

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Corporate Services and Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Morpeth on Wednesday, 4 July 2018 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor D. Bawn
(Chairman, in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Beynon, J.
Grimshaw, L.

Roughead, G.
Simpson, E.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Oliver, N.

Corporate Services and Cabinet Secretary

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

B. Scarr

Executive Director of Finance and Deputy
Chief Executive

S. Mounsey
S. Nicholson

Revenues and Customer Contact Manager
Scrutiny Co-ordinator

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Castle, K. Parry, M. Robinson and T. Wilson

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC held on 14 June 2018, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. FORWARD PLAN

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the latest Forward Plan of key decisions (July to October 2018). (Schedule enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix A).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8. CABINET REPORTS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised members of Cabinet decisions regarding issues previously commented on and been subject of report by this Committee.
(Circulated for information only and enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix B).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. SCRUTINY OF CABINET REPORTS

Apprenticeship Pay Proposal 2018

The purpose of this report was to seek Cabinet approval to a pay grading system for the Apprenticeship Programme for Northumberland County Council which reflected the entrant's age, experience and pathway level at which they would join the council and a fair pay progression throughout until graduation from the apprenticeship programme. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix C).

The Committee were requested to comment on the proposals contained in the report prior to it's determination by the Cabinet on 10 July 2018.

The Committee welcomed the report which they hoped would attract people to work for the Council.

RESOLVED that the Chairman advise the Cabinet that the Committee supports the recommendations contained in the report.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

Debt Recovery Update

The purpose of this report was to provide the Committee with information relating to the level of outstanding debt owed to the Council, so that members may satisfy themselves as to the efficiency and effectiveness of its collection and recovery policies and systems. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix D).

Councillor Nick Oliver, whilst presenting the report, noted that the Council's Council Tax collection rate had increased to 98.0 % in 2017/18 and was again the highest of the 11 north east councils.

The Write-Offs 2017-18 report, circulated for information, is enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix E.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

Corporate Services and Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19. (Report enclosed as Appendix F).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. INFORMATION REPORT - POLICY DIGEST

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised the Committee that the Policy Digest gave details of the latest policy briefings, government announcements and ministerial speeches which may be of interest to members. The report could be accessed through the service finder element of County Council's website at www.northumberland.gov.uk.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that:

- (a) under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the Agenda as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act, and
- (b) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the following reasons:

Agenda Item	Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A
12	3 - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the interest in disclosure because disclosure would adversely affect the Authority's ability to conduct its affairs.

14. SCRUTINY OF CABINET REPORTS

The Committee were advised that the following reports would be considered by the Cabinet on 10 July 2018. The Committee were asked to comment on the proposals contained in the reports, which would then be presented to the Cabinet by the Chairman.

14.1 Bates Terminal - Infrastructure Works

The purpose of this report was to enable the Cabinet to make a formal recommendation to the County Council in respect of the Council loan to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) of £2.95 million towards the Port of Blyth, Bates Terminal, Enterprise Zone Infrastructure works. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix G).

The Committee welcomed the report and expressed their hope that the proposals would support the development of skills and learning opportunities for local people.

RESOLVED that the Chairman advise the Cabinet that the Committee supports the recommendations contained in the report.

14.2 Ashwood Business Park - Infrastructure Works

The purpose of this report was to enable the Cabinet to make a formal recommendation to the County Council in respect of the Council contribution of £2.6 million towards the Ashwood Business Park, Enterprise Zone Infrastructure works. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix H).

The Committee welcomed the report and expressed their hope that the proposals would help to attract businesses to move into the area.

RESOLVED that the Chairman advise the Cabinet that the Committee supports the recommendations contained in the report.

Chairman _____

Date _____