



Climate and Environment Emergency Executive Panel

16:00 to 17:20

18 July 2023

Present: Councillors Hampton (chair following appointment), Stutely (vice chair following appointment), Champion, Lubbock, Oliver, Osborn (substitute for Councillor Fox), Padda and Stutely

Apologies: Councillor Fox

1. Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Hampton as chair for the ensuing civic year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

Two nominations were received and on being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Stutely as vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2023.

5. Integrated Waste Management Strategy

The Head of Environment Services gave a presentation on the development of the Government's Resources and Waste Management Strategy for England 2018 and the implications for the council. He set out the context of the emerging strategy, which aligned with the council's approach and aspirations to minimise the impact on the environment; reduce the resources the council uses to deliver the service; and, to create a circular economy. He understood members' frustration with the delay to implementation. Whilst the regulations for the delivery of the service were well defined, the complexity of service delivery was around different local government arrangements, working in partnerships to deliver services. In Norfolk there was a two-tier system in place. The county council was responsible for the disposal and collection the responsibility of the district councils through their partnership arrangements. The good news was that no waste was taken to landfill in the county. The government was not proscriptive about how services could be provided. In

Norfolk the service was delivered by the Norfolk Waste Partnership. The council intended to develop its own strategy and financial model with the first draft being available by the end of the year. and with a revised Environmental Services organisational structure in place to deliver it.

(A copy of the presentation is available on the [council's website](#). The meeting was recorded and is available on [here](#) .)

During discussion, members noted that the county council had the legal responsibility to dispose of waste and transported it to energy for waste plants outside the county¹. Members asked for information on the carbon emissions for the transportation of waste and incineration of waste. The Environmental Strategy Manager referred to the work that had been undertaken by consultants to analyse the council's activities and scope 3 emissions (see the next agenda item, *NI185 Emissions Report 2022/23*) to increase the understanding of the council's organisational boundary. The city council was responsible for the collection and transportation of waste within its organisational boundary. The county council's organisational boundary was responsible for the onward transportation of waste and incineration.

The Head of Environment Services agreed with members that the minimisation of waste in the first place should be a priority and confirmed that an increase in recycling was shown as a percentage of the total amount of tonnage. The council did need to prioritise ensuring its collection service was in order, ready for the implementation of the Government's Resources and Waste Management Strategy for England within the next 18 months. The greatest challenge would be behavioural change and reducing consumption and was an objective that the council would aim for.

A member said that the reverse vending machines to deposit bottles sounded exciting and innovative but asked whether it would increase recycling and suggested that it could be impractical, as the machines would fill up quickly, rather than use the systems that were already in place. The Head of Environment Services said that the benefit to the council of the deposit return scheme was minimal. It could allow the council to change its collection system and reduce collection of materials. One benefit to the council would be reduced litter with deposits at 20p a time. The capacity for plastic recycling in this country was poor in this country. The reverse vending machines would be accessible to residents and produce material that was clean and easier to recycle or reuse therefore stimulating the circular economy in the UK. Members were advised that the waste partnership was working through the details of whether authorities could recycle items with a deposit or be paid the deposit for collecting items.

During discussion, the Head of Environment Services confirmed that there was a need to provide dedicated staff to promote participation in recycling and reducing waste, which had been identified in the new organisational structure for the service. Specialist advisors would also be brought in as required.

¹ <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/rubbish-and-recycling/what-we-do-with-waste>

The Head of Environment Services also answered a member's questions on disruptions to the service. The extra bank holidays in May had caused some disruption. There had also been an error with printed calendars for garden waste collections following and members were assured that residents had now received the correct information.

Members were advised that the council received credits for recycled materials, at about £64 per tonne from the county council. The council had renegotiated the contract with NEWS in 2021 and paid a different gate fee every month dependent on the commodity market on the global market. A yearly average could be provided to members. He assured members that it was a completely open book process, and that he was confident that it had been benchmarked and was a good deal.

Discussion ensued on the council's performance and that it was within the third quartile. A member asked what the top performing councils were doing in terms of their activities. The Head of Environment Services said that the top performers used separate collection boxes or bins for different commodities (paper, glass, plastics, etc.) and had reduced the frequency of residual waste collections to every two or three weeks, which was an effective way of increasing recycling.

The panel noted that the contamination rate varied between 10 to 20 per cent, depending on where it was collected from. A member asked whether plastic packaging would be increased in collection by 2025, trays and films. The Head of Environment Services said that this was part of the need for consistency. The total figure of waste collected was 67 tonnes including fly tipping. The most effective way to reduce this was through a targeted and partnership approach with Environmental Services and Housing Services.

Members noted the emerging strategy and considered that there should be an evaluation framework aligned to the activities and goals that the council's Waste Management Strategy was trying to achieve. The Head of Environment Services confirmed that in terms of evaluation, there was a lot of data available that could map the efficiency of changes being implemented. A member said that there also needed to be some targeted work to reduce contamination "hotspots". A member suggested that consideration was also made to include soft plastics in household collections, currently recycled at supermarkets. This would divert soft plastics away from residual waste.

The Head of Environment Services commented on the recommendations and said that these did not provide any particular challenges for inclusion in the emerging strategy.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank the Head of Environment Services for the presentation;
- (2) note that the council is developing a new Waste Management Strategy and ask that the Head of Environment Services ensures that it includes
 - (a) a clearly defined evaluation framework to align activities to objectives;

- (b) activities to reduce contamination of recycled materials in contamination “hotspots” by Environmental Services officers working with colleagues in Housing Services;
 - (c) work with the Waste management Partnership to include collection of soft plastics.
- (2) that the minutes of this meeting are shared with all members of Cabinet.

6. NI185 Emissions Reporting 2021/2022

The Environmental Strategy Officer presented the report. The audit of the council’s emissions was important to provide an accurate baseline to reach net-zero by 2040.

Discussion ensued on the reporting of the council’s scope 3 emissions. The Environmental Strategy Manager confirmed that under the current arrangements (in accordance with NI185) only the council’s main emissions sources were reported. The consultant’s audit of scope 3 emissions would further the council’s detailed understanding and long-term thinking and incorporate other activities in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. He agreed with the member that some of the emissions would be within the council’s territory and some outside.

A member said that former member of the council considered that to meet an 84 per cent reduction in carbon by 2040, there needed to be an 8 per cent reduction year on year. The Environmental Strategy Manager clarified that this report only looked at the council’s own emissions. The target was to reach net zero by 2030. Through the 2040 City Vision, the council was also committed to reducing city wide emissions to net zero by 2045. He agreed with the member’s maths and pointed out that the council exceeded its target of 3 per cent each year and the intention was to review the targets for publication the coming months.

Discussion ensued on the council achieving its target for electricity by switching to a green tariff and the energy saving lighting upgrades (set out in paragraph 14), with a member commenting on how if emissions had already been eliminated how would it be recorded if reduced further. The Environmental Strategy Officer said that a reduction in the load made a difference and agreed it was not reflected in the numbers. The Environmental Strategy Manager referred to the table (paragraph 11 of the report) and said that it was a summary. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol would require data on electricity before and after switching to a green tariff, reflecting that electricity was still a precious resource from a carbon focus.

Members were assured that the council’s influence in moving its contractors to an all-electric fleet of vehicles was both direct and indirect, through its contract arrangements.

A member asked for clarification as to whether council housing was considered to fall within scope 2 or scope 3, alluding to the council’s commitment of £52 million through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to improve energy efficiency in the council’s housing stock. The Environmental Strategy Manager confirmed that housing would fall in scope 3 and would be part of the plans to reduce emissions. In reply to a member’s question, the Environmental Strategy Manager said whilst there

had been no specific consultation from or with the county council on scope 3, he would ensure that it was put on the agenda of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership. It was also suggested that there could be funding opportunities that the council could take advantage of to address scope 3 emissions through its links with the county council.

Discussion ensued on whether the council could reduce its carbon emissions to achieve its target of net zero by 2030 without offsetting. The Environmental Strategy Manager said that he considered it unlikely due to the cost of implementing heat source pumps. He would be comfortable with an offsetting approach that removed carbon dioxide from the environment, typically through tree planting. This would be considered further in the draft strategy.

In conclusion members recognised the incredible amount of work that the environmental strategy team had undertaken and recognised that it was a difficult task. The chair commented that the results had been much better than anticipated so soon after the pandemic.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR