



### **Which Council Aim does this case study deliver?**

- *One of the key aims of the Council's Corporate Plan is to have a "High Quality and Sustainable Environment".*
- *The main objectives are to reduce waste and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and contribute to the planning of adaptation to climate change.*
- *Performance is monitored quarterly at Community Services Committee regarding these core objectives reporting progress against actions, plans and indicators.*
- *In addition Community Services has a standing Environmental Item and Policy and Resources a standing item on Flooding to ensure members are updated on these areas at every Committee meeting.*
- *Heads of Service act as the cross cutting team, climate change being a standing agenda item at their bi weekly meetings.*

### **Background**

Ryedale District Council (RDC) and partners are working to reduce and adapt to the impacts of climate change and have made significant early progress in this area:

#### **RDC's Environmental Charter**

The Council adopted an Environmental Charter in 1992 to guide policy development and service delivery. This document was updated 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and approved by elected Members.

#### **Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change**

RDC agreed to become a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration in 2004, with a number of commitments contained within the declaration document.

#### **Climate Change Strategy/Action Plan**

RDC adopted a Climate change action plan in 2005, which was updated in 2007. The key aim of this is to reduce carbon emissions within Ryedale, resulting from our own operations, as well as domestic and business premises. The document is due to be updated this year (2010)

#### **Biodiversity Action Plan**

The Ryedale Biodiversity Action Plan was written in 2005 and covers the Ryedale area outside the National Park. It has been produced on behalf of the Ryedale Biodiversity Steering Group and aims to ensure that future generations can enjoy the same rich variety of wildlife as is enjoyed today.

#### **Genetic Modification**

In 2003 (Full Council, 26 June 2003) the Council resolved as far as possible, to keep Ryedale free of GM crops, animal feed and GM food. Key points were the decision to ensure that no

GM crops are grown on land over which the Council has control and to adopt a GM-free policy for all goods and services for which the Council is responsible.

### **Joint Procurement Strategy**

Ryedale is part of the North Yorkshire Procurement Partnership with a joint procurement strategy to 2012. Part of the strategy looks at priorities for improving procurement, The councils have identified six procurement 'themes', to be embedded into all procurement, helping make improvements to service delivery, deliver better value for money and addressing the objectives of the Corporate Plan. These six procurement themes are:

- Equalities (and Diversity)
- Sustainability
- Procurement Resources, Skills and Training
- e-procurement
- Risk Management
- Project and Contract Management

Regarding sustainability - the Partnership gives appropriate consideration to environment issues and whole life costing criteria when making procurement decisions including:

- Energy/resource usage
- Transport method and distance travelled
- Carbon footprint of commodity/service
- Waste disposal and recycling options
- Ethically and/or organically produced foods

### **Environmental Forum**

The Ryedale Environmental Forum was established by RDC to provide the focus in Ryedale for all those with an interest in promoting, enhancing and maintaining the quality of the environment throughout the District. The Forum aims to encourage and promote the widest consultation, discussion and debate of environmental issues relevant to the communities in Ryedale and to provide for co-ordination and co-operation between those groups and organisations involved in the environment. The forum is not a Council committee or body, but can formulate views and advice on environmental issues for the consideration of Ryedale District Council's standing committees in the performance of their duties and responsibilities where appropriate.

### **Land Drainage Liaison Group**

The group was set up by RDC to discuss land drainage matters. Comprising RDC officers and Members, Environment Agency (EA), land drainage reps, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), National Farmers Union, flood support groups and members of the public, the group has been successful in supporting a number of local initiatives eg Pickering Channel Management Project.

### **Community Plan**

The Landscape and Environment Theme of the Community Plan includes strategic aims:

- Planning for managed change and growth in Ryedale by ensuring that the right types of development come forward at the right time and in the right place
- Safeguarding environmental air quality including air, land and water
- Waste Management
- Energy efficiency and use of resources
- Maintaining the diversity of landscapes and habitat, encouraging biodiversity
- Promoting nature conservation and enjoyment of the countryside

## **Waste Collection and Waste Strategy**

Commitments and targets pertaining to municipal solid waste were set out in a waste strategy, entitled 'Let's Talk Rubbish', in 2002. This strategy was superseded in 2006 by the current strategy, entitled 'Let's Talk Less Rubbish' 2006 – 2026. Informed by 'Let's Talk Less Rubbish' a Draft Recycling Plan for Ryedale District Council has been formulated.

RDC is a national leader with regard recycling and placed 13th in England. The Council's Kerbside Collection Policy gives detail of containers, collections and acceptable waste. The Council is a Waste Collection Authority and works as a partner within the York and North Yorkshire Waste Partnership. The priority is to make progress toward greater levels of waste reduction through reuse, recycling and composting, and working towards more sustainable types of waste disposal. The Partnership website, strategy documents and information about reducing waste going to landfill can be viewed at <http://www.letstalklessrubbish.com/>

## **What was done?**

The new Corporate Plan has recently been approved (2009), one of the key aims being "to have a High Quality and Sustainable Environment". This aim is underpinned by 3 strategic objectives:

- Objective 5 - Reducing Waste and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Objective 6 - Planning to adapt to climate change.
- Objective 7 - To Improve the quality of our local environment. Embed environmental awareness and action within policies and systems.

These underpin the Local Area Agreement targets for carbon dioxide reduction at District level, as well as flood and improved biodiversity at County level. The York and North Yorkshire Rural Partnership (chaired by Janet Waggott) have overall responsibility for target delivery, supported by the Sustainable Officers group.

The Council has to date made strong progress regarding CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and climate change initiatives. £318,000 has been set aside for energy improvement initiatives such as energy efficient boilers at RDH and the pools. Major risks have been identified (as per NI 188) and studies commissioned (eg Pickering Channel Management Study) to mitigate against effects of climate change. Capital funding of £1 million has been set aside for a potential flood scheme development at Pickering.

## **Pickering Channel Management Project**

The project follows an independent assessment (RDC funded) of the condition of main rivers in the Vale of Pickering. Adaptation to climate change is a key strategic objective of the Council; flood risk management being identified as a priority service area in terms of the Council's Climate Change Strategy. Recently, an LCLIP study has been commissioned following a successful Regional Improvement & Efficiency Programme (RIEP) bid. Within Ryedale the major risk of flooding to properties lies in Pickering and Sinnington.

- Alleviation to the flooding problems in these areas is being addressed by a two-year EA land management project designed to slow the flow of the water by increasing the time it takes from rain falling on the upper catchment to flood waters arriving in the watercourses flowing through Pickering and Sinnington.
- The Pickering Channel Management Project looks to address this from the other side of the equation, looking at the potential effects of vegetation and sedimentation on water levels in the Vale of Pickering. It aims to quantify any benefits gained from enhanced river management strategies, focusing on key maintenance points in the river system. The project could facilitate the development of best practice, which could be applied to all

critical watercourses.

- The project is unique in that to the best of our knowledge this is the first study in which the EA have actively agreed to explore the possibility that the potential effects of vegetation and sedimentation could impact on flooding.

### **Slowing the Flow Project – Pickering**

‘Slowing the Flow’ is a two year pilot partnership project in the Pickering and Sinnington areas to show that land management could help to reduce the risk of flooding and also bring other benefits for water quality, wildlife and soil protection. Forest Research is leading the project in partnership with the EA, Forestry Commission, Natural England, Durham University, North York Moors National Park Authority and RDC. The project explores various options for land management changes:

- Forestry work - planting trees and creating woody debris dams to slow water down in the upper river catchment. Initial results indicated that by implementing these measures at key locations the peak flood flow could be reduced by 10%.
- Moorland management - blocking gullies on the moorland could help to slow down the flow of water. Some of the moorland gullies were man made and others were natural but both types reduced the amount of time that water remained on the land and as a result increased flood risk.
- Farmland management - creating buffer strips on field margins to improve soil management and create areas for water storage. Buffer strips involve leaving up to six metres of riverbank unmanaged allowing the grass and vegetation to trap sediment and reduce water flow.
- Flood storage - creating low-level bunds (small dams) to store floodwater upstream of Pickering. These would only store water for short periods of time, during high river flow conditions.

### **Multi Agency Flood Response Co-ordination Plan**

The plan aims to outline the policies and procedures, which enable the emergency services and supporting agencies to manage river and surface/round water flooding within Ryedale District. The plan is the first to be fully signed off in the Yorkshire and Humber region and due to the many flooding events has been fully tested.

In line with criteria set by the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the document covers the procedures for preparing for a flooding incident, the management of a flooding incident and the recovery from a flooding incident at both Bronze and Silver levels in order to meet criteria set by Defra. It encompasses such areas as:

- Flooding information and risk plan activation
- Thresholds and triggers
- Communications strategies
- Actions, roles and responsibilities
- Stand down of response and recovery
- Community specific information

### **Sustainability Audit**

A high-level audit review was carried out August 2009 regarding sustainability. The Audit’s assessment regarding performance was **Good - Minimal Risk**. The audit encompassed other related issues, which extend the subject area much wider, covering the 3 strategic objectives that underpin the Corporate Plan aim:

- Objective 5 - Reducing waste and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Objective 6 - Planning to adapt to climate change
- Objective 7 - To maintain the quality of local environment

## **Waste Minimisation – Recycling – Re-Use Initiatives**

RDC has already made excellent progress towards achieving the 2020 Government target re 225kg residual waste being within 10kgs of it and has already met the 2020 Government 50% recycling target. It remains one of the top UK Authorities regarding recycling.

- New initiatives have been undertaken regarding trade waste recycling and development of a pilot scheme for recycling/re-use of street cleansing waste to increase recycling and improve environmental cleanliness. This innovative scheme is likely to be encouraged (by NYCC) for take up by other Districts to divert biodegradable waste from landfill and help NYCC meet their Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) targets. Enhanced cleansing also benefits flood risk management, mitigating the effects of torrential rain regarding surface water flooding and reducing pooling.
- The Council's on farm composting network coupled with its 4-day week working minimises the Council's carbon footprint through reduced vehicle miles.
- The Council has recently piloted the move to monthly collections of garden waste in winter designed to reduce vehicle miles and save CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- The council has pioneered the innovative introduction of community 'give and take days', with regular 'days ' being undertaken in Pickering, Malton and Kirkbymoorside.
- The Council has few areas of land and no parks. Grass arisings removed are recycled or in the case of Orchard Fields, baled for agricultural use.
- The Council has introduced a system of internal recycling to collect paper, cardboard, toner cartridges etc. This is being developed further to include the collection of plastic bottles and cans. In addition there has been a general move away from individual to shared use multi functional printers which can double side print.
- Damaged plastic or metal, wheeled bins are recycled or re-used following refurbishment carried out by an external company.
- A system of advertising on vehicles has been introduced, called Agripa. This gives Streetscene the ability to refresh environmental messages on vehicles quickly and efficiently.
- The Waste Management Partnership has agreed between them a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which incentivises high achievers. Agreement has been reached to top slice this to facilitate further investment in waste minimisation campaigns and extra activity including events, shows, awareness campaigns, education in schools, Love Food Hate Waste, home composting etc.
- Funding has been attracted from RIEP to further the development of the Partnership. A report has been commissioned from White Young Green by the North Yorkshire Waste Partnership regarding Partnership development and efficiencies. Recommendations have been accepted and RIEP funding is being utilised to take the review forward. Areas include:
  - Waste minimisation.
  - Hazardous/clinical waste review.
  - Best practice/Information sharing/Improving communications.
  - Commercial waste.
  - Kerbside collection systems review.

## **Vehicle Emission Reduction Initiatives**

Following a strict procurement exercise regarding the vehicle replacement programme, over 50% of the LGV fleet is now equipped with the latest Euro 5 engines with ad-blue additive, for enhanced efficiency and reduced emissions. All others run with particulate traps.

- Streetscene has undertaken trials regarding the use of a 20% bio-diesel fuel in refuse vehicles. Officers have been cautious with this initiative due to the voiding of engine manufacturers warranty, cost of fuel and conflicting advice regarding environmental impact. Under current guidelines the use of bio diesel will not count towards reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and as such will not influence performance under NI 185.

- Light vehicles utilise the latest LPG conversion technology. All currently run on LPG. RDC was one of the forerunners in the UK regarding adoption of LPG for depot operations.
- Following a series of presentations to staff in May 2009 an exercise is planned in conjunction with the Ryedale Energy Saving Partnership regarding fuel-efficient driving techniques for Streetscene drivers utilising their demonstrator simulator vehicle.
- A project has been commissioned using RouteSmart software to identify potential efficiencies through optimizing collection methods and reduce miles travelled to reduce emission levels. This has determined that efficiencies can be made and operational route changes are planned for 2010.

### **Housing Strategy**

One of the private sector housing strategy key aims is to increase the energy efficiency of dwellings through:

- Financial assistance
- Advice and education
- Incorporating energy efficiency into renovation/repairs schedules

Fuel poverty initiatives/private sector grants are administered by RDC within Housing Services, equating to £100K annually for insulation and heating works with eligibility criteria based partly on age, income, and for more expensive measures on Council Tax banding. The number of enquiries in relation to fuel poverty and energy efficiency is high with significant increases in energy efficiency being made over the past few years, as evidenced in the annual report submitted to DEFRA as part of the Home Energy Conservation Act.

### **Building Control Enforcement Action**

Building Control monitor building work, assess deposited plans and advise builders/developers. To ensure compliance the approved documents L1A, L1B, L2A and L2B, are monitored to meet requirements of Building Regulation L1.

### **Property Management**

Over the past two years a number of measures have been implemented in the Council's main building stock to improve both energy efficiency and comfort levels. This includes insulation and building fabric improvements, pool covers and improvements to electrical distribution at the swimming pools.

- Renewal of energy contracts has included a continuation of OFGEM certified low carbon energy tariffs.
- Following provision of capital funding, two new energy efficient boilers have been recently installed at Ryedale House and Derwent Pool. These should reduce the amount of space used in the current boiler rooms and substantially reduce revenue costs by a minimum 30% saving.
- The proposal at Ryedale Pool was to install a wood burning biomass boiler. However, following a detailed feasibility study regarding the installation of a bio mass boiler, it is apparent that this option, though technically possible, is unlikely to offer the best technical and financial solution for this site. Renewable technology has moved on and in the light of new and emerging information this presents the Authority with the opportunity to explore alternative solutions.
- The Property Unit is moving the un-metered account for street lighting/CCTV across to the County Council contract, which will be from wholly renewable sources.
- Recently the Council has refurbished its Council Chamber increasing insulation levels in the chamber.
- The unit is also exploring the potential of extending the commissioning of renewable energy tariffs to other lower user Council buildings. This could have cost implications, which officers will report back for consideration.

### **Local Development Framework**

The spatial strategy embodied in the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) will influence the location and distribution of development and will be compiled against objectives of sustainability and accessibility. The need to reduce the need to travel, avoidance of flood risk and protection of the landscape are all key considerations that will influence the future planning strategy for the District.

The LDF will contain policies to help protect and enhance built heritage, biodiversity and important open spaces and will set targets for the reuse of brownfield land and the reduction of carbon emissions from development sites.

### **Active Sport and Leisure Strategy**

The development of an Active Sport and Leisure Strategy will provide opportunities to promote, develop and encourage the use of sustainable and healthy travel options within the community.

### **Energy Savings Trust Partnership - One to One Support**

Following application to the Energy Savings Trust, the Authority has been successful regarding securing a place on their two-year, one-to-one support programme to help embed and deliver a strategic approach to carbon reduction across the Authority. The programme is designed to cut emissions from housing and transport across the District. The project is currently at data collection stage and being led by Heads of Service.

### **Development of the LAA Partnership**

A successful LAA partnership funding application has been made to the RIEP regarding funding for a NY Climate Change Leadership Programme. The aims are as follows:

- Build capacity and achieve greater collaboration in order to improve the response to the current and future implications of climate change.
- Councillors, senior officers and stakeholders from North Yorkshire Councils have taken part in four sessions (between October 2009 and January 2010) to give them an opportunity to hear the experience from the NY authorities and key partners; discuss the priorities and practicalities that Councils, councillors and key partners face in tackling climate change.
- Deliver improved performance on NI 185/NI186 (LAA targets) and NI188 together with individual local authorities climate change targets and commitments.
- Explore the potential for collaboration between councils in North Yorkshire around responding to climate change.

## **Who was involved**

- Staff
- Heads of Service
- Members
- Environment Agency
- Internal Drainage Boards
- NFU
- Flood interest Groups
- Friends of the Earth
- North Yorkshire and City of York Waste Partnership
- NYCC
- Police
- Fire
- PCT
- Yorkshire Water

## **Benefits**

- A 7% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction was measured between 1990/91 and 2007/8. This reduction was a significant achievement by RDC, given that legislation (in the form of the Household Waste Recycling Act) necessitated the introduction of a comprehensive kerbside recycling collection scheme.
- This new recycling scheme was rolled out over the same time period and obviously required the use of additional Large Goods Vehicles, which limited the larger CO<sub>2</sub> reduction hoped for. The original target was also based on the use of bio diesel. Under the old calculation method, significant CO<sub>2</sub> reductions relating to RDC's vehicle fleet would have been realised if biofuels were more widely used, but this is now obviously not the case, following international environmental concern over the widespread growing of biofuels.
- RDC's new 2% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target for 2009/10 and the 3% target for 2010/11 (as detailed at Community Services Committee on 23 July 2009) are based on the Government's new method of calculation. The new targets do not correspond to the original, due to different calculation methods and are one of the highest targets set within North Yorkshire Authorities.
- Vehicle miles saved due to on farm composting by comparison to composting at a central site estimated 12,831 miles per year, making rounds more efficient through reducing turnaround time. CO<sub>2</sub> savings due to on farm composting: Estimated: 62,230kgs CO<sub>2</sub> saving per year from reduced mileage.
- Moving to monthly garden waste over the winter period saves an estimated 8677 miles, equating to £13,910 saving. In future years this should increase to £24K. Estimated carbon savings are 42.07 tonnes.
- Over 50% of the LGV fleet is now equipped with the latest Euro 5 engines with ad-blue additive, for enhanced efficiency and reduced emissions (estimated at 4.5% reduction). All others run with particulate traps.
- The latest information from Government Office is that target setting for NI 185 (CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from LA operations) will be deferred until 2010 when 2008/9 baseline data will be available. NI 186 (per capita CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in the Local Authority area) results from activities will not be reflected in data outputs until 2011 due to the delay in data publishing. As such progression of this indicator is long term and may not be reflected in initial data returns from DEFRA. By their very nature these are long-term indicators, progress against them being judged in years not months.

## **Resources and Value for Money**

- At Community Services Committee, 23 July 2009 Members approved challenging CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets of 2% in 2009/2010 and 3% in 2010/2011. To fund delivery the Council has set aside £318,000 in the capital programme for energy improvement initiatives.
- Major risks have been identified regarding flooding and adaptation to climate change. £1 million capital funding has been set aside to fund a potential flood scheme development at Pickering .
- £28K has been approved to deliver the Vale of Pickering Channel Management Project  
The objectives of the 3 year pilot project are to:
  - Assess the effects of vegetation and sedimentation on water levels in the main rivers within the Vale of Pickering
  - Assess the effects of maintenance of vegetation and sedimentation of the main rivers within the Vale of Pickering on ecological biodiversity

## **Next Steps / Further Action**

- Strategic action regarding CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and the climate change agenda needs to encourage a fundamental change in culture within the organisation and the public at large. Planned actions include:
  - Development of a cross-departmental project team within the Council to help embed environmental awareness and action within policies and systems.
  - Work is on going regarding the development of a cycle to work scheme for Council employees, designed to enhance fitness and reduce the organisations carbon footprint.
  - The development of carbon budgets for individual units. Work has started on this with regard to targets for the reduction in vehicle mileage at Head of Service level.
  - Development of partnership working within North Yorkshire and the region regarding joint action with key stakeholders such as the EST, NYCC and Districts.
  - A new energy efficient lighting scheme on 2nd floor Ryedale house is due to be tendered shortly. In addition there is on going investigation regarding several energy and water efficiency measures at other sites.
  - Officers are exploring the potential of one off project initiatives, which the EST could develop in our area. Examples of projects developed elsewhere include, Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) funding, ground source heat pumps, support for vulnerable groups, solar heating discount, air source heat pumps etc.
  - Route Smart is to be used to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Round reorganisation is planned during 2010.
  - RDC has £100K for 2009/10 to be used as grant money to fund energy efficient measures, for residents classed as being in fuel poverty. Further initiatives are planned in this area, with officers currently being in discussion with private organisations to supplement in-house grant administration with a more targeted area-by-area approach regarding home insulation to private housing. The new approach would incorporate the following:
    - Visit all homes within the target area, following a joint letter from the company and RDC.
    - The target is for 80% of homes to complete assessment forms.
    - At this stage both energy and benefit advice is given together with identification for qualification for subsidy.
    - Data is sent for Authorities records including initial SAP ratings.

- Insulation is effectively provided free for all those who qualify and subsidised to those 'able to pay'.

### **Author and Contact Details**

Phil Long, Head of Environment, [phil.long@ryedale.gov.uk](mailto:phil.long@ryedale.gov.uk) 01653 600666 ext 461

### **Date of publication**

20.3.10

### **Background documents/Links:**

[..\KLOE 3 1\Self Assessment -Use of Natural resources KLOE 3.1 UPDATED VERSION.doc](#)