

Minutes of an Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 29th JUNE 2011** immediately following the Special Policy and Resources Committee meeting held at 7.15 p.m.

PRESENT **Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton (Chairman) and**
Councillors S. Bambridge, W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, Mr. T.R. Bowman, P. Ducker, R.S. Fleming, G.C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Haigh, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. K. Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, Mrs. A. Palmer, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, Mrs. V.M. Raw and A. Warburton.

OFFICIALS Mr. A. Bailey (Town Clerk)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate & Policy Officer)
Mr. D. Austin (Finance Manager)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

32. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

33. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, V. Crosby, W. Curtis, G.R. Gray Mrs. I. Hewitson and T. Hogan.

34. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of personal interest were submitted by Councillors Mrs. S.J. Iveson, Mrs. D. Bowman, Mrs. J. Gray and Mrs. E.M. Paylor on Agenda Item No. 7 (Durham County Council – Consultation Papers) but they would be remaining in the meeting during the discussion and any voting thereon.

35. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor B. Hall and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on the 8th June 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

(a) **Special Policy and Resources Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 29th June 2011 be received, and

- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

37. **ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN**

A copy of the Audit Plan for 2010/2011 had been circulated by the Finance Manager for members information.

RESOLVED – that the information contained in the Audit Plan for the year 2010/2011 be received.

38. **D.C.C. – THE COUNTY DURHAM PLAN – CONSULTATION PAPERS**

Declarations of personal interest were submitted by Councillors Mrs. S.J. Iveson, Mrs. D. Bowman, Mrs. J. Gray and Mrs. E.M. Paylor this item but they would be remaining in the meeting during the discussion and any voting thereon.

The Town Clerk and Corporate and Policy Officer gave a presentation and handed out an information sheet in regard to the questions which were itemised in the 2 documents for members to make their comments. The two officers had summarised a response and sought members possible input.

(a) **“Towards a Strategy for Low Carbon Energy in County Durham”.**

Following discussion and questions by members it was:

RESOLVED – that the comments suggested by the two officers be forwarded to Durham County Council in response to the ‘Towards a Strategy for Low Carbon Energy in County Durham’.

(Copy of comments attached as Appendix 1)

(b) **“Towards a Waste Delivery Strategy for County Durham”.**

Following discussion and questions from members it was:

RESOLVED – that the comments suggested by the two officers be forwarded to Durham County Council in response to the ‘Towards a Waste Delivery Strategy for County Durham’.

(Copy of comments attached as Appendix 2)

CHAIRMAN.

**THE COUNTY DURHAM PLAN
CONSULTATION**

'Towards a Strategy for Low Carbon Energy in County Durham'

Question 1

Should the Core Strategy adopt an Energy Hierarchy along the following lines as part of the overall policy of planning for future energy development in County Durham?

1. Reduce the need for energy.

Account will be taken of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption, including maximising cooling and avoiding excessive solar gain in the summer.

2. Use energy more efficiently.

In construction, and through energy efficient appliances, lighting, fans and pumps.

3. Supply energy from renewable sources.

An assessment of the feasibility of installing renewable or low carbon energy technologies should be included. This should include the expected energy outputs and CO2 reduction potential.

4. Any continuing use of fossil fuels to use clean technologies and to be efficient e.g. using Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

The above assessment must include the potential for CHP and district heating.

Yes. The Town council feel there is no one quick fix to reduce the use of energy.

Every individual needs to be seen to be doing their bit it is hoped that more detailed information will be provided in future documents.

Question 2

Do you agree with this approach and the suggested targets for renewable electricity and heat?

The Town Council feel that a target of 26% renewable electricity by 2020 and a 6% renewable heat target by 2020 would be realistic and achievable.

The County is expected to meet 21% of renewable electricity by 2011/12. However, this is in the main due to the wind renewables and the plan acknowledges that the County is nearing capacity. County Durham is far ahead of many areas in our renewable targets and as such 26% will be difficult, although achievable, to meet. In addition this will allow time for new technologies to emerge which may help to exceed the target of 26%.

District Heating Systems should be encouraged but the impact on the quality and landscape of the area must be kept to a minimum.

Question 3

Should the County Durham Plan include a policy on wind energy development affecting the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which affords the AONB the highest level of protection?

Yes. As with many planning matters certain areas must always have specific policies to deal with their uniqueness. In this particular instance the intrusion of wind turbines in an area of outstanding natural beauty must be given the highest level of protection. In addition other 'special' sites should also have specific policies.

Question 4

Should the County Durham Plan identify and re-confirm the Broad Areas of Least Constraint (from Regional Spatial Strategy Policy 41) to guide development and ensure that it does not exceed environmental constraints?

Yes. It appears that many areas of County Durham are nearing capacity for wind energy development (turbines) the environmental constraints of each area should be a key planning policy consideration.

Question 5

Should the Council require connection to an existing or approved district heating scheme, as a condition of planning permission for major development, where viable opportunities exist?

Yes where such a development is being considered the merits of a district heating scheme should be a planning condition. However it is recognised that this cannot be a blanket condition as the detrimental impact on some areas would far outweigh the value of a district heating scheme.

Question 7

**Do you support the proposal for a Carbon Offset Fund for County Durham?
If so, what types of projects should the Fund support?
Examples could include:**

- A. Peatland restoration**
- B. Woodland and forestry creation**
- C. Energy efficiency grants**
- D. Renewable energy grants**

The Town Council fully supports and welcomes the proposals for a carbon offset fund for County Durham. However it would be difficult to limit the fund to only one of the options given. Area specific funds may be a more suitable approach to consider and in many instances more than one type of project could be considered when a development fails to meet the carbon reduction requirements.

Question 11

Do you agree with the approach for future energy development in the South Durham Delivery Area? (Please explain)

In principle the Town Council would agree with this approach. However the environmental impact and the impact on the living conditions of residents should be given extremely high levels of consideration.

Although South Durham is one of the broad areas of least constraint for wind energy that should not mean that it is flooded with wind turbines to make up for areas where it is considered they are nearing capacity. Para 11.34 comments that the area is not capable of accommodating the level of wind turbine development that was envisaged in the RSS without a significant change in the landscape character of the area. In this current economic climate it is hoped that the lure of large cash investment does not override all other considerations.

The South Durham delivery area is well placed to assist with the targets for carbon reduction, renewable energy and renewable heat targets.

**THE COUNTY DURHAM PLAN
CONSULTATION**

Technical Consultation Report 'Towards a Waste Delivery Strategy for County Durham'

Question 1

Do you have any comments to make on the approach that we have taken to assessing existing and future capacity for:

- A. Municipal Solid Waste**
- B. Commercial and Industrial Waste**
- C. Construction and Demolition Waste**
- D. Hazardous Waste**
- E. Agricultural Waste**
- F. Low level radioactive waste**

The Town Council would only comment that the information available to make any decisions is very limited and with this in mind are unable to agree or disagree with the conclusions.

Question 2

Do you have any comments on the key locational principles or any other matter in this section?

The Town Council would support the key locational principles.

We would also like to state the importance of Aycliffe in this respect. Newton Aycliffe has great road and rail links, P.95 refers to the environmental effects of the transportation of waste over long distances this can be mitigated if this is achieved using rail rather than road transport. There is an existing network of existing waste management facilities, (a waste transfer station on Aycliffe Business Park, Aycliffe Quarry and the potential of a biomass centre very nearby). Any new development or growth in this area can be accommodated by the existing and proposed facilities.

However more use could be made of demolition materials for recycling such as bricks etc. this could be achieved at Aycliffe Quarry which has some facilities on site and is nearing the end of its life as a quarry.

Although two large facilities exist near Durham City the emphasis on new housing and economic development in and around Durham City may cause problems dealing with any potential waste arisings without the need to transport to facilities further afield or invest large amounts in building new waste facilities nearby, which could be seen to go against the locational principles.

Question 3

Do you agree with our approach to safeguarding waste sites? (If you do not agree please explain why).

Agree

Question 7

Do you agree with the spatial approach for planning for future waste management facilities within the South Durham Delivery Area? (please explain)

Agree

The Town Council feel the approach to waste development in the South Durham Delivery Area is correct. We would also like to state the importance of Aycliffe in this respect. Newton Aycliffe has great road and rail links, although the plan appears to gloss over the importance of the rail network. The environmental effects of the transportation of waste over long distances can be mitigated if rail is used to transport waste rather than relying on road transport. There is an existing network of existing waste management facilities in and around Newton Aycliffe. (a waste transfer station on Aycliffe Business Park, Aycliffe Quarry and the potential of a biomass centre very nearby).

More emphasis needs to be placed on reusing materials, reducing carbon emissions and improved waste management techniques.

Protecting the natural environment whilst having the least impact on residents will be a key issue that may have longer consequences for County Durham to resolve. Utilising and expanding existing facilities would seem a common sense approach.