackie Hunter	
8 November 2022			
January 2023			
14 March 2023			
The date of this meeting is subject to change.			

Suggested issues for inclusion in the work programme

Biodiversity	To examine whether there a consistency in the delivery of services to improve biodiversity across the borough. It is suggested that the standard and frequency of grass cutting differs across the borough. Can more seeds/bulbs be planted to improve areas? This would be of interest to the public and volunteers could help to improve areas.		
Carbon Reduction and energy efficiency in the housing stock	To examine the carbon reduction and green policies within housing and how the Council's housing stock can be made more energy efficient (joint consideration with Housing Sub Committee?)		
Soft Plastic Recycling	To examine what facilities are available in North Tyneside to enable residents to recycle soft plastics such as bread wrappers and to examine what can be done by the Authority to improve recycling of soft plastics.		
Facilities for dealing with food waste	To examine the case for the provision of community facilities for the composting of household food waste. To examine how the authority can roll out the collection of food waste from homes in the borough		
Littering	To examine what can be done to reduce littering in the borough. There are examples of good practice in other areas of the country which could be considered for use in North Tyneside. To examine the steps that can be taken to educate residents/children to the problems caused by littering.		
Dog fouling	To examine examples of innovative campaigns to address the problems of dog fouling in the area and to examine the roll of enforcement in reducing instances of a failure of dog owners to clear up their dog's fouling.		

Electric Car Charging Points	To examine the case for the provision of on-street electric vehicle charging points.		
Update on the measures in place to prevent flooding	To examine whether the measures put in place following the Thunder Thursday event in 2012 are still in place and adequate to deal with potential flooding events.		
Disposable Nappies	To examine what can be done to reduce the amount of disposable nappies that are sent to landfill and to encourage the use of cloth nappies. To examine whether the provision of, for example, a loan to purchase cloth nappies might encourage their take up.		
Community Composting Facilities	To examine the case for the provision of community facilities for the disposal of compostable/biodegradable materials which would otherwise go to landfill or incineration. This would be particularly helpful in those areas without access to gardens i.e. terrace housing.		

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