

## **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD**

**9 MARCH 2010**

### **ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL - PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) with an update on the work of the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the updated position.

#### **BACKGROUND**

3. Since the last update report to OSB, the Environment Scrutiny Panel has met once, on 12 February 2010.
4. At that meeting the scrutiny panel concluded its evidence and information gathering on the topic of Recycling and Packaging Reduction. Information was submitted to the meeting in respect of:

#### **Recycling:**

5. A representative of Stockton Borough Council was present at the meeting. This was to enable Members to seek comparative information on the range of recyclable materials and levels of recycling in a neighbouring authority. Information was submitted in respect of the range of materials collected in Stockton. The panel was advised that the inclusion of plastic and cardboard has had a major impact on increasing recycling rates and also on participation levels. Domestic waste tonnages have also reduced as a direct result. Details were submitted of how Stockton's recycling service operates and of publicity materials that have been produced.

6. The panel was informed that Middlesbrough is currently undertaking a trial collection of plastic from some households. The Council is also in the process of negotiating a new recycling contract and is looking to include plastic recycling across the town.

### **Packaging reduction**

7. Following letters being sent to several national retailers on this issue, no responses have been received. Despite this, it has been ascertained that Marks and Spencer (which was one of the retailers contacted) is actively promoting a current packaging reduction campaign. The panel considered details of the company's campaign, which also covers issues such as climate change, reducing waste and increased recycling.

### **Energy reduction**

8. At its 12 February 2010 meeting, the scrutiny panel also considered the subject of energy reduction as a short, one-off, review topic. Officers from the Council and from Mouchel presented an overview, together with further information, on the subject. This included details of:

- The Council's participation in the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC).
- Development of the Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation (CRACA) Action Plan - which aims for a target of 30% carbon reduction by 2020, resulting in a 3% annual energy saving from 2010.
- The authority's adoption of a "One Planet Living" approach, which includes 10 main themes, one of which is 'Zero Carbon'.
- Investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes.
- The Council's Building Improvement Programme – which would provide £30m over 10 years to address building investment needs such as insulation, boilers, double glazing and heating/lighting controls.
- Initiatives to improve energy awareness and reduce energy usage in respect of items such as computers being left on standby, air conditioning and building temperature.
- Energy Costs & Targets – Annual energy and water cost for all buildings, including schools, in 2008/2009 was £5.7m (23,695 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>).

**COUNCILLOR BOB KERR**

**CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL**

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