

**OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio:
  - (a) **Local Authority Carbon Management Plan** - We approved the Council's Draft Carbon Management Plan which includes proposed projects, governance and finance arrangements. This Plan indicates a target of 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the next 5 years. If the Council achieves this target it could also achieve significant financial savings. We have also requested that the Economy and Environment Scrutiny monitor progress against Plan and report back to Cabinet as necessary.
  - (b) **Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy** – Approval has been given to the revised Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy to reflect substantial changes in national legislation and to align the strategy with the economic development of the City Region. The Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy provides a framework for revising the Darlington Climate Change Action Plan. Working in partnership through the TVCCP has also the potential to maximise funding opportunities for this Council.
2. **Waste Management** – Draft Waste Performance figures are now available and we are just waiting for them to be finalised but early indications are we have seen a significant improvement as a result of the new waste management contract. In 2008/09 26.9% of household waste was sent for re-use/recycling or composting. This figure has increased by nearly 10% to 36.2% in 2009/10. In fact this figure for the last two quarters was approximately 42% when the mechanical biological treatment plant was operating.

With regard to the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill, for 2008/09 this was 62.8% and for 2009/10 this has decreased to 47.3%.

The amount of waste re-used/recycled and composted will continue to increase over the duration of the contract and we will continue to see the amount of waste sent to landfill significantly reducing.

In the changed political climate, I am conscious that our waste strategy will need to be reviewed. I attended a seminar in Durham recently attended by regional and national civil servants, although it would seem that there is still a lack of clarity in the Coalition's detailed strategy.

Nevertheless, I have held meetings with officers and with senior management at Wades to see how the waste agenda can be taken forward here in Darlington. I would like to bring a paper to Scrutiny in the Autumn with my thoughts for their comments and suggestions. Thereafter, if necessary, a paper will be taken to Cabinet.

3. **Local Food Agenda** – At the Green Fair, two useful discussion meetings were held with local food producers, which I chaired, to examine how the local food agenda has been taken forward elsewhere, and what the opportunities might be here in Darlington.

More recently, as part of the Town Centre Fringe consultations, a presentation was given about the very successful Incredible Edible initiative, where the town has come together to grow fruit and vegetable informally throughout the urban area.

People who heard the presentation here in Darlington were inspired, and I have asked the officers to organise a visit to Todmorden to see what we can learn from their experience.

4. **Durham & Darlington Fire Authority** – Since last Council, I have attended two full meetings of the Authority, and a meeting of the Performance Sub-Committee. It is clear that small Fire Authorities like D&DFA could be very badly-affected by the 4-year cuts programme imposed by the Coalition Government, and senior officers are organising a day in September where Fire Authority members can discuss the potential impact of the cuts, and begin a discussion about how the service to the public can be retained.

I believe that it is important that the community here in Darlington are part of the emerging thinking about the future of our local Fire Service, and I have written to the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee to suggest that this be an agenda item in the Autumn. I am sure that the 4 Darlington representatives will find the feedback very helpful in the subsequent discussions on the Fire Authority.

5. The following items relate to initiatives that are contributing to the Climate Change Agenda, details of which are covered in other Portfolio reports.

#### **Transport**

- a) Pedestrian and cyclist training
- b) Arriva Bus Workplace Challenge
- c) Cycling – Cycling Festival; Darlington Cycle Challenge; Medal Motion; new school cycle parking.
- d) Rail – feasibility of Metro related Bank Top Station works; ‘Heritage Line’ research.
- e) Third Local Transport Plan

#### **Health and Leisure**

- a) Green Fair
- b) Bikeathon

**Councillor Nick Wallis**  
**Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio**