

## CABINET 12 NOVEMBER 2019

### FEEDBACK FROM LOCAL AREA COUNCIL MEETINGS 10 - 19 SEPTEMBER 2019 - EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES

*(Details of planning and rights of way applications are not included.)*

#### Tynedale Local Area Council, 10 September 2019

#### 60. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

#### 61. PETITIONS

This item was to:

##### **a) Receive any new petitions:**

The Chair reported that a new petition had recently commenced on the Council's website regarding a request for a one way street in Cheviot View, Prudhoe. A report would be produced for a future meeting following the closure of the petition.

##### **b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:**

There were none to consider.

##### **c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:**

The Chair reported that he would be meeting officers the following week to receive an update on Beech Grove, Prudhoe.

#### 62. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received the following updates from the Area Managers from Neighbourhood Services and Technical Services:

##### **Neighbourhood Services:**

- There had been a number of recent vehicle breakdowns which had impacted on the refuse collection service.
- Income targets were being met for the garden waste collections and removal of bulky waste.
- Grass cutting was on the 9th cut of the season. Due to the wet conditions in August there had been a longer interval between cuts and a small number of complaints had been received regarding standards. The issues had now been addressed.

- The recent wet weather had also impacted on weed control and Councillors were requested to bring to the officers attention any areas requiring attention in their wards.
- The street sweeper had been deployed to areas which had recently flooded.
- Waste removal facilities had been provided free of charge to a number of residents in West Woodburn and Otterburn following the flooding of residential homes.
- Verge cutting had been completed by contractors in July. Additional cuts were being done in-house where subsequent growth had resulted in the obscuring of sight lines.

Issues discussed by Members included:

- The application of weed killer. The initial application had been applied in May with secondary applications where needed. The wet and warm conditions had encouraged weed growth and resources would be targeted at problem areas. Further applications of weed killer could be applied during the next 6-8 weeks dependent on the weather conditions as the plants needed to be actively growing for the substance to be effective.
- Officers were requested to attend a meeting in Stocksfield to address leaf fall issues.
- It was suggested that some repositioning of recycling bins would prevent glass being left on the ground when there was space in other bins.
- Proposals were being developed for a doorstep glass collection pilot to commence in the current financial year. The location would be chosen to obtain the best representative sample.

#### **Technical Services:**

- The gulley wagon had recently been deployed in Bellingham and Prudhoe and would soon be in Wylam. A contractor had been employed to continue work on the programme when the Council's vehicle had been out of operation.
- Slurry sealing operations of footways had recently been undertaken in Hexham, Corbridge, Stocksfield and Mickley.
- Further patching works were planned but locations were still to be finalised.
- Work on drainage improvements was ongoing. Resurfacing works had been carried out at Four Stones level crossing following the resolution of drainage issues.
- Work on the flags to flex scheme would be commencing shortly.
- Dropped kerbs had recently been installed at Wark.

The following issues were raised by Members:

- Many of the Councillors commented that drains had coped much better following the recent heavy downpours after cleaning by the gulley wagon. Access to some drains had been prevented by parked cars and a list of locations would be sent to the officer.
- Inaccessible paths or road signs obscured by private hedges were inspected by the Highways Inspectors who would arrange for notices to be issued requiring the work to be carried out within 28 days. If work was not carried out by the

landowner, the Council would undertake the work and recharge the landowner. A list of problem areas was to be emailed to the officer.

- A request was made that the Fourstones compound be inspected for residual clearance work.
- Areas identified for further gulley work included Newton and roads in the vicinity of Close House. Details of the latter would be sent to the Central team.
- Councillor Cessford requested that he be consulted before resurfacing work commenced on the road adjacent to the Garden House Bank development. There were a number of issues he wished to bring to officers attention.
- Whether extra resource could be allocated to gully cleansing. Contractors were brought in when needed but the hire cost of an additional gully wagon was approximately £600 per day and therefore had a significant impact on the budget, if required on a regular basis.

The Chair and members thanked the Local Services teams for their work as Councillors and members of the public were very appreciative of the work that they undertook.

**RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **63. POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

Inspector Pam Bridges attended the meeting to give an overview and answer questions about policing in the East and West Tynedale command areas. She highlighted the following:

- They assessed the threat, harm and risk to prioritise how calls should be responded to. Protection of vulnerable people was identified as a high priority. Other priorities included domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation and online fraud.
- They aimed to provide a quality service.
- To make best use of resources, the complexity of an incident was assessed to determine the most appropriate resource to be assigned to investigate a crime.
- They worked with colleagues at the Council to analyse problems and ensure that appropriate agencies were involved.
- Action to deal with disruptive behaviour in Hexham and Prudhoe was outlined including, CCTV signage, regular patrols and prompt response to calls about incidents. Officers were conscious that anti social behaviour by youths was often displaced to other locations and they responded quickly to these.
- The number of violent crimes was low and included incidents of harassment.
- They responded to reports of burglaries in rural areas promptly including stop and searches and successful convictions. They had concluded that there was not an emerging trend.
- Work continued with colleagues in Durham and Cumbria police forces including Operation Checkpoint on 6 August 2019 to deter travelling criminals. Over 40 volunteers had given up their time to participate and were thanked for their involvement which had resulted in 35 vehicles being stopped.

- Officers liaised with licenced premises, licensing officers and community intelligence to respond to incidents regarding the night time economy.
- Details were provided regarding section 59 warning notices issued in response to motor vehicle anti social behaviour and section 31 letters to parents following the seizure of alcohol.
- Following an increase in Government funding, more police officers were in the process of being recruited by Northumbria Police Force. Special Police Constables were also being recruited.
- A reminder was issued to all drivers to take care following a number of serious incidents on the county's roads in recent months. Officers and highways staff were praised for the manner in which they had dealt with those incidents and enabling the roads to be opened as quickly as possible.
- There had been a successful prosecution of an individual in Byrness Village for keeping animals in unsuitable conditions following a joint operation with the RSPCA.
- Planning was in progress for night time patrols ahead of Halloween and Bonfire night.
- Officers were working with schools to ensure that problems with knife crime elsewhere in the country were not repeated in Northumberland.
- Vulnerability training was being provided with partner agencies.
- Northumbria Police was in the process of being restructured to ensure the best use of resources with a number of officer enhancements including firearms officers, community support officers and student officers. There would be changes to shift patterns, increased use of officers trained and equipped with tasers and body worn video.
- The refurbishment of Hexham Police Station was due to be complete in November 2019.
- Councillors and members of the community were thanked for the assistance given to Northumbria Police.

Councillor Sharp left the meeting at 6.53 p.m.

Members of the Committee discussed a number of issues and responses were given as follows:

- It was unusual for calls to 101 to take more than 20 minutes to be answered. The Inspector agreed to investigate an incident reported by Councillor Quinn. They assessed the threat, harm and risk to pritise how calls should be responded to.
- Helpful advice had been issued by the police regarding the licensing of peddlars which had been shared with Town and Parish Councils. Not everyone who sold door to door acted unlawfully, however, when complaints were received, the individuals were often not in possession of an appropriate licence.
- Corbridge was normally served by officers from the Prudhoe police station, however, the closest available officer would be assigned to respond to an incident and this included officers from Hexham police station.
- If vulnerable individuals were concerned for their safety they were recommended to call 999 whereas other individuals may think it appropriate to ring 101.
- Councillor Oliver would be provided with feedback from the local sergeant regarding a recent incident of youth disorder.

- One councillor was contacted most about speeding in his village and enquired about the availability of a police presence. It was noted that there was an opportunity for individuals to become community speedwatch volunteers. Discussions would be held regarding the most appropriate action following analysis of speed camera data.
- There needed to be increased promotion of police activity and a brief discussion was held as to how this could be best achieved. It was noted that the restructure would free up the neighbourhood teams who would be able to increase activity and provide feedback to communities which would make them feel safer. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services agreed to discuss opportunities for joint work with the Head of Communications.

Liam Howley, Community and Environmental Health Manager, reported that during 2018/19, 811 incidents had been recorded by the council, of which 55 cases related to the Tynedale area. During 2019/20 the total incidents for all areas was currently 519, with 24 recorded for the Tynedale area. The main categories included intimidation, harassment and anti social behaviour.

Whilst the LMAPS (Local Multi Agency Problem Solving) meetings had been effective in the Tynedale area, they had been less successful elsewhere which had led to a review of the arrangements 18 months previously. LMAPs had been replaced with VOL meetings (Victim Offender Location). New Chairs had been appointed and the group incorporated a broader range of partners, including representatives from adults and children's services, and were now well attended by all parties.

He made reference to the same areas and disorders outlined by the Inspector earlier in the meeting and confirmed that they worked with a variety of partner agencies appropriate to each incident.

Members had been provided with a single point of contact (SPOC) and he received confirmation from members that this was working well. He invited Councillors to contact officers if they became aware of an issue at the earliest opportunity as often an incident was amplified on social media.

The Chair and members of the committee thanked the officers for attending the meeting and also officers in the Neighbourhood teams with which they had regular contact. They found it extremely useful to receive reports on a regular basis and appreciated the efforts of officers to keep people safe and crime levels low in Tynedale.

**RESOLVED** that the update be received.

#### **64. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2018/19**

The Local Area Council received a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes as at 1 September 2019. (A copy is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix A.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**65. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated. (A copy is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix B.)

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

**40. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**Bob Parker, Blyth Town Council** referred to problems with a taxi company in Blyth, which also brought in taxis from other areas, and instances of taxis driving the wrong way down a one way street. He had contacted the NCC Licensing Section but had been advised that he should contact the authority from which the taxis came.

Philip Soderquest, Head of Housing and Public Protection, was in attendance and advised Mr Parker that, in general terms, officers would try and work across other licensing authorities. He asked Mr Parker to provide him with details after the meeting and he would ensure that he received a response.

**41. PETITIONS**

**(a) Receive any new petitions:** E Petition - 'Please help us improve Seaton Vale roundabout.'

The Chair advised members that the above e petition had been received and was worded as follows:

*As residents of Seaton Vale we are disgusted by the appearance of the roundabout at the junction with Harrington Way as you come to enter the estate. Ashington has some beautiful roundabouts but this one is not only unsightly, it is dangerous and overgrown. We have discussed this issue with Persimmon and I know our local Councillor, Jim Lang, was trying to resolve this for us. We are proud of our community and, as residents, we have purchased planters to sit under our street signs and, as a community, we come together to try to make the estate a better and prettier place to live. We would love some support to help develop our roundabout, to make it look more inviting and in keeping with others in Ashington. We do feel it is a health and safety hazard. It is overgrown and we have seen children playing in it. It is also so overgrown it is difficult to see what is coming. Many thanks for your help.*

The petition currently had 98 signatures and was still live. A report would be produced for November's meeting.

**(b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:** No reports to consider;

**(c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered:** None.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## 42. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

The Highways Delivery Area Manager was in attendance to provide verbal updates about any key recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work and to respond to issues raised by members.

Issues raised and responses were as follows:

- A response to an issue raised by a member was reported in the News Post Leader before it was provided to him. Members should be given information before it went to press.  
*This should not have happened and the Highways Delivery Area Manager had spoken to the officer responsible to ensure that it would not happen again.*
- There were a number of overgrown trees in and around Elliott Street, Blyth, the grass had not been cut to a good standard and the street was in need of a thorough clean. There were two bowling greens, one had been cut and one had not. Clarification was requested about the lease, who paid for the grass to be cut and why both bowling greens had not been cut.  
*This would be referred to the Neighbourhood Services Area Manager for a response to Councillor Campbell.*
- A different strategy was needed for weed spraying across all of the area, the blue dye was so diluted it was difficult to tell if weeds had been sprayed or not.
- The back streets from Milburn Road to Hawthorn Road and from 6th Avenue to 3rd Avenue were overgrown with weeds.  
*These issues would be referred to the Neighbourhood Services Area Manager.*
- The team was commended for the good work carried out cutting back weeds on the spine road.
- There were highways issues in the home zone area of Blyth. Could 'Give Way' lines be added to the road?  
*Required work would need to be included on the LTP Programme and, at present, operatives could only react to defects due to the restricted budget available. Give way lines could only be added as part of a Traffic Regulation Order but this suggestion would be passed on.*
- Cars were double parking at Plessey Road playing field, could a single yellow line be painted on the road?  
*The query would be passed on.*
- Since the cctv camera had been removed from Delaval Gardens a bag containing discarded items had been found and a bungalow had been broken into. Why was the camera removed?  
*The Head of Housing and Public Protection replied that, historically, when problems arose in an area, a number of tests were applied to see if it was appropriate to deploy a camera. If, after a period of time, the deployed camera had not captured information, a decision would be taken to have it removed as there must be grounds and reasons to have it there. It was no longer policy to have fixed cameras. However, if problems continued, this would be revisited and he and the Community Safety Officer would look into it.*
- Members had been advised that, after years of requesting a speed camera on Laverock Hall Road, permission had been given but it would not be sited until the end of the year. Why would it take so long?



*The Highways Delivery Area Manager said his department was responsible for delivery and construction but he would need to consult the Infrastructure Manager with regards to timescale.*

- Block paving in Station Road, Ashington needed attention and was becoming unsafe.

*Some of it was becoming dislodged and officers were looking into costs for replacement with printed concrete. The maintenance team would be asked to look into safety issues.*

- Taxis at the rank outside of Aaron's opticians, Ashington were often seen doing dangerous manoeuvres and causing queues which held up traffic.

*The Head of Housing and Public Protection said policing taxis across Northumberland was very challenging. Licensing Officers would look into it and consider whether it was an illegal activity.*

- Was there any possibility of having cctv cameras at People's Park, Ashington? Since the new play equipment had been installed there was a certain element of youths repeatedly offending and they needed to be identified.

*Cameras were deployed in response to need and any permanent cameras were funded by Parish and Town Councils. Unfortunately, such activity was not uncommon when new equipment was installed but it had to be demonstrated that damage was proportionate as footage around children needed justification in the longer term.*

The Highways Delivery Area Manager then gave his update as follows:

- Tarmac patching had been carried out in the Blyth area at Blyth Links Cemetery, Prestdale Avenue, Maple Crescent and Bebside Road, Blyth.
- Due to a heavy workload, drainage works were put on hold for six weeks and were expected to start again in two weeks. Drainage work was programmed for Aldborough Street, Alexandra Road, Keel Row Car Park, Plessey Road, Warkworth Avenue and Keelmans Terrace, Blyth.
- Major construction work was currently taking place at Cramlington\Manor Walks\Westmorland Way and the road into Cambois. As a result other works, outside of day to day maintenance, had temporarily been reduced.
- Tarmac Resurfacing works had now been completed at Josephine Butler Campus, Alexandra Road, Manley View, North Seaton Road, Ashington and Sea Crest Road, Newbiggin.
- Upcoming tarmac patching was scheduled for Tynedale Drive, Devonworth Place, Ennerdale Road, Blyth, Park Road and Castle Terrace, Ashington.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted and issues raised by members needing resolution be followed up after the meeting.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **43. POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

Inspectors Phil Patterson and Steve Nicklin were in attendance to give an overview and answer questions about policing in the Ashington and Blyth areas. Inspector Patterson said he had only been in post for two weeks in the Ashington, Bedlington and Newbiggin area but had served 22 years in the police force. He highlighted the following:

- Crime rates had reduced in Ashington by 12% overall.
- Assault, robbery and common assault were down by 12%, burglary was down by 19% and antisocial behaviour was down by 32%.
- Operation Respect which was about truancy and antisocial behaviour in young people, looking at why they did this and the support mechanisms in place.
- Operation Dignity which was about working with children who were criminalised by the system and identifying other children who may be at risk. Persuading them away from that lifestyle through successful engagement and taking part in activities to encourage a good relationship with the Police.
- Drugs were a real issue, crack cocaine being particularly addictive. A number of individuals had been identified as drug dealers and arrests were imminent.
- A number of burglaries in Newbiggin and Lynemouth had been carried out by two individuals addicted to cocaine. Information received from the public had resulted in them being identified and arrested, resulting in a significant decrease in burglaries in those areas.
- There had been an increase in commercial burglaries in Newbiggin. Again, as a result of information received from the public, an arrest had been made and it transpired that one individual had committed six of the seven burglaries.
- Those examples demonstrated the benefits of targeting the right people through shared information.
- There was no significant knife crime to report.
- Northumbria Police had lost a third of their officers over the last seven years and had to work in a smarter way. Difficult decisions were being taken and there had been changes made. For example, a Police Officer would no longer attend if a car was stolen but a crime number would be issued.
- Work included safeguarding issues around slavery and sexual crimes against children.
- Mental health issues were significant and a new operating model would start in November whereby 24/7 Police would deal with an incident but would no longer investigate it. This would be passed to an investigation team which in turn would result in quicker response times and free up Neighbourhood Teams to focus on their local area.
- With regard to antisocial behaviour (ASB) in young people, funding had been received for high quality hand held cameras which would be of real benefit. Officers would be able to video from a distance and identify the individuals concerned. They would then visit the parents of first time offenders whilst, for repeat offenders, intervention methods would be used.
- In terms of road safety, proposals were being discussed about making changes on how to tackle speeding vehicles by using existing legislation on antisocial behaviour to give the Police the power to remove vehicles.
- Inspector Pattison reiterated that he had only been in post for 2 weeks but said he was thinking outside of the box to target criminals and hoped to make a difference to the area moving forward.

Inspector Steve Nicklin then spoke about the Blyth area and highlighted the following:

- A new operating model was in place for neighbourhood teams. Trevor Oakley was leaving in November and would be replaced by Neil Hall as Inspector.
- The makeup of the teams would change, there would be a dedicated team of two sergeants and seventeen officers. Shift patterns would change to provide extra cover at key times and allow officers to be more focussed to deal with local issues.

- For the second year in Blyth there had been a reduction in crime, however, with regard to serious crime there had been two murders, which were horrific but isolated incidents, with no wider risk to the community.
- There had been a reduction in robbery by 20%, a reduction in burglary by 18% and a reduction in theft by 17%.
- Burglary had a huge impact on victims. Through proactive work it was often seen that a number of crimes were committed by the same individuals and focussing on targeting the right people would greatly reduce crime. This was the case in Blyth and recently three prolific burglars had been convicted and sent to prison.
- There had been a reduction in knife crime and the use of weapons which were not on the same scale as problems seen in other areas. However, there were dedicated tactics in place to address this and Operation Divan was a programme designed to educate the younger generation about knife crime.
- ASB was an emerging issue in Blyth both for youths and non youths and also neighbourhood disputes. This remained a priority and, with regard to perceived disorder, work was being done around intervention.
- There was a darker nights campaign in place to take a proactive approach to tackling problems and members were urged to support this by providing information and reporting any instances of ASB.

Members thanked both officers for the information they had provided and congratulated them on their approach to reducing crime.

A member stated that, with regard to information, it worked both ways and the Police should keep Town Councils updated. He also referred to the percentages provided and felt they should have been backed up with figures.

Discussion took place about speeding being a major problem in the area and how it could be addressed. The Police acknowledged the schemes in place and measures taken through the Council's Local Transport Programme (LTP) and Members' Improvement Schemes but said that, realistically, it could never be eradicated all together and it was about targeting the right people. It may have been a one off offence and Police would speak to those guilty with a view to educating them. However, with regard to the proposed changes referred to earlier, officers would have no qualms about removing vehicles from people driving illegally or persistent offenders.

In response to a query about boy racers at Blyth Beach, Inspector Nicklin said he was not aware of any problems currently as there had been a multi agency approach and a number of arrests had been made.

In terms of punishment, road safety was taken very seriously. In order to have valid insurance to drive again after conviction, criminals would need to declare their conviction. If they did not, and were on license, they would be sent back to jail for committing an offence. Police could check this and it was a case of using legislation carefully.

Emma Beniams, Senior Community Safety Officer, reported that the single points of contact for the Ashington and Blyth area were Ross McLeod and Darren Dougan but members were also welcome to contact her at any time and feedback was welcome.

Local Multi Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) meetings had previously been held every month in all of the county areas. In January those meetings had been reviewed and some

changes were implemented to improve partnership involvement and consistency across all areas. As a result Victim Offender Location (VOL) meetings now took place and she chaired all 7 of those to ensure an overview of all issues across the county, sharing of best practice and efficient use of resources. Membership of the VOL meetings had been expanded and included representatives from adults and children's services which allowed for a more holistic approach to issues affecting the local community.

In terms of statistics, there was an increase in reports of ASB this year to date and overall Ashington and Blyth were the busiest sectors with most complaints being about rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour. This could relate to behaviour around home addresses spilling out and affecting neighbours or by groups or individuals in public places. There had been 86 complaints last year with 63 complaints so far this year.

The main issue in Blyth last year was youth disorder and an Adolescent Partnership Group had been established with multi agencies to tackle this. There had been a significant increase this year in Ashington around Hirst Park, McDonalds and Paddock Woods. There were three levels of offenders - top end (those who were already known), lower level hangers on and the middle group where there was an opportunity to divert behaviour. Sixteen young people had been identified as being regularly involved in ASB and in need of further intervention.

A significant number of young people had also been travelling from Ashington and Blyth into the Bedlington area and causing problems there but this had recently reduced.

There had been sporadic reports of mini motos in Newbiggin due to the wide open spaces and difficulty identifying those responsible. Similar issues had occurred in Newsham.

In 2018/19 there were ten CCTV deployments in Blyth, eight in Ashington and three in Newbiggin. To date in 2019/20 there had been one additional deployment in Blyth and one in Ashington.

There had been two Community Trigger Activations in the Blyth area. The Community Trigger enabled members of the community to take officers to task if they felt appropriate action had not been taken. One person had reported the same incident more than three times in 2018 and felt that nothing had been done. An ASB review was undertaken and additional actions identified that Police, Housing and NCC could do more to improve the response and this had resolved the matter. In March 2019, five separate people had reported the same incident but it was found that no action had been taken because the reports were new and still under investigation.

A member referred to problems with boy racers in the car park at People's Park in Ashington and racing down Institute Road. The Senior Community Safety Officer said that sporadic complaints had been received. She acknowledged that potentially cameras, bollards or cordoning off was required and ultimately the power for the Police to uplift vehicles but emphasised the need for incidents to be reported whilst they were happening.

The Head of Housing and Public Protection agreed and said the Police needed the public to report incidents and take car registrations. Officers could not react to comments made on social media but direct reports were ideal. A member suggested that adjacent residents should be contacted to advise them of this.

A member stated that Ashington Town Council had purchased two covert cameras for Ashington and the Police should use these to help with their investigations. They should then report back to Ashington Town Council as it needed feedback and reassurance that they were being used.

The Head of Housing and Public Protection said there was a clear reduction in crime but there was a bigger fear of crime. There should be a better way of reporting what was being done and for emphasising the need of partnership work. Society had changed, tolerance levels had changed and ways of dealing with hardened, persistent criminals/offenders needed to be looked at across the whole partnership. It was about communities providing the right level of information as resources and action were based on evidence.

**RESOLVED** that the update be received and comments of members noted.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **44. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2017/20 - PROGRESS REPORT**

The report provided a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes for 2017/19 as at 1 September 2019 (attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix D**).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **45. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings (attached to the signed minutes as Appendix E).

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **46. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday, 9 October 2019 at Blyth Civic Centre - time to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 7:33 pm

**56. PETITIONS**

Members received the following reports:-

- (a) **Receive any new petitions:** to receive any new petitions. There were no new petitions.
- (b) **Consider reports on petitions previously received:**
- **School Transport in Guide Post (Attached as Appendix C)**

The Chair invited the lead petitioner, Mr. S. Armstrong, to address Members. Mr. Armstrong's key issues included the following:

- He represented Bedlingtonshire Neighbourhood Watch who had been contacted by concerned residents regarding concerns about school traffic to and from Cleaswell Hill School in Guide Post.
- Residents were very concerned at the attitude of school taxi drivers, parking on pavements, restricting access to residents, blocking driveways etc.
- A meeting had been held between residents and the local Parish Clerk but nothing had happened as a result of the meeting.
- Councillor D. Ledger, the local County Councillor, had been contacted but unable to help.
- Residents had nothing against the school but felt that, as the school expanded, there was not enough room for parking.

Neil Snowdon, Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement), raised the following points.

- Since receiving the petition the Transport Team had been monitoring the situation and would continue to do so.
- Large school vehicles would be asked to attend the school earlier to allow easier access for smaller vehicles.
- The completion of the hydropool would provide parking and so relieve pressure on School Avenue and surrounding streets.
- Complaints regarding a particular taxi and abusive language generally would be passed on.

Councillor D. Ledger made the following points:-

- He stressed that he had worked closely with Neil Snowdon and the Transport Team over the years to try and find a solution.
- Over the last two years he had had no telephone calls regarding parking at the school.
- On occasion, Council officers had spoken to taxi drivers and although the situation did settle down for a while there would eventually be a return to the previous situation.

- Foul and abusive language was an offence and should always be reported to the police
- Many Council departments, the police and the school had been involved and the situation was a failure of all of them. He stressed that the school itself also had to take some responsibility.

Councillor H.G.H. Sanderson welcomed the report and commented that if evidence of inappropriate behaviour was provided it would be dealt with. He proposed, seconded by Councillor D. Ledger and

**IT WAS RESOLVED**, unanimously, that an update be provided to the March 2020 Castle Morpeth meeting and if there had been no improvement that further action would be considered.

**(c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered:**

- **Riversdale House Flats, Stakeford, Choppington - verbal update**

Phillip Soderquest, Head of Housing and Public Protection, referred to his earlier report at the July meeting at which it was reported that the position was improving. Local residents had attended that meeting and raised further concerns.

In addressing those concerns, he commented as follows:-

- Vetting of tenants - Residents had commented that the new procedure was not being followed and some new tenants were not adhering to their tenancy agreement. Work had been carried out with the main agent for the flats and new standards were in place.
- Wheelie Bins - The provision of bins had been increased as requested, however, it seemed that residents from elsewhere were using the bins. Some apparent episodes of fly tipping alongside the bins may have actually been by agreement.
- Fighting and foul language - There had been a recent incident which was being dealt with by the police.
- Flats still an eyesore - This was still a work in progress. The main agent was reluctant to make an investment as they did not have total ownership of the flats.
- Future plans - Unfortunately, this was not a unique problem but efforts were being made to improve the position at the flats.

Councillor J.D. Foster made the following comments:-

- The position at the flats had improved a great deal and she thanked Members and Officers for their support.
- There had always been fly tipping but recent incidents may not have actually been flytipping. It was hard to judge.
- More wheelie bins had been provided but the siting was not always ideal.
- New tenants had moved in and were being properly vetted.
- Multi agency meetings were continuing and she attended them.

- She had not been receiving any complaints herself and the police had reported a reduction in complaints.

Councillor J.D. Foster proposed, seconded by Councillor R.R. Dodd, and **IT WAS RESOLVED**, unanimously, that a further update report be submitted in six months and thereafter only if there was a problem raised by the Multi agency meeting.

## **57. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers with the opportunity for members to ask questions afterwards.

### **Neighbourhood Services**

- Waste, recycling and garden waste collection services were all working well
- New collection vehicles were very good.
- Income was all on target.
- Grass cutting was up to date, however, the recent wet weather had been challenging.
- Weed killing was proving challenging, again, due to the wet weather. A second application had been made. Ponteland, Darras Hall and Longhorsley were still to be done.
- A new small sweeper for street cleaning had been delivered and was much more versatile and able to travel longer distances.
- Verge cutting was complete and there should be no further visibility issues as the growing season was over.

### **Highway Services**

- It had been a busy summer with two major schemes; Mitford Road drainage scheme and the changed road layout for the new school opposite County Hall
- Both schemes had been delivered on time and on budget.
- Patching programme had resumed and routine inspections were ongoing.
- LTP schemes were ongoing.
- In October a number of smaller schemes including small drainage schemes, crossings, signs etc. would commence.
- There had been a lot of enquiries over the summer regarding road repairs and drainage issues. These were being prioritised.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS - CORPORATE**

### **58. POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

#### **Community Safety**

Liam Howley, Community and Environmental Health Manager, updated members on the number of reported incidents of antisocial behaviour and the new reporting system, VOL (Victim Offender Location). 811 incidents had been reported in



2018/19 of which 55 were in the Castle Morpeth LAC area, and from 519 in 2019/20 of which 43 were from Castle Morpeth. 18 months ago there had been a two tier system for reporting anti social behaviour. LMAPS was a multi agency approach to solving the problem. This had been largely taken over by VOL and the system was working very well. Members all had a nominated officer as their SPOC (single point of contact). Feedback on the new system welcomed.

Members were of the opinion that the new system was not working. It was felt that they were often the first point of contact for residents but were not receiving any feedback on anti social behaviour matters. The LMAPS system had been a useful tool for them. One member commented that his experience was a little different and that there were regular updates at his local Parish Council meeting and that these were very valuable.

Phillip Sodequest commented that it was important for officers to be aware if the system was not working as members would wish. It was agreed that contact details for officers acting as a single point of contact for members would be circulated. He stressed that there had been a reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour incidents and that it was important to tackle how the public perceived this, especially with the increasing use of social media.

### **Policing Update**

Sergeant Steven Knight was in attendance to give an overview and answer questions about policing in the Castle Morpeth area. His key points included:-

- He had moved from working in the Berwick area to the Morpeth area three weeks ago.
- A knife crime initiative was underway week commencing 16 September 2019. The initiative involved going into schools and retailers and targeting young people with workshops focusing on the consequences of knife crime.
- 6 - 13 October 2019 was Rural Crime and Wildlife week. This week would cover areas such as theft of quad bikes, problems for isolated farms and poaching.
- There had been recent problems with antisocial behaviour at Stobhill and Southfields and plain clothes police patrols had been instigated there.
- Operation Nightwing was aimed at dealing with antisocial behaviour now that the darker nights were approaching.
- A new police structure for the Morpeth/Alnwick/Berwick area would come into force in January 2020 and the police in all of those areas would work as one team.
- It was acknowledged that there were communication issues and that the police area command areas did not match up with the County Council structure.
- There was a problem with poaching in that it was very difficult to prove and successfully prosecute. He stressed that poaching was taken very seriously along with other rural crime.

The Chair thanked Sergeant Knight for his attendance. Sergeant Knight would be sent contact details for all of the members of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the policing and community safety updates be noted.

## **59. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES - PROGRESS REPORT**

To receive a progress report. (A copy of the report attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix D**)

**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **60. PEGASUS RIDING CENTRE**

Members received a presentation and overview about the work and activities at the Pegasus Riding Centre. (A copy of the presentation is filed with the signed minutes.)

Dawn Watson and Laura Winter presented their report and their key points included:-

- The Pegasus Riding Centre was opened in 2009 and was now managed by Active Northumberland, catering for around 90 riders per week, 80% of whom were disabled.
- It hosted and worked in partnership with the Morpeth Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) Group.
- There were 13 RDA ponies and 17 private liveries.
- Eight schools visited the centre regularly from Northumberland and Newcastle. Adults from Tynedale Centre in Hexham also attended.
- The centre catered for a mixture of abilities and disabled. Some groups had riders, both able bodied and disabled, riding to the same ability.
- The centre depended on its volunteers and welcomed anyone who was willing to help even for only an hour.
- The Centre held a number of fun in-house competitions usually centred around Easter, Halloween and Christmas.
- This year it hosted the Northern Regional Qualifier to enable disabled riders to compete in the national competition. 14 riders qualified. Councillors Jackson and Homer had presented the rosettes.
- The national competition was held in Gloucestershire and the centre's riders and horses were very successful.

Members welcomed the report and the work it did with the RDA. It was noted that the centre could not operate without its volunteers and would welcome more. Members agreed to spread the word locally. There were also funding requirements such as for the provision of a bath and solarium for the horses

**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

**28. Public Question Time**

Adam Hogg, resident, conveyed his thanks for the prompt response to his query raised at the meeting of 17 July.

Mr Hogg continued and stated that NCC were amongst several authorities recognising climate change and queried whether the Council had set any green budgets, eg, planting of trees? Mr Hogg was informed that trees and shrubs would be planted in Cramlington. NCC were also committed to being carbon neutral and as part of the refurbishment of County Hall, a solar carport would be erected. It was reported that NCC was the most efficient/green Council in the north east and a lot of schools were planting trees and shrubs. Also any ideas would be welcomed.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services added that new trees were being planted across the county in green and urban spaces.

A member stated that tree planting was not a new concept and referred to the tree planting which had taken place after coal industries had closed.

**29. Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

**30. Local Services Issues**

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers with the opportunity for members to ask questions afterwards.

**Technical Services Update**

In the absence of Michael Carle, Highways Delivery Area Manager, Tony Gribbin, Services Area Manager gave the Technical Services Update.

Resurfacing work had been carried out at Bradbury Court, New Hartley; East Cramlington to Wheatfields roundabout, Bebside Road, A1172, Cramlington; A1068, Cramlington and Nelson roundabout.

Upcoming resurfacing work would be carried out at Nelson Avenue, Cramlington. Drainage improvements and civil works at Stead Lane, Cramlington and final surfacing at Cambois.

A zebra crossing had been installed at Astley Road, Seaton Delaval next to the high school.

Westmorland Way roundabout was still ongoing and work was on schedule.

The small patching and drainage team would up and running to get a 7 week patchment programme completed before winter. Members raised concerns in relation to Beaumont Grange, Seghill and the pedestrian crossing/temporary barrier at the Astley Community High/Whytrigg middle schools site on Astley Road in Seaton Delaval.

### **Neighbourhood Services Update**

Waste services was operating a scheduled. Grass cutting had proved challenging due to the wet weather in August. There had also been a strong regrowth of weeds due to the warm wet weather which had knocked back progress. If any areas had been missed, the Neighbourhood Team should be informed.

Preparation of the winter maintenance programmes were taking place ahead of the winter weather.

Concerns were raised regarding weeds in Hartford and Councillor Robinson stated that he had met with the Highways Delivery Manager and were in discussion with the contractor. Another concern was raised regarding the treatment and mechanism of removing weeds.

Greg Gavin, Head of Neighbourhood Services reported that the Council not use domestic weed killer due to strict legislation. He also advised that a number of alternative methods had been researched which had proved not as productive or cost effective.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted and issues raised by Members be followed up by Local Services.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS- CORPORATE**

### **31. Policing and Community Safety Update**

Liam Howley, Community and Environmental Health Manager reported that the Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley areas were covered by two Victim Offender Local Areas (VOLs) and two Police Sectors.

Mr Howley reminded members that the Local Multi Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) meetings had been replaced by the Victim, Offender, Location (VOL) meetings. These were a multi agency problem solving meeting chaired by the Council and held monthly in each Police sector. In January those meetings had been reviewed and some changes were implemented to improve partnership involvement and consistency. In particular the meetings were now chaired by a Senior Community Safety Officer with a broader range of agencies attending. In terms of statistics, reports of Anti Social Behaviour in the area for the period 2018-19 had been 128.

Brief details of the ongoing youth disorder in Bedlington were provided and Mr Howley confirmed agencies had been trying to identify the key leaders and the Community Safety Team had been working with youth providers in diversion activity.

Temporary CCTV had been installed in Bedlington to assist the identification of offenders and provide reassurance however, Bedlington Town Council had now installed permanent cameras to replace those and it was confirmed that Housing and Public Protection also had a pool of rapid deployable CCTV units available for use on a temporary basis.

Members were reminded that part of the process to replace LMAPS with VOL was to provide each member with a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) within the Community Safety Team. Mr Howley confirmed that the presentations to the Local Area Committees were being used to gather feedback from members about how those arrangements were working in practice. To date both positive and negative feedback had been received and officers would review the process to address any member concerns.

A member raised queries in relation to youth disorder, hate crime and knife violence in relation to excluded children.

The Community Safety Manager stated that the issue of excluded children would be one of many factors an investigation would consider. However, in all cases identification of the young person in question was key. Hate crime could be reported either to the Police or to the Council and members were reminded about the new national led initiative on knife crime.

In response to a comment regarding the Single Point of Contacts, these could be recirculated to members.

A member asked if the number of types of ASBs could be listed and circulated to members once a month as an information item. The Community Safety Manager would investigate this.

A multi agency approach had been requested by a member at a previous meeting and had not received a response. She also queried whether officers were deployed to the front line or back up to the police. It was advised that Community Safety primary role was to investigate ASB and to coordinate multi agency working, in particular the work of the VOLs. In a situation which required a '999' type response then the Police were the more appropriate agency.

The problem of speeding quad bikes down Astley Road and youths with baseball bats had been reported to the police which the Council had not followed up. Mr Howley advised that they should be reported as a crime to the Police. If members were not happy with the level of service provided by the Community Safety Team then this would be followed up.

In response to the comment regarding the link between youth disorder and permanent exclusions, it was reported that a Task & Finish Group had been established to investigate the causes of fixed and permanent exclusions, working

with partners to improve the situation. In the period 2014 - 18, there had been a rapid increase in the number of both fixed and permanently excluded pupils in Northumberland where permanent exclusions had increased by 203% and fixed term exclusions by 209%. In the last term, the first dataset had shown a 28% reduction in permanent exclusions and a 26% reduction in fixed term exclusions.

A tender exercise had been agreed at Cabinet to create a framework to support the provision of alternative education for children of statutory age due to the approaching expiry of an existing tender together and the increase in the number of permanent exclusions.

A member referred to antisocial behavior in Holywell and stated that he would like to see more activities provided by Active Northumberland. A number of activities had taken place over the summer holidays but something more permanent was required to attract youngsters.

In response to a query regarding CCTV footage, it was advised that in order to view the footage, it would depend on what the purpose was for viewing.

Inspectors Phil Patterson and Steve Nicklin were in attendance to give an overview and answer questions about policing in the Cramlington and Bedlington areas.

Inspector Patterson said he had only been in post for two weeks, but had served 22 years in the police force. He highlighted the following:

- Antisocial behaviour in Bedlington from organised individuals. The Police had tried several diversionary tactics including schools and parents in the hope of avoiding the justice system. The Police were looking how to address the situation
- Parents dropping off their children at Atlee park with alcohol
- The Neighbourhood Team were taking a very hands on approach
- Within the next 12 weeks, searches would be carried out with licensing checks in pubs and searches for weapons
- A consistent approach was needed
- Northumbria Police had lost a third of their officers over the last seven years and had to work in a smarter way. Difficult decisions were being taken and there had been changes made. For example, a Police Officer would no longer attend if a car was stolen but a crime number would be issued.
- With regard to antisocial behaviour (ASB) in young people, funding had been received for high quality hand held cameras which would be of real benefit. Officers would be able to video from a distance and identify the individuals concerned. They would then visit the parents of first time offenders whilst, for repeat offenders, intervention methods would be used

Inspector Steve Nicklin then spoke about the Cramlington area and highlighted the following:

- A new operating model was in place for neighbourhood teams. Trevor Oakley was leaving in November and would be replaced by Neil Hall as Inspector.

- The makeup of the teams would change, there would be five Police Officers and four Community Service Officers. Shift patterns would change to provide extra coverage and greater capacity
- Crime figures in Cramlington were quite positive. Vehicle crime had reduced and knife crime had dropped to 55% with 5 recorded offences
- There had been an increase of burglary offences at 22%
- Three prolific burglary offenders had been caught, as a result crime numbers had improved
- One known youth and one unknown youth had been arrested for antisocial behaviour. Cramlington did not have a big issue with antisocial behaviour and figures were down by 33% compared to last year due to Operation Disband which had targeted the ring leader
- A Darker Nights Campaign was to be carried out at Brockwell, Cramlington
- Drug crime had reduced in Cramlington however, there were still small areas with drug issues

Discussion followed during which the key points raised by members and responses from officers were:

- The need to proactively respond to drug crime
- The concern of eradicating crime from one area but being transferred to another area. It was advised that evidence and intelligence was needed to issue warrants
- It would be useful if feedback could be provided to the community after a crime had taken place
- Cars racing from Blyth to Whitley Bay. Recently a young person had been killed
- Seghill and Seaton Valley had a lot of people coming in from other areas carrying out drug related activity, eg county lines
- There had been a lot of problems in Seaton Delaval and officers were thanked for their intervention

Inspector Nicklin reported that some warrants had been executed in the Seghill and Seaton Valley areas after cannabis farms had been found. In relation to speeding, cameras had been installed which had been very effective.

Members thanked both officers for the information they had provided and congratulated them on their approach to reducing crime.

**RESOLVED** that the update be received and members comments be noted.

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 32. Members' Local Improvement Scheme - Progress Report

Members were provided with an update on Members' Local Area Schemes during 2018/19 as at 1 November 2018. (Report attached with the signed minutes).

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **33. Local Area Council Work Programme**

Members noted the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings (any suggestions for new agenda items would require confirmation by the Business Chair after the meeting). (A copy of the Work Programme is enclosed with the official minutes.)

A member expressed concern at the lack of public attendance and suggested an alternative way of promoting the meeting, eg advertising via social media.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.



## **NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL, 19 SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **62. POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

The Chair brought forward this item on the agenda and expressed regret that late notification had been provided by the police that they were unable to attend this meeting. He would look into this further and apologised if any attendees had come to the meeting especially for this item.

### **63. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Thursday, 22 August 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to two amendments being made:

- page 6, first paragraph - to refer to Embleton Hall, not Eshott
- typographical correction on page 9.

### **64. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were asked by any members of the public.

### **65. PETITIONS**

#### **(a) New petitions:**

Members noted that an e-petition requesting improvements to the path leading from South Lane/North Sunderland to the Primary School and nursery side gate had qualified for a written response as it had now received 70 signatures. A report would be organised for the Local Area Council's meeting on 21 November 2019.

#### **(b) Updates on petitions previously considered:**

An update was provided by the local member regarding the petition considered at the previous meeting about the replacement of a dog waste bin in Warkworth. Warkworth Parish Council, who would be responsible for purchasing any replacement bin, had since considered this issue further and had decided that there were enough dog waste bins in the area concerned; people leaving that location would pass another of the three bins nearby. Warkworth Parish Council would not thus be reinstating the bin.

Members were advised that this outcome would be communicated to the lead petitioner in writing.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## 66. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers from Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services in attendance about any key recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work for the attention of members.

### **Neighbourhood Services Update:**

- the waste service collection was operating well, bar one or two vehicle breakdowns
- the income expected from garden waste, commercial waste and bulk collection service was on target
- grass cuts numbers 11 and 12 wet conditions during August were a challenge for the teams. Arisings were greater than officers would have liked in some places and there was a less desirable appearance than they would have liked after being cut. Progress had recovered reasonably well and the core number of cuts had already been achieved this year
- progress on weed killing had also been impacted by weather conditions; areas would be addressed on request
- street cleansing activity had operated well and the small sweepers were effective. Required work had been achieved well ahead of the Tour of Britain on 9 September
- all verge cutting requirements had been completed by the end of July. Members should advise officers about any further requirements.

Members then raised a number of issues of which the key points were:

- feedback had been received from visitors about how well Northumberland was maintained
- it was very welcome to see communities helping in addition to work carried out by the County Council; around 80 people had participated in a recent litter pick at Alnwick
- the service level agreement with Amble Town Council was welcomed; the resulting work had made a big difference to the town
- thanks sent from the Bamburgh Village Show Committee for all the recent local services work at Bamburgh.

Thanks were also expressed by members for:

- excellent work at Longframlington cemetery. A path there would be funded using members' local improvement scheme money
- a resident who had undertaken litter picking around Longframlington
- all the work undertaken in the Berwick area before and after the Tour of Britain.

Members also asked for a number of issues to be followed up, of which the key points, including any responses from officers, were as follows:

- strong concern was expressed about the condition of public toilets at Holy Island. Members were advised that there had been a sewage problem caused by the volume of usage over the last Bank Holiday weekend; consideration was being given to how to boost the water pressure on Holy Island as the cisterns struggled to refill fast enough. There were similar concerns about toilets at Craster and Seahouses
- it was clarified that a traffic island off the A1 towards North and South Charlton was the responsibility of the County Council rather than Highways England, and needed deweeding

- strong concern was expressed from Alnwick Town Council about the condition of the toilets on Greenwell Lane. An inspection would be arranged; members were also reminded that a condition survey has recently been undertaken
- a request was made to clear the path going west from Alnwick west of quarry corners after the Shepherds Rest public house
- some Japanese Knotweed needed to be removed on the Longhorsley side of the river across from Felton.

#### **Technical Services Update:**

- members were advised it had been a busy summer for road resurfacing. The resource was shared across the county; after recent work particularly in the west and Castle Morpeth areas, a number of schemes would be delivered in the north area shortly. Some north area projects included at the A1068 and Church Street in Amble, Hipsburn and Acklington
- 10 of 12 Surface Dressing schemes had been delivered to date in the north area with two being deferred at Elsdon and Flotterton due to conflicts with Northumbrian Water
- all the planned micro asphalt schemes had been undertaken, at East Ord, Seahouses, Tweedmouth and Amble
- a number of drainage and signage work had been undertaken
- a new code of practice was now in place for highway maintenance
- more inspection routes would now be walked and this should result in more footway defects being identified but this in turn presents a resource and budgets issue.

Members then raised a number of issues of which the key points were:

- officers were thanked for the work to Weavers' Way in Alnwick being completed within three or four days of being reported
- gratitude was expressed for the work to rebuild a wall at Cawledge View in Alnwick within two weeks of being damaged, following initial clarification about its adoption status
- resurfacing on the old A1 road out to Alnwick to South Charlton was very good
- the resurfacing in Belford was welcomed
- the refurbishment of the listed bridge at Felton was excellent
- thanks expressed for work to Preston Tower Road at Doxford which would soon be carried out.

Members also asked for a number of issues to be followed up, of which the key points, including any responses from officers, were as follows:

- a number of Tour of Britain signs were still in place around the Alnwick and Warkworth areas - officers would follow up with the tour's operator and ask for them to be removed
- the road diversion signs at the level crossing at Warkworth were misleading; the closure was only in place between 10.00pm - 6.00am each day, but the signs did not refer to the times of operation; more information was required
- clarification was sought about clearing/cleaning road signs; members were advised that this was within highways inspectors' remits to check, but was likely to be lower on their priorities and there was not a specific routine to clean them. If members had concerns about the condition of particular road signs, they should report them to officers for attention
- work was required in North Sunderland at North Street opposite Taylor Street

- a damaged lit sign on the roundabout at Main Street, Seahouses was still not repaired. Concern was expressed that this had been raised a number of times with the street lighting team; Councillor Castle, as chair, would contact the street lighting team to ask for it to be fixed as soon as possible
- a lighting column near the Ship Inn/Chapel Road in North Sunderland had been knocked over some time ago. This should also be raised with Street Lighting.
- surface dressing work for the B6341 between Thropton to Flotterton was included in the programme for the current year but had to be deferred until the next year due to conflicts with NWL works
- patching would be undertaken at Hepple in three weeks' time
- reference was made to the drain clearance work at Alnmouth and how to undertake it around parked cars; what discussions took place with local town/parish councils for such work? Members were advised that signs were put up and letter drops undertaken. Town/parish councils could help with getting these messages out
- the path between Bamburgh to Seahouses was very well used but concerns had been raised about who was responsible for maintaining the surface, and keeping the vegetation cut back. Concerns were expressed that such details and consultation had not been undertaken with the Highways Delivery Area Manager and the Area Neighbourhood Services Manager in advance of the scheme beginning. Councillor Renner-Thompson would follow this up with the highways design team. Meetings might also be needed with the contractor
- work to fix subsidence on the A1068 would begin in October 2019. This would be carried out by operatives for the Castle Morpeth area, as it had been over that boundary when planned
- resurfacing work to Tosson Road was in the plan for the next year
- £50,000 had been spent on repairs to Carterside Road
- in connection to a request for road marking work at Marygate in Berwick, the inspector would be asked to check the lists of work due
- Principal Programme Officer Neil Snwodon would be asked to provide an update about when the agreed double yellow lines would be implemented at Castle Terrace in Berwick
- some drains were blocked on The Peth on the road up to the listed bridge at Felton
- work to remove rubble on the unofficial layby on the A1 on the north side to Felton was in the work programme
- strong concerns were expressed about visibility and road safety concerns in connection to the new planned leisure centre for Berwick; the roundabout was considered dangerous as it was on a slope. Although the current crossing was due to be upgraded, this needed attention as it posed an accident risk. These concerns would be raised with Principal Highways Development Management Officer Chris Thompson and Principal Programme Officer Neil Snowdon's team
- potholes on the second road towards Stamford needed fixing, the road was used by many Christon Bank residents
- potholes needed fixing at Swinhoe Bends. The Chair reminded everybody that it was important to use the online pothole reporting service.

Officers were thanked for their work and updates and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted and issues raised by members needing resolution be followed up after the meeting.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **67. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2017/19 - PROGRESS REPORT**

Members received a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes for 2017/19 as at 1 September 2019. (Report attached to the official minutes as Appendix A.)

The Chair intended to raise concerns at the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting on 24 September about the scheme's bureaucracy, including stipulations on requiring three quotes for schemes and why this had to involve members. He had also raised this with the Cabinet Secretary.

Concerns were also expressed about the minimum spend requirements for schemes, as this was not considered to deliver value for money. This concern would also be raised at the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **68. BERWICK REGENERATION COMMISSION**

This was a standing item on the agenda; no updates were available.

### **69. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received the latest version of the Local Area Council's work programme (attached to the official minutes as Appendix B).

Reference was made to the request made for regular updates to Local Area Council meetings about dog fouling statistics. An update about this would be presented to the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting on 24 September.

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

### **70. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME RESPONSES**

A copy of the questions asked at a previous meeting of the Local Area Council and the responses from the Head of Technical Services were circulated (copy attached to the official minutes as Appendix C.)

The Chair reminded those present that if questions could not be answered at a Local Area Council meeting, a written response would always be provided afterwards.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **71. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 17 October 2019 at St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick.