

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1, County, Hall, Morpeth on Wednesday, 26 July 2017 at 2.00 p.m.

#### PRESENT

Councillor J. Reid  
(Chairman, in the Chair)

#### COUNCILLORS

Armstrong, E.  
Cartie, E.  
Dunbar, C  
Dunn, E

Gallacher, B.  
Gibson, R.  
Pattison, W.

#### MEMBERS

Riddle, J.

CM: Planning, Housing and Resilience

#### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

D. English  
M. Ketley  
P. Simpson  
S. Nicholson

Planning Manager  
Head of Planning Services  
Public Health Protection Manager  
Scrutiny Co-ordinator

#### 9. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Place OSC held on 21 June 2017, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 10. FORWARD PLAN

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the latest Forward Plan of key decisions (July to October 2017). (Schedule enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix A).

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan be noted.

## **11. SCRUTINY OF CABINET REPORTS**

Members were advised that the following reports would be considered by the Cabinet on 27 July 2017. The Committee were invited to comment on the proposals contained therein. Those comments would then be presented to the Cabinet by the Committee Chair prior to its determination of the reports.

### **11.1 Food and Feed, Safety and Standards Service Plan 2017/18**

Peter Simpson, Public health Protection Manager, presented this report which would seek approval from the Cabinet of the Food and Feed, Safety and Standards Service Plan for 2017/18. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix B).

The Committee welcomed this excellent report and requested that the staff responsible for delivering the Plan be congratulated on their performance. They were further impressed by the success of the “Produced in Northumberland” verification scheme.

The Chairman requested that future reports included benchmarking of performance against previous years and other similar authorities, so that the Committee could measure future improvements, particularly when there was continuing pressures on resources.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

### **11.2 Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan**

David English, Planning Manager, presented this report which would seek Cabinet approval to formally ‘make’ the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan passed independent examination in December 2015. A local referendum held in the Parishes of Alnwick, Denwick and Denwick Detached in June 2017 returned a majority vote in favour of using the Plan to make decisions on planning applications. The Council was now obliged by statute to make the Neighbourhood Plan unless it considered that doing so would breach European Union obligations. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix C).

The Committee were advised that the proposals had received the support of the North Northumberland Local Area Council.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

### **11.3 Interim Planning Policy Position Statement**

Mark Ketley, Head of Planning Services, presented this report which would seek Cabinet approval for the introduction and implementation of an Interim Planning Policy Position Statement following withdrawal of the Northumberland Local Plan: Core Strategy Pre-Submission Draft Plan from submission, in order to set out the Council’s approach on a number of key strategic planning policy issues whilst a

review of the Core Strategy was undertaken and an amended Local Plan prepared. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix D).

The Committee were advised that following legal advice, the following amendments to the report to Cabinet were proposed:

**1. Revised Title:**

***“Position Statement Following Withdrawal of the Draft Core Strategy”***

**2. Additional Introductory Paragraph:**

***It is not intended that weight should be given to this document in decision-making as the document itself is not a planning policy document. It has not been subject to consultation nor does it meet the relevant regulations for the preparation of a planning policy document (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)***

There was concern from the Committee that the revised wording actually weakened the Position Statement, but understood that the revisions were based on legal advice.

Some members also made references to the scope and content of the revised Core Strategy, but were advised that they would get the opportunity to comment on the draft document when it became subject to formal consultation.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet be advised that the Committee agreed that the document be approved, although for the reasons stated above, they be informed that the decision was not unanimous.

## **12. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR**

### **Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the Committee’s Work Programme for 2017/18. (Enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix E).

Members requested that the Business Chair be requested to consider the relationship with the Town and Parish Councils in delivering Highways and Neighbourhood services. It was suggested that this may be a Local Area Council issue.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**13. POLICY DIGEST**

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised the Committee that this report, which gave details of the latest policy briefings, government announcements and ministerial speeches which may be of interest to members was available through the service finder element of County Council's web site at [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk).

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_