

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT AND  
SCRUTINY PANEL**

**REVIEW OF DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S APPROACH  
TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**REPORT TO THE MEETING ON 30 APRIL 2003**

**MEMBERS**

**Councillor Mrs Janet Hill – Chair**

**Councillor Mrs June Beckingham**

**Councillor Lynton Bennett**

**Councillor Mrs Jacqueline Bevan**

**Councillor Ian Eames**

**Councillor Robert Parkinson**

**Councillor Mrs Joyce Sanders**

**Councillor Trevor Southerd**

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## **Review of Derbyshire County Council's Approach to Environmental Sustainability**

### **1. Executive Summary**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2002 the Environment & Highways Improvement and Scrutiny Panel agreed that it would undertake a review of sustainability. It was determined that despite recognition that sustainable development is about integrating social, economic and environmental concerns a review of sustainable development in its entirety would be unmanageable due to its sheer size.

The Panel proposed that the review should be thematic with a focus on Derbyshire County Council's approach to environmental sustainability. Key questions that the review sought to answer include:

- Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?
- Do people understand it and are they committed?
- Is it being implemented?
- Is it making a difference?

This would lead to an assessment of how well Derbyshire County Council is integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work.

This report summarises the work carried out by the Environment and Highways Improvement and Scrutiny Panel and puts forward a set of recommendations.

#### **1.2 Summary of Findings**

Using the above key questions as the basis of the assessment criteria the review concluded that Derbyshire County Council is integrating environmental sustainability into a number of aspects of the Council's work but sustainability is not embedded into the culture of the Authority.

The Council has developed a number of policies that promote environmental sustainability within the organisation. However, it is evident that not all of the Council's policies and plans take environmental sustainability considerations into account when they are prepared.

Interviews revealed that there is support for environmental sustainability principles amongst Members and officers but there is little understanding of the Council's environmental policy and the links between environmental sustainability and the wider sustainable development agenda. This is to some extent enforced by inadequate training given to Members and officers on sustainability and the confusion that exists regarding who is responsible for aspects of environmental sustainability within the Council.

Despite some of the aforementioned limitations a number of innovative initiatives have been developed to support the promotion of environmental sustainability within Derbyshire. There is however, insufficient performance monitoring to evaluate how effective the Council is at promoting environmental sustainability or to determine how the Authority compares against other local authorities.

### **1.3 Recommendations**

To assist the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability into the culture of Derbyshire County Council a number of improvements are needed. These are set out below:

#### **Recommendation 1**

##### **1.3.1 Incorporate environmental and other sustainability principles into the Community Strategy and the Council Plan**

The Community Strategy provides the greatest opportunity to move environmental sustainability from the margins to the mainstream within Derbyshire County Council. The Council, and its partners, should ensure that environmental sustainability principles are integral to Derbyshire's Community Strategy and that the Council Plan, when updated, reflects these objectives.

To help monitor the Community Strategy the Local Strategic Partnership should consider including a number of Audit Commission Quality of Life Indicators into the documents targets and objectives. This will improve performance management and monitoring regarding environmental sustainability.

#### **Recommendation 2**

##### **1.3.2 Update and strengthen the existing Environmental Policy**

Derbyshire County Council's current policy was developed in 1997. It now needs updating to reflect the significant changes that have happened since 1997. To make the document more practical a strategy should be developed that translates the environmental policy into actions, targets, resource implications, and objectives for the Council.

The strategy should encompass issues such as energy, waste and staff travel schemes. The strategy should draw together existing targets included in various plans and must link into the Community Strategy, Council Plan, Performance Management Framework, East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy, cross cutting strategies and service plans.

### **Recommendation 3**

#### **1.3.3 Adapt the report template**

The existing report template specifies that environmental factors should be considered when preparing reports. This is too narrow and not widely understood by report writers. To ensure that the connection between environmental, economic and social concerns is made it is recommended that the term 'sustainable development considerations' replaces the term 'environmental considerations'. To encourage greater usage of this guideline attention is drawn to recommendation 5.

### **Recommendation 4**

#### **1.3.4 Ensure that service plans are appraised against environmental and other sustainability principles**

Service plans are key documents regarding the translation of council policy into action. To ensure that service plans consider environmental and other sustainability implications it is recommended that they be appraised against the existing Best Value and Sustainability checklist. This checklist is a straightforward way of testing the sustainability of council services and of identifying where the service is successful in meeting the principles of sustainability.

### **Recommendation 5**

#### **1.3.5 Develop a training programme on sustainability for Members and officers**

Sustainability is an approach and a cultural change. If the principles of environmental sustainability and sustainable development in general are to permeate throughout the Council Members and officers need to think sustainably. This requires training to raise awareness and understanding.

A training programme, similar to that employed by Worcestershire County Council (6.2.2.1) needs to be developed by the Environmental Policy Officer. Members and officers should receive awareness training. It is recommended that a number of officers become familiar with the issues and can then pass this knowledge onto other officers through training sessions.

### **Recommendation 6**

#### **1.3.6 Raise awareness amongst staff by regular communications**

There is a need to constantly reinforce the sustainability message by communicating to staff to make them aware of the issues. The Council has had some success in this area through regular features in the staff newsletter, awareness seminars and high profile events. This activity should be encouraged.

## **Recommendation 7**

### **1.3.7 Clarify responsibility for sustainability, including environmental sustainability, in Derbyshire County Council**

A number of interviewees were unclear of the role of the Council's Environmental Policy Officer and how this role relates to the functions delivered by the Environmental Services Department. This lack of clarity dilutes the effectiveness of the environmental sustainability message throughout the Council.

The following statements are designed to clarify the position:

- The Chief Executive's Department promotes sustainable development in its widest sense covering economic, social and environmental concerns. This includes working with partners at strategic levels and developing the Community Strategy with the Local Strategic Partnership.
- The role of the Environmental Policy Officer, working within the Policy Unit, is to promote sustainable development at a strategic level and not merely to be involved in 'green issues'.
- The Environmental Services Department is responsible within Derbyshire County Council for implementing:
  - a) Travel Plan
  - b) Internal waste collection and recycling
  - c) Greenwatch Awards / Green Action Grants

## **1.4 Additional Recommendations**

Recommendations have been made designed to improve the Council's corporate approach to environmental sustainability. The Working Group also identified a number of specific issues related to environmental sustainability that they deemed required more detailed investigation.

## **Recommendation 8**

### **1.4.1 Environmental Management System – The County Property Division explores the implications of seeking certification to ISO 14001 and reports back with findings**

Activities of the County Property Division within the Corporate Resources Department (referred to as the County Property Division) have considerable impacts on the environment. Advantages similar to those that the Environmental Services Department has benefited from could be bestowed upon the County Property Division if certification to ISO 14001 is sought.

It is recommended that the County Property Division discuss the implications of the proposals with officers from the Environmental Services Department who have experience of the process and report back to Cabinet with the findings.

## **Recommendation 9**

### **1.4.2 Environmental Management System (EMS) - The Authority adopts the new Project Management Toolkit**

The Change Management Team is developing a Project Management Toolkit. In addition to a number of other issues the toolkit promotes the consideration of sustainability principles when developing new projects.

This review welcomes the development of the toolkit and its application throughout the Council and believes that such a document can improve the sustainability of services and aid decision making without every department becoming certified to the ISO 14001 standard. It is recommended that the toolkit signposts readers to the Environmental Services Departments EMS.

## **Recommendation 10**

### **1.4.3 Travel Plans - Encourage an increase in home working where feasible**

Mindful of the work being undertaken by the Corporate Steering Group this report recognises that the Travel Plan contains a number of initiatives that will contribute to less car journeys being made by employees, and more of those journeys being made by alternative forms of transport.

The review welcomes the further facilitation of home working as a means of reducing car journeys and encourages actions that lead to more employees working closer to their homes where feasible.

## **Recommendation 11**

### **1.4.4 Energy and Water Management - Develop an Energy Strategy for Derbyshire County Council and incorporate it into the updated Environmental Policy (recommendation 2)**

The Authority should develop an energy strategy that directs activity and sets out specific council-wide targets and responsibilities. To increase its effectiveness, and to minimise the number of strategies in operation the strategy should be incorporated in the wider Environmental Policy as suggested in recommendation 2.

## **Recommendation 12**

### **1.4.5 Energy and Water Management - Promote long term 'invest to save' approach**

To meet long-term targets Derbyshire County Council needs to consider investing greater resources into properties to make them more energy efficient. The investment should be recouped over the life-span of the building as energy prices rise.

Where schools benefit from energy efficiency improvements an element of the revenue savings generated should be redirected back to the County Property Division to re-invest into more initiatives.

Derbyshire County Council departments should however, be given financial incentives to reduce energy consumption. When an effective monitoring system is in place individual departments should be rewarded if they reduce energy usage. This will encourage managers to promote energy efficiency within working practices.

#### **Recommendation 13**

##### **1.4.6 Procurement - Implement the new Procurement Toolkit across the Council**

The new toolkit is due in September 2003. The review Working Group welcomes the principles of the new toolkit and hopes that it will lead to more procurement decisions based on the whole life cost of products and services and the most economically sustainable solution.

#### **Recommendation 14**

##### **1.4.7 Internal Waste Management - Implement new waste contract and develop recycling of waste products**

A new waste contract is being developed. The new contract should lead to a considerable improvement in the Council's management of its internal waste. Recycling levels and the range of products being recycled need to improve.

To encourage more staff to reduce, reuse and recycle materials it is imperative that staff are made aware of the new services through a communications campaign. Subject to agreement with the Procurement Unit, the Environmental Services Department should use their expertise to lead this campaign and take ownership of internal waste issues within the Council

#### **Recommendation 15**

##### **1.4.8 Best Value - All Best Value reviews should complete the Best Value and Sustainability Checklist**

Best Value reviews should follow the Best Value and Sustainability checklist to ensure that services comply with sustainable development principles. To assist this process the expertise of the Environmental Policy Officer should be utilised.



## **1.5 The Next Stage**

The report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration. It is recommended that: -

- (1) the Chair of the Improvement and Scrutiny Panel presents the report to the Cabinet.
- (2) following consideration of this report it is suggested that, should the Cabinet agree to implement the recommendations, the Improvement and Scrutiny Panel receives a report at a date to be determined, to outline progress made.

## **2. Introduction**

Sustainable development is a process, the aim of which is to create a society where everyone has a good quality of life while maintaining and enhancing the environmental resources upon which human societies depend.

The widely used definition of sustainable development is '*development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*'.<sup>1</sup>

On the practical level, sustainable development is an approach that aims to integrate social, economic and environmental concerns. It is now accepted that good social conditions require strong economies, strong economies rely on environmental resources, and environmental conditions are inseparable from our quality of life.<sup>2</sup>

At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2002 the Environment & Highways Improvement and Scrutiny Panel agreed that it would undertake a review of sustainability. It was determined that despite recognition that sustainable development is about integrating social, economic and environmental concerns a review of sustainable development in its entirety would be unmanageable due to its sheer size.

The Panel proposed that the review should be thematic with a focus on Derbyshire County Council's approach to environmental sustainability. It was agreed that the review should be internally focused analysing the Council's policies, processes and frameworks and establishing if the Council's own services and activities meet the high standards it encourages others to adopt. Key questions that the review sought to answer include:

- Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?
- Do people understand it and are they committed?
- Is it being implemented
- Is it making a difference?

This would lead to an assessment of how well Derbyshire County Council is integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work.

A copy of the project brief is attached at Appendix 1.

### **2.1 Environmental Sustainability and the Council Plan**

The goal of achieving environmental sustainability is not directly mentioned in the Council Plan but a Key Goal in the 2002–2005 Plan is to 'Protect and enhance the environment.' The objectives associated with this aim are:

- To increase recycling and energy production from household waste

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<sup>1</sup> Our Common Future (The Brundtland Report) – Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development

<sup>2</sup> I&DeA Knowledge / WWF - Briefing 1: What is sustainable development? 2002

- To protect and enhance the local environment
- To control developments and land use in the county

Household waste management issues are subject to an ongoing Best Value review and were therefore not considered in this report.

In addition targets within the Council Plan that impact on environmental sustainability include:

- The development of a Community Strategy which works towards a long term sustainable vision for the county
- Achievement of a 5% improvement in the reduction of property running and energy costs for operational buildings by the end of 2005.

The 2002 Community Survey also indicates that residents consider environmental issues to be important. The survey revealed that 17% of residents believed that protecting the environment was an important Council function, and indeed many residents indicated that they thought Derbyshire County Council was good at protecting the environment with a net success of +37% recorded.

## **2.2 Review Working Group**

To oversee the review, a working group comprising Councillors B Lucas, Mrs J Sanders and R Parkinson was established. Councillors had discussions with: -

Cllr Williams	- Leader of the Council
Cllr Burrows	- Cabinet Member, Environment & Highways
Nick Hodgson	- Chief Executive
David Harvey	- Director of Environmental Services
Alan Beastall	- County Property Officer
John Bettison	- Engineering Services Manager
Neil Forrest	- Assistant Director, Planning & Environment
David Lowe	- Head of Policy
Andrew Ayling	- County Procurement Officer
Dawn Moran	- Principal Procurement Officer
Maggie Bishop	- Principal Officer Environment
Mark Jeffcote	- Leicester City Council
Steve Waller	- Principal Consultant, I&DeA

In addition evidence has been gathered from:-

Yvonne Peach	- Principal Transportation Officer
Steve Pearson	- Waste Manager
Kevin Cardall	- Energy Manager
Binder Hamlyn	Review of Environmental Stewardship

## **2.3 Acknowledgements**

The Environment and Highways Improvement and Scrutiny Panel would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the review.

### 3. **Drivers for Environmental Sustainability**

Whilst there is no specific statutory responsibility to deliver environmental sustainability there are a number of prominent drivers that compel council's to work towards this goal.

These drivers in the UK are supported by facts such as:

- If everyone in the world consumed resources at the same rate as people in the UK, we would need more than 3 earths<sup>3</sup>
- While resource consumption and environmental damage has grown rapidly in recent decades, peoples perception's of improvements in their quality of life has not grown at the same rate.

**Table 1 – Drivers for Environmental Sustainability <sup>4</sup>**

Level	What	Key outcome
International	UN Earth Summit 1992	Local Agenda 21
	EU Environment Action Programme	Integration of environment into policy making
	Kyoto Summit 1997	Domestic aim to cut emissions of CO <sub>2</sub> by 20%
National	UK Sustainable Development Strategy 1999 'A better quality of life'	National objectives: (relevant to environmental sustainability ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective protection of the environment</li> <li>• Prudent use of natural resources</li> </ul>
	Local Government Act 1999,	Best value 'give effect to the principles of sustainable development in best value reviews'
	Local Government Act 2000,	Power to promote 'social, economic and environmental well being' of communities
	Single Capital Pot Targets	Government targets on energy and water usage and CO <sub>2</sub> emissions
Regional	Regional Development Agencies	Develop high level sustainability frameworks with regional objectives and targets
	Greater London Authority	Mayors Strategies
Local	Local Quality of life indicators	Menu of indicators to help measure progress
	Community Strategy	Clear links with LA21

<sup>3</sup> Living Planet Report 2002, WWF

<sup>4</sup> Table adapted from the Audit Commission Best Value Review Report of the London Borough of Sutton's Environmental Sustainability Review, December 2001.

#### **4. Background to Environmental Sustainability and Derbyshire County Council**

##### **4.1 From Local Agenda 21 to Community Strategies**

Derbyshire County Council produced 'The Challenge' Local Agenda 21 document in 1997. This document, emanating from the 1992 Earth Summit, explained the Council's strategy for promoting and actioning sustainable development in Derbyshire. The document was the culmination of work, including significant consultation, which commenced in 1993.

A report was produced annually to update Councillors of progress against agreed priorities.

In the Local Government Act 2000, the Government has given local authorities the duty to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas through the development of a Community Strategy. The Community Strategy should build on the progress achieved through the LA 21 process. The importance of the Community Strategy in promoting sustainable development will be considered later in the review.

##### **4.2 Environmental Stewardship VFM report**

As part of the 1996/97 Value For Money Audit Reviews (VFM), auditors Binder Hamlyn undertook a review of environmental stewardship at Derbyshire County Council.

The review found that overall the Council performs well against some of the Audit Commission's good practice indicators for environmental stewardship. In particular the review praised the Council's response to Local Agenda 21, and the successful translation of environmental policies into planning, transport and development control strategies.

However, the review identified a number of areas where improvements could be made. Recommendations were made regarding energy and water management, communications, corporate responsibility and environmental management systems.

The report was considered and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 June 1998. A number of actions were recommended by the Council to improve performance in certain areas. This review will look at recommendations made within the report to see if priority areas have been implemented.

##### **4.3 Roles and Responsibilities**

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for sustainability within Derbyshire County Council is the Environment and Highways portfolio holder.

A number of officers deliver services that contribute to environmental sustainability targets within the Council. In the Chief Executive's Department the post of Environmental Policy Officer exists to promote environmental and other sustainability objectives throughout the organisation and the wider community.

Environmental Services employ a number of officers who deliver aspects of the environmental sustainability agenda. This includes an Environmental Policy and Projects Officer and a Sustainable Transport Officer. In addition the County Property Division employs an Energy Manager. It should however be noted that for targets to be met all Members and officers have a role to play in adopting environmental sustainability principles.

## **5. A Corporate Approach to Environmental Sustainability**

### **5.1 Why is a corporate approach to environmental sustainability essential if progress is to be made?**

Evidence suggests that to enhance the positive impact that an organisation can have on the environment issues must be mainstreamed throughout an organisation, rather than isolated in service departments.

#### **5.1.1 London Borough of Sutton**

The London Borough of Sutton undertook a Best Value review of Environmental Sustainability in 2000/01. The Council was assessed as providing an ***excellent, three star service with promising prospects for improvement***. The inspectors judged the service to be excellent because:

- “There is a clear and established internal and external commitment to the environmental sustainability goal throughout the organisation”.

In addition the Inspectors noted that the commitment was supported by appropriate frameworks for translating and tracking progress, and staff at all levels of the Council who were able to demonstrate understanding of, and a commitment to, the Council’s corporate goal.

#### **5.1.2 Leicester City Council**

Leicester became Britain’s first Environment City in 1990, and the City Council was awarded Beacon Status in 2001/02 for ‘Maintaining a Quality Environment.’ To embed sustainability (incorporating environmental sustainability) into the culture of Leicester City Council the authority has implemented a wide range of practical measures. These include:

- The sustainability of Leicester is built into the Council’s corporate purpose
- All service plans, Best Value reviews, policies, strategies and major projects are appraised using a sustainable development checklist
- Sustainable development performance indicators are produced for each department and for the authority as a whole
- Sustainable development is built into the staff induction process
- Sustainable development training is built into the management development programme<sup>5</sup>

Leicester City Council and the London Borough of Sutton are recognised as being at the forefront of authorities that are utilising the new powers provided by the Local Government Act 2000. Powers enable Council’s to “do anything which they consider is likely to achieve” the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area.

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<sup>5</sup> Leadership for Sustainable Development, Greengage Consulting Ltd, 2001

## 5.2 Assessment Criteria

A number of tools have been developed to assess how well a local authority is integrating environmental sustainability into its work. These tools have been used to drive improvement in local authorities. Appendix 2 highlights a few examples of models used by County Council's.

A number of elements featured within the examples are comparable. This review will use a combination of the tools to evaluate how effective the Council's corporate approach to environmental sustainability is.

**Table 2 – Criteria chosen to evaluate the Council's approach to environmental sustainability**

Key Questions	Issues to consider
<b>1. Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?</b>  <b>(POLICY)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy</b> - What policies exist and are environmental considerations clearly featured within service plans?</li> <li>• <b>Decision making</b> - Are environmental implications considered in decisions?</li> </ul>
<b>2. Do people understand it and are they committed?</b>  <b>(AWARENESS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Understanding</b> and support for, environmental sustainability amongst Members and officers?</li> <li>• <b>Training</b> - What training is provided to Members and officers on environmental sustainability issues?</li> <li>• <b>Structure</b> - What structure exists to support the promotion of environmental sustainability?</li> </ul>
<b>3. Is it being implemented and is it making a difference?</b>  <b>(ACTION)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action</b> - Is policy being translated into action?</li> <li>• <b>Performance</b> - What do the Indicators suggest?</li> </ul>

## 5.3 The Scope of the Review

This review will initially assess the Council's corporate approach to environmental sustainability. The Working Group however identified a number of issues regarding environmental sustainability that the review should consider in detail. A number of these issues were identified in the Value For Money report.

- Environmental Management Systems
- Travel Plans
- Energy and Water Management
- Procurement and environmental sustainability
- Internal Waste Management
- Best Value and environmental sustainability



## **6. The Assessment:**

**How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

**6.1 Question 1 - Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?**

- Policy
- Decision Making
- Conclusion

## **6. The Assessment - How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

### **6.1 Question 1 - Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?**

#### **6.1.1 Policy**

‘Creating the right framework that puts environmental sustainability at the heart of the Council across its corporate planning processes’.<sup>6</sup>

Appendix 3 shows a simplistic model of the key strategies/policies influencing environmental sustainability within Derbyshire County Council’s Policy Framework.

##### **6.1.1.1 The Council Plan**

The Council Plan is a strategic document that outlines the Authority’s key objectives and drives other plans and strategies. As section 2.1 mentions the goal of achieving environmental sustainability is not directly mentioned in the Council Plan but a Key Goal in the 2002–2005 Plan is to ‘Protect and enhance the environment.’

In addition environmental sustainability principles are implicit in a number of aims and targets within the Council Plan. These include:

- The development of a Community Strategy which works towards a long term sustainable vision for the county
- Achievement of a 5% improvement in the reduction of property running and energy costs for operational buildings by the end of 2005.

It is worth noting that a number of Council’s that are deemed to be examples of best practice in mainstreaming environmental sustainability have explicit corporate goals relating to environmental sustainability or sustainable development.

The London Borough of Sutton for example has within its Corporate Action Plan the goal of ‘Achieving Environmental Sustainability’.

##### **6.1.1.2 Environmental Policy**

Derbyshire County Council’s current Environmental Policy was developed in 1997. The policy is a statement of intent setting out the Council’s commitment to environmental improvement.

The policy does not contain detailed objectives, targets, timescales and responsibilities it contains aims and promises.

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<sup>6</sup> Sustainability Strategy, Worcestershire County Council, 2001

The VFM report praised the policy stating that:

*“It acts as a valuable first step in ensuring that the corporate commitment to the environment permeates the work and culture of all departments”.*

The report does add that:

*“The effectiveness of the Council’s corporate environmental policy will largely be determined by the commitment and ownership generated across all departments”<sup>7</sup>.*

The issue of ownership of the environmental policy across all departments will be examined when the review considers the question: ‘do people understand it and are they committed?’

Derbyshire County Council’s Environmental Policy is found in Appendix 4.

### 6.1.1.3 Service Plans

Each department within Derbyshire County Council produces an annual service plan. A template has been produced to standardise the format for service plans. The template does not specify that service plans should be appraised against a sustainability criteria, there is however a requirement that service plans demonstrate how the service contributes to achieving council goals and targets that are set within the Council Plan.

### 6.1.1.4 Community Strategy (in development)

Local authorities in England and Wales have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to prepare a community strategy. Government guidance on community strategies states that the overall objective of a community strategy is to: “improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of each area and its inhabitants”.

The new duty provides the greatest opportunity to move environmental sustainability from the margins to the mainstream within Derbyshire County Council and across Derbyshire. The challenge will be to translate environmental sustainability from the Community Strategy to front line services.

### 6.1.1.5 East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy

County Council officers have contributed to the development of a sustainable development framework

**Table 3 – Strategic links**

Achieving a better quality of life – UK sustainable development strategy



East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy



Derbyshire Community Strategy

<sup>7</sup> Review of Environmental Stewardship – Value For Money Study, Binder Hamlyn, 1998, p7-8

for the East Midlands. This document, developed by the Regional Assembly, is a bridge between the national strategy for sustainable development and activity at a local level through Local Agenda 21 and now community strategies.

The Integrated Regional Strategy contains priorities and targets for the East Midlands that all local authorities should seek to contribute to meeting.

#### **6.1.1.6 Cross Cutting Plans**

A number of additional cross cutting corporate plans have an important role to play in promoting environmental sustainability within the Council. Strategies such as the Asset Management Plan, Local Structure Plan, Derbyshire County Council Travel Plan and the Procurement Strategy include actions and targets that will influence whether the principles featured within the Environmental Policy are adhered to.

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#### **6.1.2 Decision Making – Are environmental sustainability implications considered when making decisions?**

*‘To make sustainable development a reality it must be built into policies and decisions at all levels’<sup>8</sup>*

All reports prepared by Derbyshire County Council officers should comply with the following guidelines:

*‘In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, **environmental**, financial, health, legal and human rights, personnel and property considerations’.*

The guidelines do not explain what environmental factors are.

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#### **6.1.3 Conclusion – Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?**

Derbyshire County Council has a number of corporate policies that promote environmental sustainability across the authority and provide a good platform to put environmental sustainability at the heart of the Council’s corporate planning process.

The environmental policy is a valuable document outlining the Council’s environmental principles and the forthcoming community strategy provides the Council with a great opportunity to integrate environmental sustainability principles into working practice across Derbyshire County Council.

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<sup>8</sup> Achieving a better quality of life, Government Annual Report, 2002

It can be argued that environmental sustainability is not built into policies at all levels. All strategies and plans are not routinely assessed against sustainable development criteria, however, they should give consideration to environmental implications when preparing a committee report.

It would be valuable if the Council Plan was more explicit in the Authority's promotion of sustainable development and environmental sustainability. This can be addressed when the Council Plan is updated to reflect priorities identified in the Community Strategy. This will enable service plans to reflect the Council's commitment to sustainable development.

## **6. The Assessment:**

**How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

6.2 Question 2 – Do people understand it and are they committed?

- Understanding and Support
- Training
- Structure
- Conclusion

## 6.2 Question 2 – Do people understand it and are they committed?

*'Policy alone will never achieve sustainability. Worcestershire County Council has 14,000 staff who need to see the relevance of sustainability and to want to do things differently'*<sup>6</sup>

### 6.2.1 Understanding and support for environmental sustainability policy amongst Members and senior officers.

*"Achieving sustainable development is difficult. It needs political leadership and is undermined by populism."*<sup>5</sup>

The VFM report highlights the difficulties that exist in ensuring a complex environmental message reaches all Councillors and staff across a large organisation.

To identify the understanding and support for environmental sustainability amongst Members and officers a number of interviews were arranged. Members of the review Working Group posed questions to a number of Cabinet Members and senior officers, the interviewees are noted in **2.2**. The following points can be summarised from the interviews:

- 1) Awareness of the Environmental Policy** - Members are not familiar with Derbyshire County Council's Environmental Policy or the East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy. Senior Officers were aware of the Environmental Policy.
- 2) Understanding of issues** – Members and some officers identified environmental sustainability with 'green issues' such as waste, travel and pollution, and the LA 21 process. There was a lack of awareness of the wider agenda and the links between environmental sustainability and economic and social issues.
- 3) Support for environmental sustainability** – There was support from Members and officers for sustainability but there was a belief that sustainability was just another issue competing for priority with other issues that are currently higher up the Council's agenda.
- 4) Decision-making** – Members and officers were aware that the report template featured guidelines that required officers to consider the environmental impact of decisions. From the discussions it became apparent that officers believed that most report authors were unsure what was required from this guideline, and indeed few reports incorporated environmental considerations.

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<sup>6</sup> Sustainability Strategy, Worcestershire County Council, 2001

<sup>5</sup> Rodney Green, CEO Leicester City Council, Leadership for Sustainable Development, Greengage Consulting Ltd, 2001

## 6.2.2 Training on environmental sustainability issues

*'Much emphasis has been placed on winning hearts and minds through sustainability training'<sup>6</sup>*

The Environmental Policy for Employees recognises the need for training for managers and employees which actively encourages initiatives that have a positive impact upon the environment. In addition the 'Managers Guidelines for Induction of New Employees' instructs managers to ensure that employees have a full awareness of the Council's Environmental Policy.

Training does form a key element of the Environmental Management System adopted by the Environmental Services Department.

Despite the reference in policies and plans most employees and Members do not undertake awareness training on sustainability. In the interviews with Members and senior officers all interviewees deemed the training given to Members and employees on sustainability to be inadequate, and for many training was deemed to be the key element in ensuring that environmental sustainability was mainstreamed in the culture of the Council.

### 6.2.2.1 Good Practice - Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council believes that in order to create a sustainable organisation, while the right policies are part of the solution, real change will not be achieved unless people are actively involved in the process of change.

Much emphasis has therefore been placed on winning hearts and minds through sustainability training.

Worcestershire County Council has 14,000 staff and 57 elected Councillors who need to see the need for change, the relevance of the issues to their work and lifestyle and practical actions that can be taken to make a difference.

The Council has thus set an ambitious target in its Corporate Plan to 'train' 80% of its staff and Members on sustainability. An awareness programme has been developed. This is designed to progress staff through 3 levels of engagement,

- Level 1 - Head - acknowledgement of the existence of sustainability and a recognition of the important role of the Council.
- Level 2 - Heart - appreciation of sustainability values - social and economic as well as environmental and willingness to consider the implications for work and lifestyle
- Level 3 - Hands - changes in behaviour at home and work, from simple actions e.g., double-siding of paper copying to complex ones e.g., addition of sustainability clauses into new contracts.

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<sup>6</sup> Sustainability Strategy, Worcestershire County Council, 2001



### **6.2.3 Structure - What structure exists to support the promotion of environmental sustainability?**

#### **6.2.3.1 Members**

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for all aspects of sustainability within Derbyshire County Council is the Environment and Highways portfolio holder. The Environment and Highways Improvement and Scrutiny Committee monitors the delivery of this function.

#### **6.2.3.2 Officers**

The responsibility for developing the Community Strategy sits with the Policy Unit in the Chief Executives Department. Within the Policy Unit the post of Environmental Policy Officer exists to promote environmental and other sustainability objectives throughout the organisation and the wider community.

Environmental Services employ a significant number of officers who deliver aspects of the environmental sustainability agenda. This includes an Environmental Policy and Projects Officer and a Sustainable Transport Officer. In addition the County Property Division employs an Energy Manager.

#### **6.2.3.3 Lack of Clarity**

The interviews with Members and senior officers revealed that there was some confusion with regards to who was responsible for certain functions within the Council. A number of interviewees were unclear of the role of the Council's Environmental Policy Officer and specifically how it relates to the functions delivered by the Environmental Services Department. This confusion was expressed regarding issues such as internal waste collection and sustainable transport.

This lack of clarity regarding reporting arrangements dilutes the effectiveness of the message throughout the Council. To strengthen ownership of environmental sustainability among service departments the VFM study recommended that the Council should consider allocating responsibility for environmental stewardship to a chief officer.

#### **6.2.3.4 Communications**

The lack of clarity regarding reporting arrangements and ownership makes the difficult task of communicating the environmental sustainability message throughout the organisation even harder. The interviews also highlighted the ad-hoc cross-departmental sharing of ideas and good practice that exists.

The Audit Commission has identified a number of characteristics of successful environmental communication campaigns in local authorities. The list includes:

- Encouraging the formation of departmental action groups to promote the initiative within departments.
- Encouraging staff to act as advocates of Council policy
- Providing good news stories

The VFM report recommended that the Council should develop a communications campaign for staff, to promote understanding of, and contribution to, the Council's environmental strategy and policy.

#### **6.2.3.5 Good Practice – London Borough of Sutton**

The responsibility for delivering Sutton's corporate environmental sustainability action plan lies with the Environmental Co-ordination group, which reports monthly to the Chief Officers' management team.

#### **6.2.3.6 Good Practice – Leicester City Council**

To support environmental sustainability within Leicester City Council 5 Full time staff are employed within the Environment and Regeneration Department to promote environmental sustainability issues such as the Environmental Management System, training and Quality of Life Indicators across the Council. An Energy Team is employed to manage energy usage.

Within the Chief Executives Division officers who were previously employed to develop the LA21 strategy are now developing the Council's Community Strategy. There is a close working relationship between the teams as the developing community strategy brings sustainable development to the fore within the Council.

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#### **6.2.4 Conclusion – Do people understand it and are they committed?**

Policy exists but despite members and officers being supportive of sustainability there is a limited understanding of environmental policy. In addition there is a general lack of knowledge of sustainable development in its widest sense.

Reflecting the above statement Member and officer training is insufficient to develop the understanding of, and commitment to, sustainability.

Comprehension of environmental sustainability is also limited by confusion regarding the perceived roles and responsibilities of officers from within the Policy Unit and the Environmental Services Department. This lack of clarity and focus can impact on the Council's ability to communicate environmental sustainability messages throughout Derbyshire County Council.

## **6. The Assessment:**

**How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

6.3 Question 3 – Is it being implemented and is it making a difference?

- Action
- Performance

## 6.3 Question 3 – Is it being implemented and is it making a difference?

### 6.3.1 Action – demonstrating good practice

Derbyshire County Council produces an Annual Environmental Report informing the Cabinet of the progress made by the Authority on environmental initiatives. The 2001/02 report indicates that the Council is very active in striving for environmental improvements. Examples of good practice employed by Derbyshire County Council include:

- **Eco Schools** - This is an environmental award scheme for schools, which aims to promote environmental awareness and positive environmental action.

There are schools in Derbyshire which have been working towards the Eco Schools award since 1997. Five schools have now achieved the Green Flag Award, and many schools have achieved bronze and silver awards. In total more than a quarter of schools in Derbyshire are participating in the Eco Schools initiative.

Advantages to schools and the environment include financial savings gleaned from reduced water, fuel and waste disposal bills, and increased environmental awareness amongst pupils and staff.



- **Smart Living** – Award winning guide to a sustainable lifestyle in Derbyshire
- **EMS** – The Environmental Management System (EMS) developed by the Environmental Services Department has achieved certification to the international standards ISO 14001. This system can help to manage environmental impacts of council activities.
- **Walton and Holymoorside Primary School** – This groundbreaking school building based upon the principles of sustainability was completed in 2002.
- **Solar Panels in Bus Shelters**
- **Car Share Scheme**
- **Reuse of surplus and recovered road chippings**



The examples highlighted above are just a sample of the innovative initiatives being undertaken by the Authority. The interviews with officers however, indicated that “each department often does its own thing”.

It cannot be said that all the actions and good examples are driven by corporate policy such as the Environmental Policy or the East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy. Officers within departments largely drive initiatives.

### 6.3.2 Performance – Is it making a difference?

*'The Council should ensure that the reporting of performance is embedded into the process to ensure that it drives action'<sup>9</sup>*

Previous pages have highlighted the policies in place, awareness of the environmental sustainability agenda, and examples of good practice being employed by the Authority. This section attempts to determine if the actions are actually making a difference to the environmental performance of the Council.

#### 6.3.2.1 Performance Indicators

Derbyshire County Council collects a number of indicators across its services. The current Environmental Policy does not contain targets and no specific performance indicators are relevant to achieving environmental sustainability. There are a number of indicators that give a picture of how well environmental services are provided on the ground.

Indicator	Target / Performance
BVPI 180a – Energy consumption/m2 of LA property compared with comparable buildings in the UK	Comparison figures not available.
Energy and Water usage	Energy usage is increasing annually. Targets set in the Council's Asset Management Plan – 5% reduction in energy and water usage from 2002 baseline by 2007
Carbon Dioxide Emissions	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions to be 20% below 1990 levels by 2010
Internal waste	Derbyshire County Council currently produces 650 tonnes of corporate waste per annum (excluding school sites)
MORI Community Survey 2002	+37% believe Derbyshire County Council is good at protecting the environment

There is insufficient comparative performance indication to monitor effectively the impact of the Council's actions. The indicators primarily relate to specific services and do not reflect the corporate perspective, and are not featured within corporate documents.

<sup>9</sup> Derbyshire County Council External Audit Letter, 2001, KPMG

### **6.3.2.2 Good Practice – Worcestershire County Council**

The Council monitors sustainability progress by a number of local Best Value indicators in their BVPP.

- Percentage reduction in stationery consumption paper is to be used and a benchmark for consumption currently being developed
- Percentage reduction in energy consumption in main council offices and 20 schools
- Number of schools registered for the Eco-schools scheme demonstrating good environmental performance
- Number of businesses undertaking an environmental review - research into the level of engagement of local firms in Sustainability is ongoing
- Percentage of Council staff who have attended the Sustainability Training programme ( excluding teachers)

### **6.3.2.3 Good Practice – Bedfordshire County Council**

Bedfordshire's LA21 Strategy contained a number of Quality of Life Indicators in order to assess changes in the quality of life over time. The indicators will now form part of Bedfordshire's Community Strategy.

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### **6.3.3 Conclusion – Is it being implemented and is it making a difference?**

Action is being undertaken in service departments to improve Derbyshire County Council's environmental sustainability. A number of these activities are innovative and highly successful. It is questionable whether these initiatives are driven by corporate policy.

It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of Derbyshire County Council action. Indicators do monitor specific initiatives but there are very few overarching corporate PI's (in BVPP) that reflect the impact that Derbyshire County Council is having on the environment as a whole. Monitoring needs to be improved, in consultation with stakeholders, to enable the council to focus its work, monitor effectiveness, and make comparisons against best practice elsewhere.

## **7. The Assessment:**

**How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

- **Conclusion**
- **Recommendations**

## **7. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **7.1 Conclusions – How well is Derbyshire County Council integrating environmental sustainability into all aspects of its work?**

Derbyshire County Council is integrating environmental sustainability into a number of aspects of the Council's work but sustainability is not embedded into the culture of the Authority.

The Council has developed a number of policies that promote environmental sustainability within the organisation. However, it is evident that not all of the Council's policies and plans take environmental sustainability considerations into account when they are prepared.

Interviews revealed that there is support for environmental sustainability principles amongst Members and officers but there is little understanding of the Council's environmental policy and the links between environmental sustainability and the wider sustainable development agenda. This is to some extent enforced by inadequate training given to Members and officers on sustainability and the confusion that exists regarding who is responsible for aspects of environmental sustainability within the Council.

Despite some of the aforementioned limitations a number of innovative initiatives have been developed to support the promotion of environmental sustainability within Derbyshire. There is however, insufficient performance monitoring to evaluate how effective the Council is at promoting environmental sustainability or to determine how the Authority compares against other local authorities.

### **7.2 Recommendations**

To assist the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability into the culture of Derbyshire County Council a number of improvements are needed. These are set out below:

<b>Recommendation 1</b>
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#### **7.2.1 Incorporate environmental and other sustainability principles into the Community Strategy and the Council Plan**

The Community Strategy provides the greatest opportunity to move environmental sustainability from the margins to the mainstream within Derbyshire County Council. The Council, and its partners, should ensure that environmental sustainability principles are integral to Derbyshire's Community Strategy and that the Council Plan, when updated, reflects these objectives.

To help monitor the Community Strategy the Local Strategic Partnership should consider including a number of Audit Commission Quality of Life Indicators into the documents targets and objectives. This will improve performance management and monitoring regarding environmental sustainability.



## **Recommendation 2**

### **7.2.2 Update and strengthen the existing Environmental Policy**

Derbyshire County Council's current policy was developed in 1997. It now needs updating to reflect the significant changes that have happened since 1997. To make the document more practical a strategy should be developed that translates the environmental policy into actions, targets, resource implications, and objectives for the Council.

The strategy should encompass issues such as energy, waste and staff travel schemes. The strategy should draw together existing targets included in various plans and must link into the Community Strategy, Council Plan, Performance Management Framework, East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy, cross cutting strategies and service plans.

## **Recommendation 3**

### **7.2.3 Adapt the report template**

The existing report template specifies that environmental factors should be considered when preparing reports. This is too narrow and not widely understood by report writers. To ensure that the connection between environmental, economic and social concerns is made it is recommended that the term 'sustainable development considerations' replaces the term 'environmental considerations'. To encourage greater usage of this guideline attention is drawn to recommendation 5.

## **Recommendation 4**

### **7.2.4 Ensure that service plans are appraised against environmental and other sustainability principles**

Service plans are key documents regarding the translation of council policy into action. To ensure that service plans consider environmental and other sustainability implications it is recommended that they be appraised against the existing Best Value and Sustainability checklist. This checklist is a straightforward way of testing the sustainability of council services and of identifying where the service is successful in meeting the principles of sustainability.

## **Recommendation 5**

### **7.2.5 Develop a training programme on sustainability for Members and officers**

Sustainability is an approach and a cultural change. If the principles of environmental sustainability and sustainable development in general are to

permeate throughout the Council Members and officers need to think sustainably. This requires training to raise awareness and understanding.

A training programme, similar to that employed by Worcestershire County Council (6.2.2.1) needs to be developed by the Environmental Policy Officer. Members and officers should receive awareness training. It is recommended that a number of officers become familiar with the issues and can then pass this knowledge onto other officers through training sessions.

#### **Recommendation 6**

### **7.2.6 Raise awareness amongst staff by regular communications**

There is a need to constantly reinforce the sustainability message by communicating to staff to make them aware of the issues. The Council has had some success in this area through regular features in the staff newsletter, awareness seminars and high profile events. This activity should be encouraged.

#### **Recommendation 7**

### **7.2.7 Clarify responsibility for sustainability, including environmental sustainability, in Derbyshire County Council**

A number of interviewees were unclear of the role of the Council's Environmental Policy Officer and how this role relates to the functions delivered by the Environmental Services Department. This lack of clarity dilutes the effectiveness of the environmental sustainability message throughout the Council.

To following statements are designed to clarify the position:

- The Chief Executive's Department promotes sustainable development in its widest sense covering economic, social and environmental concerns. This includes working with partners at strategic levels and developing the Community Strategy with the Local Strategic Partnership.
- The role of the Environmental Policy Officer, working within the Policy Unit, is to promote sustainable development at a strategic level and not merely to be involved in 'green issues'.
- The Environmental Services Department is responsible within Derbyshire County Council for implementing:
  - a) Travel Plan
  - b) Internal waste collection and recycling
  - c) Greenwatch Awards / Green Action Grants

## **8. Aspects of environmental sustainability to consider in greater detail:**

- Environmental Management System
- Travel Plans
- Energy and Water Management
- Procurement
- Internal Waste Management
- Best Value

## **8. Aspects of environmental sustainability to consider in greater detail**

Recommendations have been made designed to improve the Council's corporate approach to environmental sustainability. The Working Group also identified a number of specific issues related to environmental sustainability that they deemed required more detailed investigation.

### **8.1 Environmental Management System (EMS)**

The Value For Money report (4.2) recommended that the Council adopt a system of environmental audit which helps to identify the impact, direct and indirect, that each of the service areas has on the environment.

In 2000 Derbyshire County Council set up a pilot project in the Environmental Services Department to improve the system of environmental management and to reduce the environmental impacts of the departments activities. Other aims were to ensure that it complied with environmental legislation.

In February 2002 the Environmental Services Department was awarded the ISO 14001 international environmental management systems standard. The intention was to extend the scheme to the whole of the Council.

#### **8.1.1 Advantages of the EMS**

Discussions with officers from the Environmental Services Department highlighted a number of benefits that the EMS has had on the department.

- Assisted the translation of policy to action
- Aids decision making
- Identified areas of improper practice
- Standardised working practices
- Raised awareness of environmental sustainability amongst staff – training
- Ultimately decreased negative impact department's activities have had on the environment
- Commercial advantages gained through certification to ISO 14001
- Identifies areas where savings can be made

#### **8.1.2 Disadvantages of the EMS**

Officers from the Environmental Services Department also disclosed a number of disadvantages of the EMS process.

- Lengthy process as culture change required
- Expensive process (but costs savings have been identified)

### 8.1.3 Conclusion

Achieving certification to ISO 14001 was a lengthy and fairly expensive task for the Environmental Services Department however, the system has improved working practices and raised awareness of environmental sustainability issues. The EMS has proved valuable to the department because of the big impact the service has on the environment.

There would be benefits gained from rolling out the EMS to the entire authority, indeed authorities such as Sutton and Leicester have achieved certification to an environmental management systems standard across all services. It is arguable that these gains would be outweighed in most departments by the cost and bureaucracy of the process.

This view is supported by the VFM report, which, despite recommending that the Council adopts a system of environmental audit recognises that, “many of the requirements of EMS are simply good management practice and the Council could adopt these without necessarily obtaining external accreditation, which can often become a time consuming exercise”.<sup>7</sup>

### 8.1.4 Recommendations

#### **Recommendation 8**

##### **8.1.4.1 The County Property Division explores the implications of seeking accreditation to ISO 14001 and reports back with findings**

Activities of the County Property Division within the Corporate Resources Department (referred to as the County Property Division) have considerable impacts on the environment. Advantages similar to those that the Environmental Services Department has benefited from could be bestowed upon the County Property Division if certification to ISO 14001 is sought.

It is recommended that the County Property Division discuss the implications of the proposals with officers from the Environmental Services Department who have experience of the process and report back to Cabinet with the findings.

#### **Recommendation 9**

##### **8.1.4.2 The Authority adopts the new Project Management Toolkit**

The Change Management Team is developing a Project Management Toolkit. In addition to a number of other issues the toolkit promotes the consideration of sustainability principles when developing new projects.

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<sup>7</sup> Review of Environmental Stewardship – Value For Money Study, Binder Hamlyn, 1998, p10

This review welcomes the development of the toolkit and its application throughout the Council and believes that such a document can improve the sustainability of services and aid decision making without every department becoming certified to the ISO 14001 standard. It is recommended that the toolkit signposts readers to the Environmental Services Departments EMS.

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## **8.2 Travel Plans**

Road traffic is the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide and which already accounts for at least 22% of all CO<sub>2</sub> emitted in the UK. Local Authorities now have the power to promote Travel Plans for employers and Derbyshire County Council employs a Sustainable Transport Officer to encourage and assist local organisations to develop travel plans and develop and implement its own Travel Plan.

Many authorities see it as vital that they set an example of good practice in order to provide leadership and to influence others in the community. This may be particularly pertinent with regards to Travel Plans. In a report prepared for DEFRA in 2001 a local authority Chief Executive stated, “How can we promote green travel plans when anyone who looks at our car park will see how full it is of cars?”<sup>5</sup>

### **8.2.1 The Issues**

- 2002 Employee Travel Survey identified that 81% of Derbyshire County Council employees who work in Matlock offices travel to work by car.
- 66% are single occupants
- Insufficient car parking spaces at Matlock offices to meet current demand
- The annual level of mileage allowances claimed for the organisation is greater than 11 million miles. Enough to travel to the moon and back 23 times a year!

### **8.2.2 What is Derbyshire County Council doing to improve the position?**

In order to reduce the social and environmental impacts of road vehicles caused by County Council business a Travel Plan for the Authority containing a number of measures was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2002.

The Travel Plan contains targets and actions designed to reduce car journeys and encourage alternative means of transport. Initiatives that have already commenced include amongst others:

- Car sharing scheme launched in June 2000. The scheme has proved to be successful and demand now exceeds allocated car sharers parking spaces
- Piloted a home-working scheme.
- Installed cycle lockers at County Hall

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<sup>5</sup> Leadership for Sustainable Development, Greengage Consulting Ltd, 2001,p20

- Developed a website for public transport information, with an interactive journey planner
- As part of the planning application for any County Council development, including major expansion to County Council sites, Travel Plans are developed
- All vehicles other than plant now use low sulphur diesel. New vehicles entering the fleet are common rail diesels that produce lower emissions than dual fuel vehicles. Next year, Euro 4 diesel engines will be introduced into the fleet

The Travel Plan is being driven forward within the Authority by a Corporate Steering Group, led by the Environmental Services Department.

### **8.2.3 Conclusion**

Derbyshire County Council has made progress in tackling the problem. Initiatives such as the car sharing scheme have proved popular but the car parks are still full and are predominantly filled by cars with single occupants.

Initiatives outlined in the Travel Plan should be encouraged to assist the Council meet the target set within the plan.

### **8.2.4 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 10**

#### **8.2.4.1 Encourage an increase in home working where feasible**

Mindful of the work being undertaken by the Corporate Steering Group this report recognises that the Travel Plan contains a number of initiatives that will contribute to less car journeys being made by employees, and more of those journeys being made by alternative forms of transport. Further investigation needs to be undertaken to resolve existing car parking issues.

The review welcomes the further facilitation of home working as a means of reducing car journeys and encourages actions that lead to more employees working closer to their homes where feasible.

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## **8.3 Energy and Water Management**

The VFM study was highly critical of the Council's approach to energy management in council buildings. The report identified the absence of a corporate approach to energy management, a lack of shared responsibility for energy conservation, and noted that opportunities for saving money and minimising the environmental damage through reduced water and energy consumption were missed.

### 8.3.1 Derbyshire County Council's Energy and Water Consumption

- In 2001/02 Derbyshire County Council spent over £6.5m on fuel and water
- Electricity consumption at County offices has increased by 5% since 2000, equivalent to more than £5,000
- Targets set in the Council's Asset Management Plan – 5% reduction in energy and water usage from 2002 baseline by 2007, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to be 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.

### 8.3.2 External pressures and key issues

The Government has committed the UK to ambitious energy targets. Targets exist for reducing energy consumption and for generating more energy from renewable sources. To help meet these targets legislation is applying pressure on local authorities to improve energy efficiency:

- Energy White Paper encouraging more renewable energy to be generated could **significantly increase the Council's energy costs**
- A review of building regulations to raise standards for energy efficiency in new buildings and re-furbishments is to be brought forward to 2005

In addition Derbyshire County Council has a number of issues regarding energy management that may impact on performance:

- Derbyshire County Council has no corporate energy policy
- Difficulties exist obtaining accurate consumption data
- Few direct incentives for services to reduce energy usage

### 8.3.3 What is Derbyshire County Council doing to improve this position?

A number of initiatives have been implemented, or are being actioned, that are designed to improve the energy efficiency of County Council buildings. These include the following:

- New buildings are being designed and built with environmental sustainability considerations in mind. Walton & Holymoorside School is a good example of this. The financial savings generated by this scheme are not however, being re-invested into financing more environmentally sustainable initiatives.
- Property Services is piloting the use of automatic meter reading systems to monitor energy usage. This will enable Property Services to be proactive in identifying leaks and excessive usage. In addition plans are being made to manually read all meters every 1-3 months if necessary. Energy savings should result in the additional costs being recouped.
- The Council is a member of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authority Energy Partnership. Its aim is to pool resources and share information on all aspects of energy. The Partnership has developed a strategy to guide partners to achieve substantial CO<sub>2</sub> and energy reductions.
- Schools £60,000 capital pot for energy efficiency improvements recently approved on 21/3/03.



### **8.3.4 Good Practice - Stockport MBC & Leicestershire County Council**

- Stockport MBC has switched to ‘green electricity’ to power their town hall complex
- Leicestershire County Council employs lights that automatically turn off when the room is empty

### **8.3.5 Conclusion**

The Authority has made significant advances since the VFM report was produced. However, more needs to be done to reduce the impact that the Council’s energy consumption has on the environment and to limit the impact that the proposed increase in energy prices will have.

### **8.3.6 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 11**

#### **8.3.6.1 Develop an Energy Strategy for Derbyshire County Council and incorporate it into the updated Environmental Policy (recommendation 2)**

The Authority should develop an energy strategy that directs activity and sets out specific council-wide targets and responsibilities. To increase its effectiveness, and to minimise the number of strategies in operation the strategy should be incorporated in the wider Environmental Policy as suggested in recommendation 2.

#### **Recommendation 12**

#### **8.3.6.2 Promote long term ‘invest to save’ approach**

To meet long-term targets Derbyshire County Council needs to consider investing greater resources into properties to make them more energy efficient. The investment should be recouped over the life-span of the building as energy prices rise.

Where schools benefit from energy efficiency improvements an element of the revenue savings generated should be redirected back to the County Property Division to re-invest into more initiatives.

Derbyshire County Council departments should however, be given financial incentives to reduce energy consumption. When an effective monitoring system is in place individual departments should be rewarded if they reduce energy usage. This will encourage managers to promote energy efficiency within working practices.

## **8.4 Procurement and Environmental Sustainability**

Derbyshire County Council provides services to nearly 750,000 people, is the largest employer in the County and has an annual budget of over £600m. Derbyshire County Council can have a major influence in the marketplace and purchasing decisions made can help to minimise the Council's impact on the environment.

A number of local authorities have recognised that there is a need for environmental considerations to be taken into account when products and services are procured. Leicester City Council and Belfast City Council have adopted environmental purchasing policies and guides that help to minimise the Council's impact on the environment by providing staff with information and practical help to assist them to buy or specify products which cause the least environmental damage.

### **8.4.1 Financial savings from buying 'green'**

There can be significant cost savings from taking an environmentally aware approach to purchasing. 'Green' products can, for example, be more energy efficient, and cost less in the long term. If you take the full life-cycle cost it is often better to pay slightly more initially to secure long term financial or sustainability benefits.

### **8.4.2 Legal concerns**

It is perfectly legal to include environmental conditions in a contract to provide a service to the County Council so long as they meet these conditions:

- They apply equally to all potential contractors
- They are not anti-competitive
- They do not specify brand products
- They do not refer to 'non-commercial' matters.

It is also perfectly legal to include environmental considerations in the specification of the goods and services the Council wants from suppliers. The same conditions as for selecting contractors apply.

The Council can specify and purchase products to exacting environmental standards so long as the Council obtains value for money and the quality of the products is satisfactory.

### **8.4.2 Procurement and Derbyshire County Council**

The Procurement Unit replaced the Central Purchasing Unit in 2001. The Unit is responsible for procuring services and managing contracts across the Authority. The driving force was to reduce costs by £12m on budgets over a 5 year period.

Environmental considerations form part of the existing procurement guidelines however, the Council's Procurement Manager explained that pressure to meet decreases in the short term costs of goods and services was potentially a risk to sustainable aspirations. Issues of sustainability generally do not have a high definable role in the contracting process.

#### **8.4.3 What is Derbyshire County Council doing to improve this position?**

- The Procurement Unit is developing a new Procurement Toolkit that will seek to ensure that issues such as sustainability, equal opportunities, and community safety are taken into consideration at an early stage of the assessment process prior to contracting. The new toolkit will seek to aid the Council to generate long term savings by reducing waste, energy and water consumption.
- The Unit is trying to incentivise the supply chain to think about sustainable development. This can reduce costs for partners.
- Whole life costing is being applied to some purchasing decisions such as PC's and sustainability principles are now at the centre of the County Property Division's contracts and partnering arrangements.

#### **8.4.4 Conclusion**

When purchasing goods and services it is important that sustainability issues are taken into consideration and are included at the pre-specification stage of the process. Purchasing 'greener' products can reduce the impact that Derbyshire County Council has on the environment and may also save the Authority money in the long term.

Following the creation of the Procurement Unit changes are being made to the procurement process that will give sustainability issues a higher priority when goods and services are procured. The developments are a step in the right direction.

#### **8.4.5 Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation 13</b>
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##### **8.4.5.1 Implement the new Procurement Toolkit across the Council**

The new toolkit is due in September 2003. The review Working Group welcomes the principles of the new toolkit and hopes that it will lead to more procurement decisions based on the whole life cost of products and services and the most economically sustainable solution.

## **8.5 Internal Waste Management**

Derbyshire County Council produces 650 tonnes of corporate waste per annum, excluding school sites. Much of this waste, including some paper, ends up in landfill sites. Limited recycling is undertaken in County Council offices.

The Procurement Unit is in the process of procuring a contract for the disposal of waste generated by Derbyshire County Council. The new contract will initially include provision for the recycling of paper, the recycling of white and brown goods will then follow.

Corporate ownership for the management of County Council waste is unclear. This was reinforced by the interviews with Members and officers. Expertise sits within the Environmental Services Department.

### **8.5.1 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 14**

##### **8.5.1.1 Implement new waste contract and develop recycling of waste products**

The new waste contract should lead to a considerable improvement in the Council's management of its internal waste. Recycling levels and the range of products being recycled need to improve.

To encourage more staff to reduce, reuse and recycle materials it is imperative that staff are made aware of the new services through a communications campaign. Subject to agreement with the Procurement Unit, the Environmental Services Department should use their expertise to lead this campaign and take ownership of internal waste issues within the Council.

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## **8.6 Best Value and Environmental Sustainability**

The Local Government Act 1999 established the legal framework for Best Value. Guidance issued as Circular 10/99 made several important statements on sustainable development. The most frequently quoted is that:

“Best Value reviews will need to give effect to the principles of sustainable development”<sup>10</sup>

To aid the appraisal of Best Value reviews Derbyshire County Council developed a Best Value and Sustainability Checklist. The checklist is a straightforward way of testing the sustainability of council services and of identifying where the service is successful in meeting the principles of sustainability.

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<sup>10</sup> Circular 10/99, DTLR, 1999

### **8.6.1 Utilising the Best Value and Sustainability Toolkit**

Interviews conducted during the course of this review identified that the checklist is not being utilised by all Best Value review teams. In addition the Environmental Policy Officer informed the review that she had not discussed with any officers involved in Best Value reviews the sustainable development implications of services under review this financial year.

### **8.6.2 Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation 15</b>
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#### **8.6.2.1 All Best Value reviews should complete the Best Value and Sustainability Checklist**

Best Value reviews should follow the Best Value and sustainability checklist to ensure that services comply with sustainable development principles. To assist this process the expertise of the Environmental Policy Officer should be utilised to advise each review team.

## **9. The Next Stage**

The report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration. It is recommended that: -

- (3) the Chair of the Improvement and Scrutiny Panel presents the report to the Cabinet.
- (4) following consideration of this report it is suggested that, should the Cabinet agree to implement the recommendations, the Improvement and Scrutiny Panel receives a report at a date to be determined, to outline progress made.

## 10. Action Plan

The table below sets out the recommendations outlined in this final report.

Recommendation	Implement Yes/No	What action has taken place?	Lead Officer	Timescale
<b>1. Incorporate environmental and other sustainability principles into the Community Strategy and the Council Plan</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strategy</li> <li>Council Plan</li> </ul>			Alison Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sept 2003</li> <li>July 2003</li> </ul>
<b>2. Update and strengthen existing Environmental Policy</b>				
To encompass energy, waste and staff travel targets within an environmental strategy			Maggie Bishop	April 2004
<b>3. Adapt existing report template</b>				
Replace environmental considerations with sustainable development considerations			David Tysoe	Following training (see 5)
<b>4. Ensure that service plans are appraised against environmental and other sustainability principles</b>				
Service plans to be appraised against existing Best Value and Sustainability Checklist			Maggie Bishop in liaison with Chief Officers	Incorporate into 2004/05 Service Plans
<b>5. Develop a training programme on sustainability for Members and officers</b>				
Raising awareness and winning hearts and minds			Maggie Bishop	To commence Autumn 2003
<b>6. Raise awareness amongst staff by regular communications</b>				
There is a need to constantly reinforce the sustainability message			All DCC	Ongoing
<b>7. Clarify responsibility for sustainability, including environmental sustainability, in Derbyshire County Council</b>				
Statements clarifying responsibility are identified within the report				

Recommendation	Implement Yes/No	What action has taken place?	Lead Officer	Timescale
<b>8. The County Property Division explores the implications of seeking accreditation to ISO 14001 and reports back with findings</b>				
Discuss implications with officers from the Environmental Services Department			Alan Beastall	April 2004
<b>9. The Authority adopts the new Project Management Toolkit</b>				
Toolkit being developed by the Change Management Team			John Gilbert	Summer 2003
<b>10. Encourage an increase in home working where feasible</b>				
Pilot study undertaken in 1999. As from 2001 guidance issued on homeworking for Derbyshire County Council employees			Corporate Steering Grp	Ongoing
<b>11. Develop an Energy Strategy for Derbyshire County Council and incorporate it into the updated Environmental Policy</b>				
The energy strategy should direct activity and set out specific council-wide targets and responsibilities			Alan Beastall	April 2004
<b>12. Promote long term 'invest to save' approach</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest resources making Council property more energy efficient</li> <li>Develop incentives for departments to reduce energy consumption</li> </ul>			Alan Beastall	Ongoing
<b>13. Implement the new Procurement Toolkit across the Council</b>				
Toolkit being developed by the Procurement Unit			Andrew Ayling	September 2003
<b>14. Implement new waste contract and develop recycling of waste products</b>				
To include collection of waste from 230 corporate sites with the potential to expand the service to all schools in Derbyshire			Andrew Ayling / Steve Pearson	Report to Cabinet on 17 June
<b>15. All Best Value reviews should complete the Best Value and Sustainability checklist</b>				
Support and advice is available for implementation of this recommendation			Maggie Bishop	Checklist to be used in 2003/4 reviews

## **11. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### **REVIEW OF DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

### **PROJECT BRIEF**

#### **1. Purpose of the Review**

- To undertake a review examining Derbyshire County Council's approach to environmental sustainability, and to determine how any improvements could be gained.

#### **2. Objectives of the Review**

- To identify what County Council policies/objectives currently exist regarding environmental sustainability
- To measure the effectiveness of the Council's internal environmental sustainability policies (do Members and officers see sustainability as their concern?)
- To identify the extent to which the County Council integrates environmental sustainability considerations into its objectives, policies, plans, reviews and actions
- To consider the most appropriate structure to support the promotion of environmental sustainability across the County
- To identify good practice and areas for improvement where the Council can lead by example

#### **3. Big Issues**

- Is there a culture of environmental sustainability across the County Council?
- Is the County Council leading by example?
- Are the channels of communication working effectively across the County Council?

#### **4. Review Methodology**

- Research existing Derbyshire County Council policies/objectives
- Identify national and regional objectives
- Research best practice
- Collect and analyse performance information
- Undertake consultation with:
  - Chief Officers
  - Staff
  - Elected Members



**5. Outline Consultation Plan**

- A variety of consultation techniques will be employed to ascertain the views of the groups identified above

**6. Comparison and Benchmarking – quantitative and qualitative information**

- What performance measures are monitored by Derbyshire County Council?
- How does the County Council compare with other councils?
- What structures, partnerships and policies/objectives are utilised by other councils to deliver environmental sustainability targets?

**7. What the review will not include**

- A full review of the County Council's approach to sustainability, incorporating economic and social aspects of sustainability
- Waste management issues that will be reviewed in the ongoing Best Value Review

**8. Outline Project Plan**

- September 2002 I & S Committee approves the Project Brief and appoints a Working Group
- October to December 2002 I & S Working Group prepares consultation plan, gathers comparative information and undertakes consultation
- December 2002 I & S Committee receives a progress report
- March 2003 I & S Committee receives the final report

## Appendix 2      Environmental Sustainability Assessment Tools

### Hampshire County Council

Hampshire County Council uses a sustainability matrix to assess how well sustainable development is integrated into its work programmes. The matrix assesses sustainable development in its widest sense rather than just environmental sustainability.

It seeks to do this by identifying twelve themes, in three groupings:

<b>People:</b>	<b>Systems:</b>	<b>Stakeholders:</b>
1. Scope and Understanding	5. Policy	11. Consultation
2. Support	6. Decision Making	12. Stakeholder involvement
3. Training	7. Budget Setting	
4. Structures	8. Business Plans	
	9. Best Value	
	10. Procurement	

Each theme assessed is graded levels 1-4 against set criteria.

### Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council has attempted to identify the essential ingredients required for sustainability to be a success within a local authority. The essential ingredients according to the Council's Sustainability Challenge are:

- Policy - creating the right corporate framework that puts sustainability at the heart of the Council across its corporate planning process
- Awareness - winning hearts and minds with an innovative programme aimed at officers and Members across the Council, with the aim of long term cultural and behavioural change
- Action – demonstrating good practice

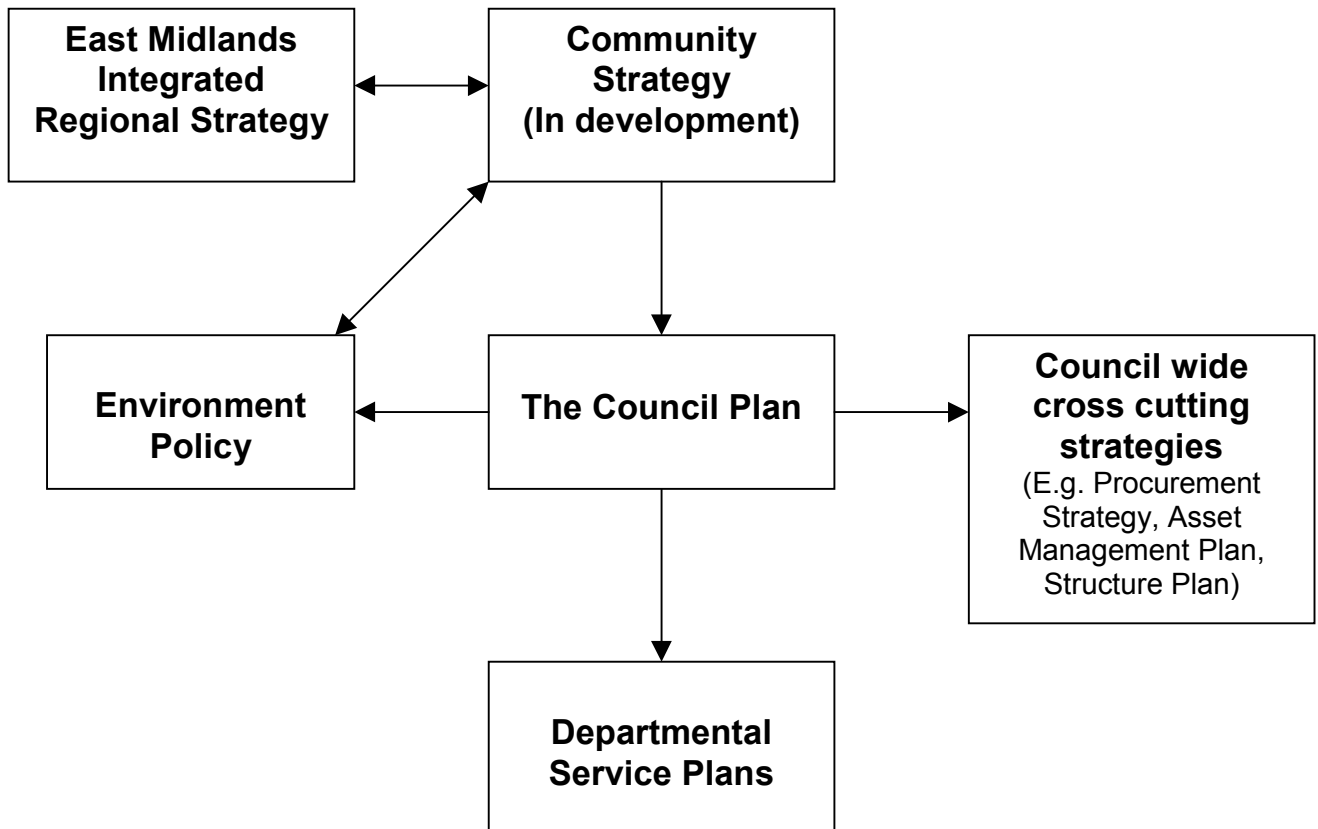
### Bedfordshire County Council

When undertaking a Best Value review on Sustainability in Bedfordshire an expert witness determined that there are five issues that a review needs to address to determine if sustainability is integrated well into working practices:

- Is environmental sustainability mainstreamed?
- Do people understand it?
- Are they committed?
- Is it being implemented?
- Is it making a difference?

## Appendix 3

### Key strategies/policies influencing environmental sustainability within Derbyshire County Council's Policy Framework



## **Appendix 4      Derbyshire County Council Environment Policy**

### **Environmental Policy**

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#### **Our Aims, Our Promises**

THE COUNTY COUNCIL is a democratically accountable organisation with a vital role in representing the interests of the people of Derbyshire. As a decision-maker, major employer, provider of services and agent for economic development, we recognise the significant impact we have on the environment.

In working towards achieving a more sustainable future, we will do all we can to minimise any adverse environmental impact we may have while enhancing any positive effects to improve the quality of life for Derbyshire people.

The County Council is contributing to Local Agenda 21 by publicly setting out our commitment to environmental improvement, in the shape of these aims and promises.

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In everything we do, Derbyshire County Council will seek to:

- reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency and conservation
- promote the conservation and more sustainable use of both renewable and non-renewable resources
- minimise and, where possible, eliminate the release of any pollutant which may cause damage to health and the environment
- protect, conserve and enhance both the natural and built environments, protecting habitats and heritage by promoting bio-diversity and local distinctiveness
- minimise the generation of wastes by reducing, reusing, recovering and recycling resources and disposing of wastes safely, responsibly, and by the best environmental option
- minimise the risk of environmental damage by assessing all policies, activities and practices for their environmental effects and by adopting those technologies and working methods with the lowest risk
- raise awareness, educate and train employees, and provide information to the public on environmental policies, practices and issues
- include environmental standards in all appropriate contracts and service level agreements, and develop conditions to ensure that contractors working on our behalf apply environmental standards as high as our own. include environmental standards in all appropriate contracts and service level agreements, and develop conditions to ensure that contractors working on our behalf apply environmental

#### **We will do this by:**

- promoting freedom of information about Derbyshire's environment and the Council's environmental performance against published targets
- adopting the 'precautionary' and 'polluter pays' principles, which means taking care to avoid activities which have an adverse environmental impact, and accepting responsibility for doing what we can to repair any environmental damage we may cause
- developing and operating an environmental management system to co-ordinate and monitor County Council activities and practices affecting the environment
- updating this environmental policy in the light of a review of the Council's environmental activities and new developments

- fostering a sense of responsibility for the environment among elected members and employees through information, awareness-raising and education
  - fostering environmental awareness amongst children and young people, through environmental education
  - achieving reasonable continuous improvements in environmental performance over and above compliance with all relevant regulatory and legislative requirements
  - striving to achieve recognised standards of best environmental practice in all activities and areas of service delivery
  - seeking to ensure that all environmental management practice complies with the principles of the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme for Local Government
  - working closely with other organisations, where appropriate, to further the aims of this policy.
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## **Contacts**

If you would like more information about this policy, or about other aspects of sustainable development, please contact Maggie Bishop in the Chief Executive's Office on 01629 580000 ext 7344