

DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS REPORT

DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP NAME: Environment & Housing

DATE OF REPORT: 20 January 2009

CONTACT: Rob Nicholls

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE THEME:

The overall aim of the Delivery Partnership is to fully contribute to the housing and environment elements of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and LAA. In particular the partnership plays the following roles:-

- It enables communities and organizations in Newcastle to work together and co-operate to address priorities for service improvement and improve wellbeing as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement, and any other governing documents agreed by Newcastle's Local Strategic Partnership.
 - It plans, commissions services and expends resources allocated via the Strategic Board and cooperates with other organizations and partnerships locally, regionally and nationally; in furtherance of the role.
 - It develops and supports appropriate infrastructure in order to facilitate the role, including sub groups, working groups and forums relating to areas of engagement, policy, strategy or service delivery.
 - It works and liaises closely with other elements of the Local Strategy Partnership, ensuring that appropriate action plans and other relevant agreements are devised and acted upon and that there is clarity on where lead responsibility lies.
 - It ensures that as far as is practical and lawful the decision making of the Partnership is inclusive, transparent, multi-sectoral and open to public scrutiny.
- 1a). In respect of Environment the key objectives are:
- To reduce the impact the City has on climate change by reducing carbon emissions from the domestic, commercial/industrial and transport sectors.
 - To reduce the number of people living in fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of homes and the take up of relevant benefits.
 - To reduce the amount of municipal waste the city sends to landfill with a principle focus on waste minimisation.
 - To ensure the city is clean green and safe by improving the environmental quality of local communities.
- 1b). In respect of Transport the key objective is to improve person journey time along 16 strategic transport corridors across Tyne and Wear. This includes pedestrians, cyclists, users of public transport and private cars, ie, all road users. Effective congestion management assists in facilitating:

- Regeneration – access to development initiatives
- Economic prosperity – reducing delays to services and businesses
- Social Amenity – reducing the impact of congestion of day to day life
- Environmental improvements – reduction in noise and exhaust emissions
- Quality of Life – access to goods and services with shorter journey times

1c). In respect of housing the key objectives are:

- To improve the quality of place in Newcastle by improving housing condition, management and repair
- To improve the choice of housing offered in Newcastle by increasing the numbers and range of new house building
- To increase the social inclusion and independence of people affected by homelessness by providing advice, assistance and support.

KEY INITIATIVES/SERVICES DELIVERED

a). In respect of environment

Carbon Reduction

- Restructuring of the Climate Change Partnership to reflect the requirements of the new Nottingham Declaration Partnership template for strategy production and delivery.
- Initiation of a Carbon Routemap project in partnership with Newcastle University. The first stage, which is identifying and collating data on carbon production across the City, is underway.

Fuel Poverty

- Continued delivery by the Newcastle Warmzone.
 - No. households assessed – 68,937
 - No. insulation measures installed – 38,212 (29,951 homes)
 - No. completed benefits checks - 13,917
 - No. of confirmed secured claims - 2,441
 - Value of confirmed secured claims - £5,521,474
 - CO2 emissions reduced (estimate) c. 26,000 t p.a.

Landfill Reduction

- Constitution of a new group to drive the waste minimisation objective. The first meeting is 13th January 2009.
- Continued roll out of the integrated waste collection and recycling service to c85,000 homes. Project will be complete by March 2009.

Environmental Quality

- 1st meeting of new working group has now taken place. Toolkit to tackle environmental crime and in particular fly tipping currently being produced. This to be shared with group at next meeting planned for early February.

b). In respect of housing:

Preventing people from becoming homeless by

- Providing advice and assistance
- Providing supported housing
- Increasing housing options and improving access to them
- Partnership working with a range of different providers in the homeless sector

Addressing empty homes in the private sector by:

- Acquisition and demolition of housing sites
- Schemes to assist provision of private rent deposits
- Setting up new private rented tenancies
- Promotion of re-occupation of vacant private homes
- Enforcement action to address sub-standard management
- Compulsory purchase of vacant property

Accelerating new house building by:

- Assemble a long term housing development programme
- Carry out infrastructure works to facilitate development
- Renegotiate development on sites where necessary
- Develop appropriate delivery vehicles
- Commission new house building from private and from public sector providers
- Assemble evidence relating to land availability and the housing market

Increasing the supply of affordable housing by:

- Develop land use planning policy to promote the required numbers of new affordable housing
- Carry out assessments of the viability of specific sites to maximise affordable housing
- Commission new affordable housing from public and private providers

Improving the condition of council housing by:

- Commission and performance manage the refurbishment of council homes
- Manage the investment programme to ensure spend profile delivered and required standard achieved
- Co-ordination of activity to maximise strategic impact and value for money

c). In respect of transport there are a number of traffic management initiatives implemented across Tyne and Wear to address the objectives, including physical engineering measures, including No Car Lanes, bus priority measures, advance stop lines at signals for cyclists, cycle tracks and paths. These are supplemented with green travel plans and school travel plans and other marketing initiatives for air quality and individual travel marketing.

PROGRESS AGAINST PERFORMANCE TARGETS

a). Overview

Description	Performance for selected period				
	Traffic Light	Traffic Light	Period End Target	Period End Actual	Year End Target
LAAL1: Prevention of homelessness	Green	●	900	1092	1800
LAAL2: Vacant dwellings returned to occupation or demolished	Green	●	70	137	140
NI154: Net additional homes provided	Red	●	300	140	600
NI155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	Green	●	50	52	100
NI158: Percentage of non-decent council homes	Green	●	67	62.2	48.8
NI167: Congestion - average journey time per mile during the morning peak	Green	●	Information not yet provided by measuring body-DFT		3.42
NI186: Per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions in the LA area	Information not available at this stage				6.6
NI187a: Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating <35	Green	●	2.22	2.07	1.92
NI187b: Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a high energy efficiency rating >65	Green	●	33.3	33.2	33.55
NI193: Municipal waste land filled	Green	●	72	66.4	66
NI195a: Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter)	Green	●	7	2	7
NI195c: Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	Green	●	5	5	5

b). Environment performance targets summary

- NI186: Per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions in the LA area

This NI is calculated annually by the Government without any direct input from the partnership, so it is not possible to report in year progress. It is envisaged that the Carbon Routemap project will allow the timely and more accurate production of information relating to this indicator.

- NI187a: Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating <35. It is estimated that currently performance is on target to meet the overall objectives of this indicator. Interim data monitoring highlights that the number of homes with an energy rating below 35 has decreased. Recent work has also been carried out on a review of the baseline and on a detailed breakdown of the number of such homes which could be fitted with improvement measures such as cavity wall and/or loft insulation.

- NI187b: Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a high energy efficiency rating >65. It is estimated that currently performance is on target to meet the overall objectives of this indicator. Interim data monitoring highlights that the number of homes with an energy rating above 65 has increased. Recent work has also been carried out on a review of the baseline and on a detailed breakdown of the number of such homes which could be fitted with improvement measures such as cavity wall and/or loft insulation.

- NI193: Municipal waste land filled

Performance is on target to meet the period end target. The proportion of waste sent to landfill continues to reduce due to the ongoing replacement of the black bin with the blue bin recycling service and the continued operation of the Mechanical Biological Treatment facility at Byker/Ellington. Although the full year effect of the blue bin will not be measurable until 2009/10, early indications show the service has resulted in a 75% increase in recyclable material collected from households.

- NI195a: Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter). First of three city wide inspections confirmed performance to be on target. Results of second inspection currently due.

- NI195c: Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti). As per NI195a.

c). Housing performance targets

LAAL1 – prevention of homelessness:

The consolidation of the preventative approach to homelessness continues.

We have improved our identification of those people at risk of homelessness, in particular in respect of personal debt, with faster referral times, joint training and the advice and guidance of a specialist group.

We have improved working arrangements with Supporting People in relation to NI 142, promoting independent living for vulnerable people by ensuring that appropriate support prevents repeat homelessness when residents leave supported

accommodation.

We have worked closely with YHN, in particular in relation to the prevention of eviction by earlier intervention, offering advice and using a multi-agency approach, now including major housing associations.

LAAL2 – private sector vacants: Current performance is ahead of target with increased activities from our Private Rented Sector team in this quarter. Performance is expected to exceed current year's target.

NI154 – net additional homes: Current performance would produce 424 net additional homes if annualised, significantly below target of 600. This is partly due to the onset of the credit crunch and partly to delays in bringing forward the programme of housing market regeneration.

NI155 – gross affordable homes: Performance is on target at the end of quarter one. However, current market conditions make it questionable that this build rate will be sustained. Predictions in future years are particularly difficult and outputs are likely to fall below target reflecting the reduced output in overall housebuilding (see NI154). In the worst case - if private housebuilding becomes effectively unviable - the only new homes will be those funded publicly and completion rates are likely to remain at the current level (100 per year).

NI158 – non-decent council homes: The adoption of a “two package” approach (internal and external) meant that properties only become decent once both packages have been completed. This has meant that in the first part of the programme the overall number of homes that met the standard for decency remained static. However, this picture has now started to change and the programme is now delivering the strongest performance against decency to date.

d). Transport Performance Target

The key indicator is NI167. This has improved both in 2006/07 and 2007/08. The target relates to person journey time per person mile during the am peak on the 16LTP strategic corridors inbound to the urban centres in Tyne and Wear. The target for the current financial year is 3.42 and this is likely to be achieved. Confirmation of this will not be known until DFT release the performance information which they are responsible for collating.

ISSUES/COMMENTS FOR THE ATTENTION OF DELIVERY BOARD (Including barriers to delivery)

In respect of Environment:

1. A detailed investigation of the potential of low carbon community energy networks for the City Centre, Cruddas Park and Byker/Walker is underway and expected to be completed by February 2009. This will build on the Citywide feasibility study carried out last summer with the intention follow quickly with a business case for procurement where this is identified to be feasible.
2. The global economic downturn has seriously effected the value of most recyclable materials and the demand for them. The value for paper has dropped from c.£ 45 per tonne to £5-£15 per tonne. Corus closed its doors to accepting steel cans for a period before Christmas. All local authorities are experiencing these difficulties to varying degrees. Locally, some materials, particularly plastic are having to be stored rather than recycled as there is no market demand. It is uncertain how this situation will develop in 2009. It is particularly sensitive as 2009/10 is a target year for the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme and there is a risk that both local and national targets for landfill reduction could be adversely effected. The government and the Waste and Resources Action Programme and investigating the situation to determine how best to stimulate the market.
3. The Council will agree the strategy of dealing with residual municipal waste in January 2009. This will include a commitment to reducing waste produced by 15% of 2005/6 levels by 2019/20. Achieving this will be crucial in ensuring statutory landfill target are met. Therefore the success of the new group being established to deliver waste minimisation programmes will be extremely important. Invitees to the new group include BAN, Friends of the Earth, CVS and the local waste industry.

In respect of Housing

1. Review of new house building targets: The recent financial instability and economic downturn will require a review of targets in relation to house building in the current LAA period.
2. The Local Development Framework Core Strategy: the revision of the spatial planning framework for new housing will provide an essential base for the delivery of the new house building targets.
3. Completion of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment will identify land that is viable for development and assist in identifying any gap funding needed.

4. Completion of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment will analyse housing needs within Newcastle's Housing Market Area and provide evidence of the kind of housing the city will need in the future.
5. Funding provided by CLG to assist the local authority in meeting its growth target set out in the Growth Point Programme of Development.

In respect of Transport

1. Department for Transport are keen to share best practice. This is achieved at meetings of the Metropolitan authorities in the UK, all of which have set congestion reduction targets.
2. In Tyne and Wear, Joint Transport Steering Group and the Tyne and Wear Traffic Managers also discuss best practice issues which assist in achieving the target.

SHARING BEST PRACTICE

In respect of Environment:

- The Climate Change Partnership continues to stimulate sharing best practice. Nexus for example have discussed the potential for installing renewables at Metro stations with Dr Chris French from SustainPlus as a result of his presentation to the last meeting of the partnership. National Express have also expressed an interest in working with the partnership to improve the green credentials of the Central Station.
- The Council continues to lead the climate change theme on the Core Cities Group.
- The Council is currently defining how the City can work with CABI on their national programme of embedding sustainability into the built environment.
- The Universities and the Royal Victoria Infirmary are being involved in the scoping of a City Centre energy network.

In respect of Housing

- The Council has a leading role in a group of those councils with ALMOs which share and develop good practice.
- The Council is an active member of a sub-regional group dealing with best practice in the private rented sector.
- The Council will continue to collaborate with Gateshead council, in particular on those initiatives relevant to the work of the Council's House Market Renewal Pathfinder.

In respect of Transport

- Department for Transport are keen to share best practice. This is achieved at meetings of the Metropolitan authorities in the UK, all of which have set congestion reduction targets.
- In Tyne and Wear, Joint Transport Steering Group and the Tyne and Wear Traffic Managers also discuss best issues which assist in achieving the target.