

Environment Sub Committee

Tuesday, 10 January 2023

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

In attendance:
Councillor S Graham (Cabinet Member for the
Environment).

E14/22 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitutes reported.

E15/22 Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported

E16/22 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

E17/22 Fleet Decarbonisation

The Sub-committee received a presentation which set out the steps taken by the Authority in respect of decarbonising its fleet of vehicles. It was explained that in 2021/22 the fleet had contributed 16% of the Authority's carbon footprint and this had been 15% lower than in the previous year. It was also reported that during the same period the Authority's business miles had reduced by 66%.

It was explained that the Authority operated:

- 338 small vehicles, those under 2.5 tonnes, of which 10 were electrically powered;
- 21 medium sized vehicles, 5 of which were electric; and
- 48 large vehicles, over 7.5 tonnes.

It was explained that fully electric vehicles cost more to purchase than their diesel counterparts which meant that the funding available did not allow all the vehicles to be replaced. An example given was the cost to replace a diesel Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) was around £200K, with the electric equivalent around £400K and a hydrogen vehicle at around £800K.

Members were advised that there were a lot of factors which had to be taken into account in relation to the decarbonisation of the fleet including having a suitable charging infrastructure

and the improvements being made in relation to the technology, including improved batteries. In addition reference was made to the difficulties in obtaining suitable electric vehicles in the correct configuration. It was explained that a trial of an electric refuse collection vehicle had identified that the vehicle was too wide to go down some of the back streets of the borough.

Clarification was sought in relation to whether servicing costs had been factored into purchasing decisions in relation to electric vehicles and whether consideration had been given to deferring purchasing electric vehicles to allow the technology to catch up.

It was explained that servicing costs had been included in purchasing decisions and that the fleet team was currently being upskilled to deal with electric vehicles. It was also explained that, where appropriate, purchases had been delayed to take account of technological advances. The Authority also considered the use of hybrid vehicles where appropriate.

Reference was made to the cost of running electric vehicles and how the volatility of the market affected running costs. It was explained that charging points had been installed at the Killingworth Depot and there were plans in place for more installations as well as new battery storage on the site.

The Chair thanked the officer for her presentation.

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

E18/22 Flood Management Plan - Review of Performance

The Sub-committee considered a presentation on the action taken in respect of surface water management in North Tyneside after the flooding events of 2012. The presentation set out the development of a flooding strategy, the work done to date and how successful it had been in preventing flooding in various areas of the Borough. It was explained that around £25M of flood alleviation schemes had been delivered, hundreds of properties had been protected and emergency response plans had been improved.

Reference was made to the flood alleviation works carried out in the Briar Vale and Killingworth areas of the Borough. It was suggested that it would be useful for members to receive a map showing the extent of the flooding which had occurred in their ward together with details of the flood wardens in those areas.

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