

Environment Sub-Committee

10 January 2018

Present: Councillor B Burdis (Chair)
Councillors L Bell, K Clark, D Cox, N Craven, S Graham,
E Hodson, M Huscroft and W Lott.

E24/01/18 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors D Drummond, G Madden and M Thirlaway.

E25/01/18 Substitute Members

In accordance with the Council's Constitution the following substitute member was reported:

Councillor N Craven for Councillor D Drummond.

E26/01/18 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

E27/01/18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2017 be confirmed.

E28/01/18 Work Programme 2018

A report was presented which explained that air quality was currently of particular interest to the residents of North Tyneside and wider afield. There had recently been widespread coverage in the media about air pollution and its impact on health. Reference was made to the various pollutants from motor vehicles, manufacturing and industrial processes which could be harmful to health. In particular reference was made to fine and very fine particulate matter known as PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} which were particularly harmful to health. It was explained that there were no safe levels of these particulates.

A Member referred to the recent permission granted for the construction of an "Energy from Waste" plant in the Borough and concern was expressed about the potential pollutants which might lawfully be emitted from the site. It was suggested that there was a lack of knowledge about what would be processed on the site and therefore what potentially harmful pollutants might be emitted into the atmosphere.

It was suggested that East Howdon area of the Borough in particular suffered from poor air quality due to fumes from the traffic at the Tyne Tunnel passing over the area, fumes and odours emitted from nearby manufacturing and industrial processes and pollution from the nearby river. It was also suggested that there was a high prevalence of chest complaints and/or cancers within the East Howdon community due to the air quality.

Members considered that it would be helpful to gain a greater understanding of the issues around atmospheric pollution and in particular the effects on air quality in North Tyneside. It was suggested that one of the local universities may be able to assist the Sub-committee by providing an expert independent overview of the topic. This would then assist the Sub-committee in determining what, if any, further work was required.

Members also gave consideration to a number of other potential topics which could be added to the Sub-committee's work programme.

Reference was made to the recent reports on the amount of plastics in the marine environment and also along the Borough's beaches. It was suggested that a Sub-group be set up to look at what could be done to minimise the single use of plastics which would then reduce the amount of plastics which could be deposited on the North Tyneside coastline and ultimately into the sea.

It was also suggested that a briefing be presented to Members on the current position on what could and could not be recycled in North Tyneside and also why glass had to be stored separately from the other recyclables but then appeared to be tipped into the same area of the collection vehicle.

Members also requested an update on the work of the Surface Water and Drainage Partnership in relation to the prevention flooding within the Borough.

Reference was made to the new developments which were to be created at Murton Gap and Killingworth Moor and it was suggested that it would be helpful if appropriate wildlife corridors could be identified at a very early stage of the process to ensure that suitable provision for wildlife was maintained. It was suggested that details of how this might be achieved could be presented as part of a future report on the Biodiversity Action Plan.

It was **agreed** that (1) a briefing on atmospheric pollution be presented to a future meeting of the Sub-committee;
(2) Members be invited to forward their concerns in relation to air pollution or air quality in North Tyneside for incorporation into the scope of a study;
(3) a scope be developed for a Sub-group to carry out an in-depth study into the steps which could be taken to reduce the amount of plastics used and which find their way into the environment;
(4) an update on the work of the Surface Water and Drainage Partnership be presented to a future meeting;
(5) an update be provided on recycling in the borough; and
(6) that the options for the creation of wildlife corridors prior to new developments at Killingworth Moor and Murton Gap be presented to the Sub-committee when the annual report on the Biodiversity Action Plan is considered.