

## **Environment Sub-Committee**

**7 March 2018**

Present: Councillor B Burdis (Chair)  
Councillors D Cox, D Drummond, S Graham, E Hodson,  
M Huscroft, W Lott, J O'Shea and A Percy.

### **E29/03/18 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Bell, K Clark, G Madden and M Thirlaway.

### **E30/03/18 Substitute Members**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution the following substitute member was reported:

Councillor J O'Shea for Councillor K Clark.

### **E31/03/18 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

### **E32/03/18 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2018 be confirmed.

### **E33/03/18 Environment Agency – Regulatory Powers**

Dave Edwardson, Team Leader Installations, and Peter Duffy, Regulatory Officer, at the Environment Agency (EA) gave a presentation which set out the Agency's role in regulating industry. It was explained that although the EA had a very wide remit there were three broad areas which were regulated under the EA's permitting regulations. These were:

- Installations – which covered such areas as waste treatment and storage facilities, chemical factories, food and drink manufacturers, paper and pulp manufacturers and power stations;
- Waste Activities – which covered waste transfer stations and scrapyards; and
- Discharges to water – which covered sewerage works and combined sewer outflows.

It was explained that the permit scheme only covered the impact of emissions from the installation itself and the processes which were physically attached, such as the storage of waste. The permit scheme did not cover how goods and products were transported to and from the site, as this was covered under planning regulations.

It was explained that the aim of the permitting scheme was to minimise pollution, prevent harm to human health and to prevent detriment to amenity. The permit imposed obligations on the operator of the process in relation to the above. It was acknowledged that the permit scheme would not stop all emissions from a process. There was also an expectation that the site operators would comply with all regulations and conditions.

Each permit application was considered on its merits and, where appropriate, the EA would look to other organisations such as Public Health England for advice in relation to specific issues, such as for processes which dealt with chemical solvents. A permit could only be refused if the application did not meet one or more of the requirements under environmental legislation, including if it would have a significant impact on the environment or human health. If all the requirements were met the Agency was required to issue a permit.

It was explained that under the permitting process the EA assessed applications to determine if:

- The impact on the environment was acceptable or the installation could cause significant pollution;
- The emissions would have an acceptable impact on human health (by air quality modelling); and
- The proposal met current legislation, including best available techniques for installations.

Reference was made to the consultation carried out during the permitting process. It was explained that the Local Planning Authority was consulted in relation to land use and local environmental services were also consulted. In addition, depending on the type of process being applied for, there could be consultation with Public Health England, the Food Standards Agency and/or the Health and Safety Executive. The local community would also be consulted in relation to applications which were classed as Sites of High Public Interest. It was explained that a Site of High Public Interest would be classed as one with:

- A high level of interest over at least three months of sustained contact by members of the public;
- A level of engagement with the local Member of Parliament;
- Interest demonstrated from at least 10 – 20 separate individuals; and
- demonstrable media interest

It was explained that local strength of feeling or need for the process or development was not a factor which was considered in relation to a permit application.

Details of the system for checking compliance with the permit conditions were also outlined. It was explained that the EA carried out inspections and audits of installations as well as assessing results of the operators own monitoring. The EA also investigated any breaches of permit conditions. Details of the various enforcement powers held by the EA were outlined.

Clarification was sought on whether the monitoring of pollutants took account of the existing situation. It was explained that the air quality modelling took account of the existing position in the local area and that monitoring would take account of the pollutants which would be expected to be generated by the process.

The Chair thanks the representatives of the Environment Agency for their presentation and for providing answers to Members' questions.

It was **agreed** that the report be noted.

### **E34/03/18      Surface Water and Drainage Partnership**

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the progress of the Surface Water and Drainage Partnership (the Partnership) since the last report considered by the Sub-committee. The report covered the Flood Risk Implementation Plan, the Flood Season Plan for North Tyneside and reference to community preparedness and resilience.

It was explained that the Partnership has met on a quarterly basis and had overseen work in relation to:

- the Killingworth and Longbenton Sustainable Surface Drainage Project;
- the progress made against the Flood Risk Implementation Plan;
- the works carried out in relation to community preparedness.

In addition it was explained that the following works had been completed in the past year or were nearing completion:

- The Fairfield Green Monkseaton Scheme, as part of the Murton Gap scheme to reduce the risk of flooding to nearby homes. The £1M scheme had involved the installation of large dry storage basins and the provision of a new ditch system;
- A major scheme in the fields between Shiremoor and Wellfield. The £0.5M scheme involved the creation of a large holding pond to hold back surface water upstream of the houses in Wellfield;
- The installation of property level protection in Oak Grove, Wallsend;
- Phase 1 and 2 of the Killingworth and Longbenton Sustainable Drainage Project. Phase 3 of the project, the re-routing of drainage from Killingworth lake and the construction of a large storage basin at the south bank, would commence during the Summer;
- The flood risk reduction scheme at Briar Vale, Monkseaton would be completed in the Summer.

Clarification was sought on how residents could demonstrate to insurance companies that works to reduce potential flooding events had been completed. It was explained that the Local Authority could provide a letter, which detailed the works carried out, which residents could provide as evidence to their insurance company.

It was **agreed** that the report be noted

### **E35/03/18      Air Pollution Study**

Consideration was given to a report which provided a draft scope for the Sub-committee to carry out a piece of work in relation to concerns over air pollution in North Tyneside. Members gave consideration to the contents of the draft scope and how the study was to be carried out. At the last meeting it had been agreed that the full Sub-committee would carry out the study as part of its normal meetings however as the number of meetings of the Sub-committee had been reduced it was decided that the study would be carried out by a Sub-group instead. Members suggested that the invitation to serve on the Sub-group be extended to all Members of the Council.

It was **agreed** (1) the scope for the study be confirmed;  
(2) the study be carried out by a Sub-group; and  
(3) the invitation to serve on the Sub-group be sent to all Members of the Council

### **E36/03/18      Energy Study Report**

Consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Sub-committee