

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF on Monday, 9 March 2020 at 3.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor E. Armstrong
(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 145 - 151)

(Planning Vice-chair Councillor L. Dunn (part), in the chair for items 133 - 144)

COUNCILLORS

Bawn, D.L (part)	Jones, V.
Beynon, J.A	Sanderson, H.G.H. (part)
Dickinson, S. (part)	Towns, D.J
Dodd, R.R.	Wearmouth, R. (part)
Foster, J.D. (part)	

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bird, M	Senior Democratic Services Officer
King, M.	Highways Delivery Area Manager
Kingham, A.	Director - Business Development
Lally, D.	Chief Executive
Laughton, R.	Planning Officer
Leadbeatter, N	Housing Enabling Officer
Masson, N.	Principal Solicitor
Murphy, J.	Principal Planning Officer
O'Farrell, R.	Interim Executive Director: Regeneration, Commercial & Economy
Sinnamon, E.	Senior Planning Manager
Snowdon, N.	Principal Programme Officer
Soderquest, P.	Head of Housing and Public Protection
Wardle, S.	Neighbourhood Services Area Manager
Wood, T.	Senior Planning Officer
Press (1)	

Ch.'s Initials.....

133. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jackson and Ledger.

134. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday, 10 February 2020 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

135. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

- Councillor Dickinson declared that he would be speaking as local member for application 19/01714/FUL and would take no part in the subsequent discussion of the application
- Councillor Jones declared that she would be speaking as local member for application 19/04829/FUL and would take no part in the subsequent discussion of the application
- Councillor Towns declared an interest in relation to the 'Northumberland College - Update' item as he was a governor of the college, but this did not bar him from participating as the agenda item was only for information, not any decision.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

136. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to this agenda using the powers delegated to it and included details of the public speaking arrangements. (Report attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

137. 19/03659/VARYCO

Variation of condition 2 of planning permission reference 18/01707/VARYCO to allow for continuation on a permanent basis of the hours of 7am to 11pm on any day when aircraft can take off, land or move around within the airfield (circuit training - which shall continue to operate between 9am and 7pm only - and emergencies excepted)

Bockenfield Aerodrome Ltd, Eshott Airfield, Felton, Morpeth, NE65 9QJ

The Chair reported that this application had been withdrawn from the agenda.

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138. 19/04659/FUL
New access and gate to field.
High House, High House Road, Morpeth, NE61 2YU

The Chair reported that this application had been withdrawn from the agenda.

139. 18/01840/FUL
Demolition of existing farmstead and erection of 3 No dwelling houses.
Benridge Moor Farm, Longhorsley, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 3SD

Richard Laughton, Planning Officer, introduced the application. He firstly explained that the application had been heard at committee on two other occasions in November 2018 and March 2019. The reason the application was being heard again at committee was detailed in the introduction of the officer committee report. Members had sought to approve the application against the officers recommendation in November 2018 - there was an error in paragraphs 1.2 & 1.3 of the report that referred to November 2019. The application was referred back to the committee by the Interim Director of Planning upon review that the discussion and decision did not address the harm to the Green Belt; the application was then refused by members in March 2019. The applicant then challenged this decision by judicial review on the grounds that there had been an abuse of power and a breach of fairness. The Courts decided that there was no breach of fairness but ordered the application be referred back to committee by March 2020 - there was again an error in point 1 of paragraph 1.4 referring to March 2019. The breach of unfairness was for failing to notify the claimant's agent within five working days prior to the previous committee meeting and therefore was back to committee now for determination.

Mr Laughton then continued introducing the application with the aid of a slides presentation.

Supporter Graham Keen addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- the application had originally been resolved subject to two issues being addressed; none of the four reasons given in the report justified refusal
- the application would support local services and the community, unlike what the officer claimed. The proposal acknowledged the rural character of the area, there was a garden centre and petrol station nearby, the new X14 bus service ran locally, and it was accessible to the housing built at Hebron in 2017
- the layout was not sporadic; it was appropriate and there would be a 48% reduction to the built form. Like applications for Hebron in 2017 and Stannington in 2019, the site was not within the defined Green Belt. The application would improve the site and any harm to the openness of the Green Belt would be limited
- these were all factors that deserved the application providing very special circumstances. In summary, the current structure was no longer appropriate; the application would deliver economic, social and environmental benefits; it would regenerate redundant buildings; result in a reduction to the size of the built form; generate a low level of traffic; and the application had near unanimous support from local neighbours.

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(Councillors Bawn and Wearmouth arrived at this meeting.)

In response to questions from members the following information was provided:-

- the application was in the Green Belt as defined by saved policy S5 of the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan. It was not in the Green Belt as per the Local Plan but was within emerging Green Belt policy, which was being given more weight
- regarding the legal challenge to the application, the judicial review did not pursue the application as either being ultra vires or an abuse of power, but because it couldn't be proven that the Council had given five days' notice of the proposal
- nothing about the proposal had changed between any of the three applications
- Planning Services were confident about the robustness of the Council's position, which had been agreed by Legal Services. Officers were satisfied that the recommended reasons for refusing the application still stood
- reference to the 2017 Hebron application was not appropriate as this application needed to be considered on its own merits
- regarding clarity about what should be considered as setting precedents, applications had to be considered on a case by case basis. The Hebron Hill application referred to was determined a number of years previously.

Councillor Dodd then proposed the officer recommendation to refuse the application. This was seconded by Councillor Dickinson.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- the site was currently in a poor state, would have no agricultural future, result in a 48% decrease in size and thus actually be an improvement for the site upon the Green Belt
- Planning Services had provided very clear and detailed recommendations which provided clarity
- there might be other more appropriate ways of developing this site, but this application was not the solution
- if this application was passed, it could set a precedent and every farmstead be up for sale for development
- there was no policy support for the suggestion that "if a site is a mess, it should be built on".

It was then clarified that as both Councillors Bawn and Wearmouth had entered the meeting during the consideration of this application, neither had participated and nor would either vote. On being put to the vote, it was agreed by four votes for to two against with one abstention, that it be:

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** for the reasons outlined in the report.

140. 19/04829/FUL

Resubmission: Proposed siting of 1no. chalet and part change of use of 1no. Barn. Land North Of Heugh Mill Farm, Stamfordham, Northumberland

Tamsin Wood, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application by firstly providing an update. The applicant had submitted two additional letters, which had been circulated to

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members. Public Protection had agreed that the refusal reasons 4, 5 & 6 had now been addressed, so they should be deleted from the list of refusal reasons. The Local Area Council was being presented with a 'minded to refuse' application as the Planning Inspector was responsible for the final decision in this instance.

Ms Wood then continued introducing the application with the aid of a slides presentation.

Objectors Jane Lewis and Anne Horrocks addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. Their key points included the following:-

- there was no essential need on the site for the proposed dwelling, which was inappropriate in the Green Belt
- it was not justified and was a speculative application. There was nothing unique about the application nor did it demonstrate any very special circumstances, and had no exceptions as per paragraphs 146 and 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- the site was accessed by a gated track which was unsuitable for vehicles
- there was no amenity for getting water to the site. A septic tank had been erected without planning consent and had to receive retrospective approval
- although the application was for a temporary use, if the business succeeded, it was likely that the applicant would apply for permanent permission
- there were traffic implications; the site was accessed via a very sharp bend near a listed narrow bridge
- the Green Belt's purpose was to avoid encroachment into it. The site was open land only two years ago. Mill Lane was used considerably by walkers and horse riders, upon whom this application would have a considerable impact.

Councillor Veronica Jones addressed the meeting speaking as the local councillor. Her key points included the following:-

- she supported the officer recommendation to refuse the application; the applicant sought to bypass the Council
- the application was within the Green Belt in an area of high landscape value, offered no very special circumstances to justify approving it; was in the open countryside and not within the settlement boundary
- the application had no connection to the Mill Lane dwellings and was served by an unmade track that had no direct access to the road network
- she was surprised that the Highways Authority had not objected to the application as it was on a bend on a single lane near a bridge, which had also been damaged in an accident recently
- it was a piecemeal development for a rural business yet there were no horses on site yet. The proposed dwelling was unnecessarily large for temporary accommodation. As the application was going straight to appeal for determination, members should support the recommendation of 'minded to refuse'.

(Councillor Jones then left the meeting whilst the remainder of the application was considered.)

Supporter Craig Ross addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- the application was for temporary planning permission for the siting of a chalet and part change use of a barn; it was not the earlier pre-application, not the withdrawn applications which no longer formed part of the planning register; not the hearsay about what might happen with the barns, land or any future development, but what was presented today to be treated on its own merits
- it did not propose a permanent permission nor a house of stone and slate; the applicant was placing the risk and burden on themselves to make their new business work. PPS7 Annex A, stated, under temporary dwellings, "It should normally, for the first three years be provided with a caravan, a wooden structure which can easily be dismantled or other temporary accommodation. Annex A paragraph 12 also identified other criteria which had been assessed by the independent surveyor appointed by the Council; parts 1 - 4 had all been confirmed as met within the report
- if applying paragraph 79a or the NPPF, guidance in the NPPG, the content of policy H16, the emerging policies of HOU8 and STP1, the surveyor's report concluded that there was a clear evidence of the intention and ability to operate the enterprise; there would be a functional need on the landholding once the horse breeding enterprise was introduced; providing the stocking levels and sales were achieved then the enterprise would be viable for the foreseeable future; and a worker should be resident on a temporary basis to meet the functional need and allow the enterprise to be expanded
- the inappropriateness and harm to the Green Belt would be outweighed by the need for a worker to live permanently at their place of work in the countryside. This amounted to the very special circumstances necessary, like appeal reference 3232803. If members were minded to approve this application now, then the appeal would fall away and Planning Services could implement it
- the applicant had confirmation from Northumbrian Water Limited about a water supply, and was happy to accept conditions on this and the potential for contamination and radon gas. The use of conditions was common practice given the temporary permission sought. If the business succeeded, further permission would be needed in three years' time. The planning policy and guidance, temporary permission and independent surveyor's report should all be considered to judge this application on its own merits and support a newly forming rural business.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- the independent adviser's advice had been sought to avoid being fettered about people's presumptions about such sites. The adviser had confirmed that there was a firm intention for the site
- a three bedroom property was not considered necessary for a worker on this site
- the independent advisor agreed that there was evidence for a need which would increase if the business developed also. No clear evidence had been provided however about the likely hours that would be needed by the worker on site
- additional information had been provided by the applicant on 4 March, this and information from the applicant's agent had been provided. However no new issues had been raised which would change the officer's recommendation
- the first application in 2018 had been for sheds, which had not been completed. The applicant owned land around the site.

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Councillor Bawn then proposed the officer recommendation to refuse the application, subject to the deletion of refusal reasons 4 - 6. This was seconded by Councillor Dodd.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- some details did not stack up as the site had ceased to trade for horse breeding in 2009
- there were many examples in the Hexhamshire area of structures built for livestock, only for no livestock to actually subsequently live on site
- it was a piecemeal approach that would require a lot for a full mains connection
- it would have been better if this Local Area Council had been responsible for deciding the full application rather than being asked to provide a 'minded to refuse/grant'
- the proposed chalet was not in keeping with a microbusiness, and it could easily lead to an application for permanent residence.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by seven votes for, none against and one abstention that it be:

RESOLVED that the application be minded to be **REFUSED** for reasons 1 - 3 as outlined in the report.

(Councillor Jones then returned to the meeting.)

141. 19/01714/FUL

11no dwellings for rent by a registered social landlord

Land West Of Ladyburn House, Simonside Crescent, Hadston, Northumberland

Tamsin Wood, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a slide presentation.

Objector Stephanie Smith addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. Her key points included the following:-

- the green space of the proposed development site was very valuable to the community. There was no dispute about the need for social housing, but not at this site
- this proposal would take away the character of the estate and lose space that was a safe place for local children to play; no other local green spaces were big enough for children to play on, and many people considered it to be their own village green. The space was particularly well used during summertime
- there were numerous other local sites that such a development could be built on, but there had been no discussion of such alternatives
- the application would take away the only green space that side of Hadston.

Councillor Ann Elliott of East Chevington Parish Council and County Councillor Scott Dickinson addressed the meeting by sharing the local member speaking slot. Councillor Elliott's key points included the following:-

- the parish council supported affordable social housing and the need for one and two bed bungalows, but supported residents about keeping and valuing their local green space

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- East Chevington Parish Council worked hard to ensure a good quality of life locally and had good local facilities. The proposed development would however disadvantage residents and also add to traffic problems
- Hadston could not afford to lose such a safe location.

Councillor Dickinson's key points included the following:-

- thanks for members visiting the site which would have helped understand the situation
- the site was spacious, open and safe
- Karbon Homes were a good landlord and worked on a number of initiatives, and the community welcomed affordable housing, but it had to be located on appropriate sites
- residents and the parish council had outlined moral reasons for not building on the site.

Supporter Andrew Moss addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- the site was not allocated as protected open space
- paragraph 3 of the report indicated that some judgements such as this were balanced. This application proposed 11 new homes in a sustainable area; affordable housing was a priority for the Council; its housing strategy for 2019-22 aimed for 1000 more houses for rent
- of the 11 properties proposed by the application, seven would be sited on the open space identified. There was a high level of demand for affordable housing locally from February 2019 to February 2020, with 11 bids per property
- the affordable housing was acceptable in principle and would fit the character of the area.

On a point of order, members were then advised that a councillor did not have to leave the meeting after speaking in the local member slot if they chose not to, but some did. Councillor Dickinson had sought advice before speaking in the previous slot. It was requested that legal advice about this be produced and circulated to members.

In response to questions from members the following information was provided:-

- there had been no formal application to make the site a village green
- there would be a distance of 21 metres between the front of the bungalows to the neighbouring two storey houses
- the two storey bungalows would be 7.875 metres to eaves height
- an attenuation pond was included
- members needed to balance the need for affordable housing against the permanent loss of open space.

Councillor Beynon then proposed the officer recommendation to refuse the application. This was seconded by Councillor Bawn

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- the site visit had greatly assisted. The site was very central and valuable to the village and many other local spaces would be preferable to build on

- everybody wanted more affordable social housing but it had to be built in the right places - there had to be other more suitable places locally.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously that it be

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** for the reasons outlined in the report.

142. 19/04955/COU

Change of use from A1 to A4 as supplemented by letter from applicant received 20/02/20

10 West Road, Ponteland, Northumberland, NE20 9SU

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the application by firstly providing a number of updates. One further letter of objection and one of support had recently been received, but neither raised any new issues. It was proposed that condition 3 should be removed and replaced with a Public Protection condition requiring a noise management plan as follows:-

Before the development is brought into use or continues in use, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing the management of noise from the use of the premises. The development shall thereafter be operated in accordance with the approved noise management scheme.

Reason: To protect nearby residents from undesirable noise impacts in accordance with the NPPF.

Ms Murphy then continued introducing the application with the aid of a slides presentation.

Councillor Alan Hall addressed the meeting on behalf of Ponteland Town Council. His key points included the following:-

- nine detailed objections had been made by local residents, including some from Meadowfield Park residential home, where the average age was 75, and the oldest 102
- an objection raised expressed concern about late night noise, rubbish generated, nuisance from taxis and cars and any possible antisocial behaviour by customers
- it was a largely residential area, so the wrong location for this type of development
- they did not agree with the report's statement that a design centre would be a similar use for the site.

Supporter Michael Barnes addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- the application was for a micropub; they were much smaller than most pubs, and it would hold up to approximately 30 people
- he and his wife would run the business and always be on site during opening hours. There would be no brewing on site, thus no odour/smell generated
- there would be no live or recorded music, no television, no outside seating, and no drinks promotions. Customers were anticipated to be in the 35+ age range,

and the premises were unlikely to generate excessive noise. Its location on the A696 meant that road noise would often be louder

- the premises were technically in Ponteland town centre as defined by the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan. Of the 13 buildings on West Road, only two were residential
- a large free car park was available nearby, although most customers were expected to have walked to the premises. It would be a dog friendly pub. Deliveries to micropubs were smaller and less frequent than to pubs.

In response to questions from members the following information was provided:-

- issues such as food provision and noise were mostly licensing matters but there were some overlaps with planning
- the noise management plan would detail the stipulations for no music
- enforcement powers existed to address any breaches of planning permission. Officers were satisfied with what was included in the application
- there was no parking provision with these premises
- Public Protection would comment on any subsequent licensing application. One licensing objective was the protection of people from nuisance; a Licensing Panel would have to be satisfied that the development satisfied that principle, and also agree on the opening hours
- the condition banning any amplified music would have to be discharged before the development could progress.

Councillor Towns then proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor Dickinson.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- for the first time in decades, more public houses were opening than closing, and they created employment
- concerns expressed could be adequately addressed in the conditions included and through the licensing process
- other local micropubs had been successful, including one in Morpeth for which the originally anticipated level of complaints had failed to materialise
- the proximity of the premises to the residential and sheltered accommodation was concerning. The applicant should be applauded for his work but the proposal was in the wrong place
- there was enough detail and work put into the application to ensure that concerns raised would be addressed.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by seven votes for to one against with one abstentions, that it be

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions as outlined in the report and the change in condition number 3 requesting cycle provision to a request for a noise management plan, as read out in the earlier update.

(Councillor Sanderson arrived at the meeting.)

143. 19/03940/CCD

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Refurbishment works to include ground floor extensions to existing reception area and Blocks 1 and 2 so as to provide additional/improved reception facilities, meeting space, and breakout area. Provision of new covered walkway from car parking areas, alterations to elevations, revised car parking arrangement, and associated external works/landscaping as supplemented by additional noise/odour suppression details 06/02/20 and amended by proposed site layout plan received 18/02/20

County Hall, Loansdean, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

There were no public speakers.

Councillor Bawn then proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor Towns.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously that it be

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions in the report.

144. Planning Appeals Update

Members received details of recent planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(Councillors Dickinson and Dunn exited the meeting.)

OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

On the conclusion of the development control business at 5.28pm, the meeting adjourned as the remainder of the agenda consisted of other Local Area Council business scheduled to begin at 6.00pm.

(Councillor Foster arrived at the meeting.)

145. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were in attendance for this item.

146. PETITIONS

Members were informed that, since the previous meeting, no new petitions had been received and there were no reports due on petitions previously received

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There were however two updates due on petitions previously considered, as follows:

(a) Riversdale House Flats, Stakeford

key points The Head of Housing and Public Protection updated members, of which his were:-

- tenant vetting was ongoing
- new wheeled bins with better storage had been placed on site, but this had resulted in more fly tipping at the site by people suspected to be from outside of the area
- there had been a marked improvement recently in the general condition and appearance of the flats and a reduction in the number of complaints. More cooperation was taking place with agents
- members were asked to agree that no further periodical updates were required to the Local Area Council

complaints Councillor Foster as local member replied, acknowledging the reduction in and improvements made, but also expressed concern about other people using the new bin storage to dispose of their own rubbish. She asked if the bins could be moved out of sight. She agreed that the six monthly updates to this meeting could cease on the proviso that the issue could still return to the agenda in future if the situation subsequently deteriorated. Other quarterly monitoring meetings included various involved parties would continue.

to the The Head of Housing and Public Protection agreed that the issue could return Local Area Council if issues were to escalate again, but other meetings would continue to take place to address the issue and work would continue with residents.

(b) School Transport in Guide Post

The Principal Programme Officer updated members by explaining that since the petition had been considered in September 2020, the school transport team had worked with the school and operatives. The lead petitioner had written to all residents and only two responses had been sent to the school transport team in response. The last contact with the lead petitioner had been in January 2020.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the updates be noted; and
- (2) no further regular updates be presented to the Local Area Council about Riversdale House flats unless the situation deteriorates in future.

147. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers with the opportunity for members to ask questions afterwards. Key points included were:

Neighbourhood Services update:

- winter operatives had been working a 28 hour week

- staff would shortly begin the grass cutting season. All equipment had been serviced except for the wide area mowers
- the blue dye for weed control would be used again. Acetic acid treatment would be trialled
- the garden waste service had recently started; the fee per bin was £43 for 2020. It provided an income to the Morpeth area of £300,000
- there had been some impact due to recent snowfall but few bins had been missed.

garden waste still In response to a question, members were advised that any extension of service routes were considered on a case by case individual basis; the service needed to be efficient.

Technical Services update:

- work on the new car park opposite Morpeth train station was on target and within budget
- the additional signage at Longhirst had been started
- a hotbox would be used to address the current backlog in road repairs]
- the footpath to the rear of County Hall underneath the railway line would received drainage works by April 2020
- a small patching programme, for fixing small potholes, would begin from April
- work was beginning for signage at Catchburn Farm and the crossing at Broadway, Ponteland
- the Environment Agency would be involved in work to address the Mitford River collapse
- sites were currently being prepared for resurfacing work over summer
- three recent storm events leading to surface water flooding had been successfully reacted to.

officers Members raised issues of which the key points of them and responses from were:

- regarding any possible improvement to the gulleys at North Road in Ponteland, perhaps with Section 106 funding, this was being addressed including extra cleansing, plus rather than just an issue of capacity, the lie of the pipes might also need addressing
- the resurfacing of land by shops at De Walden Terrace in Pegswood had carried over the year and any issues were being addressed. Coalas were being asked for a price for work to the whole area
- in response to concerns about part of the the hybrid plastic/tarmac road between Pegswood to Longhirst being dug up to implement a planning application and the wish for the surface to be reinstated, this would be followed up with the streetworks team; there was no stipulation in place unless such roads were still within warranty
- concerns about mine water rising up on the footpath along the bypass between Whorral Bank to Pegswood would be followed up
- in response to a request for an update about new parking spaces at All Saints First School, as this work might be longer than the eight days available over the Easter holidays, it might need to be deferred to summer; a firm date would be confirmed in the diary for the work and local residents advised.

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raised by **RESOLVED** that the updates be noted and officers follow up the issues members.

At this point, as the meeting was approaching three hours in length it was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond three hours in duration.

DISCUSSION ITEMS - CORPORATE

148. Northumberland College - Update

The Local Area Council received a presentation about the changes made to Northumberland College following their merger with Sunderland College. (Copy of the presentation enclosed with the minutes of the meeting.)

Nigel Harett, Principal of Northumberland College, gave the presentation and highlighted the following:

- the further education sector had seen a number of changes since 1 April 2019 including academy conversions, federations and merger of further and higher education institutions to improve their resilience and viability
- the college had faced a number of challenges including: financial vulnerability which had not allowed for investment in the estate, nor updates of the curriculum to meet the needs of students and employers, a decline in the quality of education as had the college's reputation
- intervention by the Further Education Commissioner, Funding and Skills Funding Agency and OFSTED had led to the merger
- the formation of Education Partnership North East now comprised Northumberland College, Sunderland College and Hartlepool College with campuses in Northumberland in Ashington, Berwick and Kirkley Hall. All of the colleges had been strengthened with economies of scale from centralised functions such as finance and HR. The colleges were working together to better meet the individual needs of the communities they served
- a Transformation Programme had commenced in 2019 across many areas including: staffing, curriculum improvements, student support and estate improvements, the latter also addressing health, safety and safeguarding issues
- engagement was taking place at strategic and local levels and included employers in a range of sectors, the National Farmers Union and schools. They wanted to reach students at an earlier age to help shape and inform their career choices.
- a robust curriculum needed to be provided across all age groups, from 16-19 years old and also adults
- partnerships were being created with schools who were keen to work with the college on technical and apprenticeship provision
- there was a significant level of investment across all campuses including the creation of a new reception and student hub at Ashington, careers hubs in technology and digital and health and life sciences, upgrades and new facilities at the Kirkley Hall Campus included a new Equine and Veterinary Science Centres,

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new facilities for SEND Students and upgrades to student residential accommodation

- the college wanted to be accessible to all learners across the county including those in the west, and were aware that this needed to be developed with digital technology.

Members made the following key points:

- members here were 100% supportive of Mr Harrett and his leadership team's actions. If members could assist in any way, Mr Harrett could let them know
- the new reception area and the zones used were welcomed
- it was good to speak to local schools to find out what study options they would like at the college and how this would link to their career progression, so options could be tailored so more young people could stay locally.

agricultural still offered and possibly.

A member asked what other courses could be added at Kirkley Hall as the college was smaller than previously, members were advised that Kirkley Hall courses in agriculture, horticulture, equine services, zoo, animal management floristry. The college would like to investigate other options for forestry

Mr Harrett was thanked for his presentation and his work for the college and it was:

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

149. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

filed with (Members received a progress report as of 1 March 2020. (Copy of the report the signed minutes as Appendix C.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

150. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings. (Copy of the report filed with the signed minutes as Appendix D.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

151. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 6 April 2020, at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth. This meeting would deal with planning matters only.

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CHAIR

DATE
