

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Haydon Bridge Community High School and Sports College, North Bank, Haydon Bridge, Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 6LR on Tuesday, 15 January 2019 at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor G Stewart

(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 112 - 113 and 119 - 127)

(Planning Vice-Chair Councillor R Gibson in the chair for items 114 - 118)

In attendance (no.s 112 - 118)

MEMBERS

A Dale (no.s 112 - 122)

C Homer

CW Horncastle (no.s 112 - 125)

I Hutchinson

N Oliver

KR Quinn (no.s 112 - 123)

JR Riddle (no.s 116 - 128)

A Sharp

KG Stow (no.s 112 - 124)

OFFICERS

N Armstrong

S Aviston

K Blyth

D Hunt

D Jackson

M Jeffrey

P Jones

D Lally

N Masson

A Olive

E Sinnamon

N Turnbull

Senior Planning Officer

Head of School Organisation and Resources

Principal Planning Officer

Area Manager (West),

Neighbourhood Services

Service Director - Education and Skills

Green Spaces and Countryside Manager

Service Director - Local Services

Chief Executive

Principal Lawyer

Highways Delivery Area Manager

Senior Planning Manager

Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor W Daley, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

S Wilson, Media Communication Officer

Ch.'s Initials.....

9 members of the public
1 member of the press

112. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cessford and Kennedy.

113. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Dale declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in planning application 18/02238/FUL as she knew the owner of the Riding.

Councillor Horncastle declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application 18/03728/VARYCCD as he had lobbied for the salt barn and he would not participate in that item.

Elizabeth Sinnamon, Senior Planning Manager, declared an interest in planning application 18/02238/FUL as she was a former resident of the village and would leave the meeting during consideration of that item.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Councillor Stewart then vacated the Chair, for Planning Vice-Chair Councillor Gibson to chair the development control section of the agenda, as was the arrangement for all Local Area Councils.

114. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

115. 18/02238/FUL

**Application to rebuild barn which had permission under T/20080196 for change of use and conversion of existing barn to create a single residential dwelling and garage (retrospective)
Acomb View, The Riding, Acomb, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 4PF**

(4.40 pm the Senior Planning Manager left the meeting whilst the application was considered.)

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the report with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. He provided the following update:

- One additional representation objecting to the application had been received on behalf of a group of 7 residents at Riding Farm comprising the Farm House, The Spinney, West View and The Cottage. The objection raised issues in respect of:
 - The traditional farm stading and its historical importance/listed status;
 - Residents had been supportive of the previous applications for conversion;
 - Surprise at loss of trees and demolition of buildings and impact on character of the site;
 - Concern that approval could grant permission for a new building that would be out of keeping with other buildings; and
 - Setting of a precedent including new builds within the Green Belt in the parish and beyond; demolition of buildings in contravention of consents; approval of new builds adjacent to listed buildings; potential loss of green space within the Green Belt; and development of larger new builds where there are current farm buildings.

Mr Sewell, addressed the Committee on behalf of the residents of Riding Home Farm to object to the application. His comments included the following:-

- Riding Home Farm comprised the original farmhouse and a range of converted barns forming 3 further dwellings converted to residential properties between 2003 to 2006.
- The site was historically sensitive as it embodied the traditional layout and buildings of a mid 19th century Northumberland farm. The buildings include many historically significant features and were all listed.
- Residents had been supportive of the planning applications sought for Acomb View in 2008 and extension in 2014 as it would have seen the site sensitively converted to additional residential accomodation and halt the deterioration of the barns.
- They had therefore been happy in 2016 to learn that the site had been sold and the plans were to be implemented. They had met with the new owners and had invited them to community functions.
- They had been surprised when work had started on site in 2018 with the removal of trees which spoiled the outlook and character of the site.
- The entire run of barns had been demolished almost immediately after the arrival of the main contractors. This was a huge loss to the site as the buildings formed part of the overall character and history of the farmsteading which was irreplaceable.
- The demolition had been in contravention of the planning consent and the owners had been requested to cease work which had followed with the application to build a new property.
- The neighbours had been put on a difficult position, as originally supportive of the original applications for a sensitive conversion of the barns, they did not want to stand in the way of the aspirations of the new owners.

However, they had growing concerns as they learned more about the new application, the implications for the site and wider planning in the Parish.

- Their concerns included:
 - Approval of the plans could grant permission for a new-build building within the Riding Home Farm site that would be out of keeping with buildings which had stood there for nearly 200 years and would detract from the historical significance of the overall site. They were not convinced that it would be possible to build a new building which accurately or sensitively replaced that which had been demolished.
 - The setting of precedents by the approval of the application, including:
 - The approval of new builds within the Green Belt in Acomb parish and beyond.
 - The demolition of buildings with historical value in contravention of planning consents.
 - The approval of new builds on historically significant sites adjacent to listed buildings.
 - The potential loss of greenspace within the Green Belt.
 - The development of larger new builds where farm buildings currently stood.
- They therefore found themselves in a position where they regretfully objected to the application.

Ms. Ludman, a planning consultant representing the applicants, addressed the Committee in support of their application. She commented that:-

- Members appeared to have been sympathetic to the unfortunate circumstances of the applicants which had been outlined at the meeting in December.
- Advice from officers required that Members were clear about the very special circumstances required to justify making a decision to approve a technical new build development in the Green Belt.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) did not contain guidance as to what constituted very special circumstances which was therefore determined by the courts. Information and case law had been sent to the Council.
- The Committee were referred to three cases:
 - Hunston Properties which held that whether the very special circumstances test was met, based on the facts of a particular proposal, was a matter for the decision maker. It was up to the decision maker to make a planning judgement on the case before them.
 - Basildon DC v. First Secretary of State and Temple where it was held that 'a number of factors, none of them 'very special', when considered in isolation, may, when combined together, amount to very special circumstances. There was no reason why a number of factors ordinary in themselves cannot combine to create something very special.'
 - Lord Justice Carnwarth, in the case of Wychavon, considered that the potential considerations which may be taken into account in the very

special circumstances were not restricted and may include personal circumstances. There was other case law but due to time restrictions she was unable to provide more detail.

- She suggested that the following factors, combined, constituted 'very special circumstances' that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
 1. The untidiness of the site being left as it was and the fact that development of the site could improve the appearance of that part of the Ridings including the setting of listed buildings nearby.
 2. The fact that the site could be brought back into use for caravan storage which would cause greater harm to the Green Belt.
 3. The fact that planning permission had existed on the site until very recently, and the re-construction of the barn would not result in a development that was materially different to the previously approved conversion scheme.
 4. There were other policies in the NPPF which could also add to the very special circumstances case (also supported by case law). In particular paragraph 141 states that Local Planning Authorities should take opportunities to 'improve damaged and derelict land'.
 5. The personal circumstances of the elderly applicants, both financial and emotional.
- In her opinion the harm to the Green Belt (and any other harm) would be outweighed by the very special circumstances identified.
- The neighbours concern revolved around a fear of setting a precedent for similar developments elsewhere. Due to the very special circumstances identified, no precedent would be set. Also in planning, each case was considered on its own merits and the particular circumstances of this case were unique.
- She reiterated that her clients had not removed the trees and had sent photographic evidence to this effect to the Council. The trees had been removed before they bought the site, presumably by the former owner.
- The Committee were requested to approve the application so that her clients could continue to re-build their retirement home.

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

- A tree survey submitted with the original planning application that was granted permission on the site had identified that, out of 6 trees on the site, 3 were to be removed and 3 were to be retained. They did not have any evidence regarding their removal. A condition could be included with any permission for replacements but they would not have the same effect of the very mature trees that had been removed.
- The proposed building would occupy a similar footprint to the original barns and would be almost identical in appearance. The Conservation Officer had made some comments on the plans for this application as originally submitted that the proposals looked overly domestic. They intended to try and use the materials from the demolition and they would look for this to be controlled.

- The proposals as submitted for this application had been amended and improved since their original submission. However, it was noted that the historic fabric could not be replaced.
- It was understood that a telephone call had been made to the Council's Enforcement Team to report that the barns had been demolished. Officers had visited the site and on discovering the buildings had been demolished, had requested that the work cease and a new application be made.
- The Council had not requested that the structure be demolished and was therefore dissimilar to a previous case referred to.
- The nature of very special circumstances meant that they could not be repeated to create a precedent and therefore a decision by Castle Morpeth Local Area Council could not be utilised.
- Reference was made to the discussion at the previous meeting and the grounds considered which had included limited infilling in villages and redevelopment of previously developed land. The conclusion was that these were not an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt as they did not meet the required tests and therefore consideration had been given as to whether there were very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm of constructing new buildings in the Green Belt. If there were a combination of very special circumstances, these could not be duplicated elsewhere, if they were, then they were not very special circumstances.
- Existing openings would have been utilised under the conversion application. Columns that had been lost would not be able to be replicated and it was likely different materials would be required throughout the building. Some openings were slightly more domesticated than would have been expected of a conversion. Features on the former roof were to be replicated. If approved, conditions would be used to secure the detail and ensure the design was the best that could be achieved and these would be brought back to committee.
- The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt were considered to be inappropriate. Inappropriate development would be harmful to the Green Belt. Exceptions were listed in paragraph 145 of the NPPF which were contained within paragraph 7.15 of the officer's report which officers considered were not met.

It was unfortunate that the minutes of the December meeting had not been able to be finalised prior to the issue of the agenda for this meeting due to the festive period. The Democratic Services Officer confirmed the decision that the application had been deferred in order that further time and consideration could be given to determine any potential reasons for approval.

The Principal Lawyer stated that matters were deferred on the previous occasion. Whilst the minutes of the previous meeting were not included, all of the information Members required to make a decision had been presented to the Committee.

In answer to a question, it was confirmed that a site visit had not been discussed at the previous meeting. Councillor Dale moved that a site visit be

held to assess the impact of the proposals. This was not seconded and the motion failed.

Councillor Stewart proposed acceptance of the recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons in the officer's report. This was seconded by Councillor Homer.

Reference was made to the discussion held at the meeting on 11 December 2018 when the Committee had looked favourably on the application. Whilst Members understood the reasons for the officer's interpretation of the policy, the building had not existed for a short period of time. It was noted that the Conservation Officer had accepted the scheme and considered that it would fit in well with the surrounding listed buildings. Conditions could be included to ensure the best design.

A vote was taken as follows:- **FOR: 2; AGAINST: 8.** The motion to refuse planning permission failed.

Councillor Horncastle proposed that permission be granted, subject to conditions for the following very special circumstances:

- Granting permission would improve the site from its current state and the setting and effect on the listed buildings.
- There would be a greater impact on the site if it reverted back to its former use of caravan storage and therefore a residential dwelling would most likely be preferable.
- With reference to case law, the personal and financial circumstances of the elderly couple who were currently residing in a mobile home.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Quinn.

The Principal Lawyer provided clarification regarding paragraph 144 of the NPPF and that an explanation would be required to demonstrate how the very special circumstances clearly outweighed the harm to the Green Belt.

Some Members supported the application reluctantly and stated that it would have been preferable for the applicants to have discussed the structural problems that had been discovered with officers from the Council, prior to demolition of the building.

It was suggested that the harm in this case to the Green Belt would not be very great as there had been barns on the site until very recently and they had permission for conversion.

The Principal Planner stated that use of the land as caravan storage was not a fallback position as a previous application for conversion had been implemented, and it no longer met the exception test of previously developed land as what was proposed would have a greater impact than what was there

now. Councillor Horncastle agreed to withdraw the second reason regarding reversion back to use of the land as caravan storage.

Members discussed the reasons for the application to be approved which included those put forward by the planning consultant. The following circumstances proposed by Councillor Oliver, when combined, were considered to amount to very special circumstances:

1. Granting permission would improve the appearance of the site from its current condition and improve the setting of the listed buildings.
2. Planning permission had existed on the site until recently and would not result in a development that was materially different to the previously approved conversion scheme. It would also be less harmful to the area than the development not proceeding and not result in material harm to the Green Belt.
3. Paragraph 78 which referred to the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas and paragraph 141 of the NPPF which stated that Local Planning Authorities should take opportunities to 'improve damaged and derelict land'.
4. Reference to the case law and the personal circumstances of the elderly applicants, financial and emotional, having invested all of their money in the development and were having to reside in a motorhome.

Councillor Horncastle and Councillor Quinn agreed to withdraw their original proposal in order that they could be replaced with the proposal from Councillor Oliver. This was seconded by Councillor Horncastle.

Following clarification from the Principal Planning Officer, it was agreed that reference to paragraph 78 be removed from Councillor Oliver's 3rd ground above.

On being put to the vote, the motion to approve the application, against officer recommendation, was as follows:- **FOR: 8; AGAINST: 2.**

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** subject to consideration of conditions at a future meeting of the Committee.

(5.56 pm the Senior Planning Manager returned to the meeting.)

116. 18/03820/CCD
Rear single storey extension to the eastern elevation of existing school buildings
Otterburn First School, Otterburn, Newcastle Upon Tyne,
Northumberland NE19 1JF

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the report with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

Councillor Hutchinson proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Stewart and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

117. 18/03728/VARCCD

Variation of condition 2 (plans) pursuant to planning application 16/02705/CCD in order to allow change of barn type Council Depot, Shilburn Road, Allendale, Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 9LG

(5.59 pm Councillor Horncastle left the meeting whilst the application was considered.)

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the report with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. She provided the following update:

- An amended site location plan had been received. It was proposed that the wording of Condition 2 be amended to include the revised site plan, as follows:

'The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following approved plans:

- 1. Drawing No. 01 - Scheme Location Plan and Layout*
- 2. Drawing No. 218248 D 100 - LD-27-4PT6-30 Eurodome Salt Barn*
- 3. Drawing No. L(0-01) Site Location Plan (amended plan received 14/1/19)***

Reason: To ensure the development is built in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of proper planning.'

Councillor Hutchinson proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application subject to the conditions contained in the officer's report and the update at the meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Quinn and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions, as outlined in the report and reworded condition 2 as outlined above.

(6.03 pm Councillor Horncastle returned to the meeting.)

118. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

A report was received which provided an update on the progress of planning appeals received. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix B).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

On the conclusion of the development control business at 6.05 pm, Councillor Gibson vacated the Chair and Councillor Stewart returned to the Chair to continue the meeting which reconvened after a short break at 6.20pm.

OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

119. URGENT BUSINESS - ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The Chair referred to the difficult financial decisions that the administration had to make which would be outlined later in the meeting. Huge progress had been made in a short space of time since the local elections in May 2017 although the difficulties were recognised. The administration had been looking at a range of options to both balance the books and support front line services going forward.

One of the proposals had been the introduction of parking charges at the Tyne Riverside Park and Prudhoe Railway Station. He and Councillor Stow had been unable to support this and had explained their reasons for this. Their aims for their wards included improving leisure, tourism and employment opportunities in the area.

They had lobbied the administration and had listened to residents from Prudhoe and other parts of the Tynedale area since the proposals had been published and had coordinated with others, including Councillor Quinn. Residents had sent their views to the decision makers setting out their clear objections. The consultation had been carried out in a fair way and the decision makers had listened.

The Chair was delighted to announce that Councillor Glen Sanderson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services had stated that they would not be continuing with the proposals to introduce charges at Prudhoe Rail Station and Tyne Riverside Country Park in Prudhoe.

120. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

David Williamson, Stocksfield, commented that he had written in response to the proposed parking charges and whilst he was pleased they were not

going to be imposed in Prudhoe, enquired about the proposals for Hexham and Haltwhistle.

Councillor Oliver, confirmed that the proposals for Haltwhistle had also been withdrawn and that the charges at Hexham Railway Station and was managed by Northern who operate the passenger train services.

Eileen Charlton, Haydon Bridge, enquired whether there was any leeway regarding the charges for road closures? She commented that in Haydon Bridge they closed the bridge for approximately 20 minutes for fireworks on New Years Eve and also Church Street on Northumberland Day. They had small independent businesses in the town and were therefore unable to ask for sponsorship from a large organisation; their event was run by volunteers.

Councillor Sharp supported the comments made by Mrs Charlton and stated that he had already raised the issue with officers.

The Chief Executive stated that arrangements would be put in place with regard to the Northumberland Day event and she would discuss this further with officers after the meeting.

Councillor Oliver commented that the fee did not cover the total cost of events with road closures which were expensive to organise. He added that events could be supported by local Councillors and Town and Parish Councils with donations being sought from members of the public in attendance.

It was noted that there were many events that took place across the county and that the Council was unable to continue to do this free of charge. The number of cycling events with road closures had reduced due to this. There were a lot of competing demands for the limited budgets available.

121. PETITIONS

This item was to:

a) Receive any new petitions:

It was reported that a petition had been handed in to Democratic Services regarding the proposed introduction of parking charges at Prudhoe. This would be reported to Cabinet when it considered the outcome of the consultation on parking charges.

b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

i) Eastwood Park Path, Prudhoe

Holly Kelleher, lead petitioner, spoke of her passion for athletics and explained that the nearest running facilities were located at Hexham or Blaydon as there were none currently in Prudhoe. They had established the Prudhoe Riverside

park run and had started a running group for children but there was no running track which would enable them to train over the winter months on dark evenings. They charged only £15 per year so it was affordable for all participants.

Improvements were being carried out at Eastwood Park which was located next to a large housing estate. A lit path would make it accessible to a large number of residents enabling it to be used by dog walkers, wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs.

She appreciated that the provision of such a facility would come at a significant cost and confirmed that as it would be a new sports venture the club would be willing and able to assist in applications for funding.

The Green Spaces and Countryside Manager explained that the purpose of the report was to seek the views of members to ascertain whether there was support for the construction of an all weather footpath at Eastwood Park. He gave a brief summary of work that had recently been carried out at the park and further improvements that were planned.

Whilst the proposals had merit, there was currently no budget provision for a lit footpath which was estimated to cost in excess of £100,000. The capital allocation for park improvement projects had been committed for 2019/20 but not yet for 2020/21. Match funding was also normally sought from other sources.

Councillor Homer, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Arts, Leisure and Tourism enquired whether the Sports Development Team had been contacted as they would be able to assist with sources of funding. She expressed her support for the project which would increase participation and build healthy habits in children for their long term future. The Green Spaces and Countryside Manager confirmed that Kathie Keady, Community Sports Manager at Active Northumberland, was aware of the proposal.

Ms Kelleher explained that they had been successful in obtaining funding to enable volunteers to obtain coaching qualifications and lighting; however they required a place to train.

Several of the members expressed their support for the project which would get residents active and support healthy lifestyles. The Chair expressed his appreciation to the lead petitioner for her efforts and confirmed that he and Councillor Stow, as local members, supported the project.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and that an update be received in due course when the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Arts, Leisure and Tourism had been able to obtain further information from the Community Sports Manager at Active Northumberland.

c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:

There were none to consider.

122. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

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

Neighbourhood Services:

- Recent work had concentrated on leaf cleansing with only a few remaining locations to be addressed. A new road sweeper meant there was less downtime for repairs and maintenance.
- Other work included cutting back hedges and tidying highway verges. Members were requested to inform officers of any areas requiring attention.
- A consultation on annualised hours was in the process of being carried out with grounds maintenance staff which would see them working longer hours in the summer period and shorter hours in the winter months.
- Refuse collection staff were thanked for their work over the festive period which had seen a 10% increase in the collection of recycling and general waste.

The Chair, on behalf of all members, expressed his appreciation to local services employees for their efforts and suggested that awareness should be raised with members of the public of the work that was undertaken by them including early shifts etc.

Technical Services:

- During the mild winter weather to date, work had continued on the structural patching including the A68 north, A696 and C324. A 'hot box' team continued to provide permanent repairs on single track roads. Between 120-220 tonnes were laid per day to improve the road network with our large patching gang.
- Future projects planned for March 2019 included Prudhoe Front Street, Hexham West Road and Haltwhistle Main Street.
- Roads continued to be inspected on a daily basis with future work identified and included in the programme which therefore changed on a regular basis. Extra funding from the Government mean they were able to carry out additional work.
- Safety fencing repairs were to be carried out / had been carried out on the A696 at Rowens Close and Church Street in Whitfield.
- A drainage gang also continued to work in the area on gulleys, ditching and new pipework which would continue over the winter months when employees were not required for winter services duties. 8,000 had been checked since April 2018 with the gully tanker.

- 12 weeks remained of the winter services period with grit heaps and bins being replenished on a continuing rolling program.
- Road patching and surface dressing would recommence in May 2019.

In answer to questions, it was confirmed that:

- Officers liaised with neighbouring authorities and would make use of each others road closures where appropriate.
- Work was scheduled to commence the following day on the A695 which required traffic management.
- Work had been undertaken on the road outside Close House earlier that day.
- An investigation had been by the Fire and Rescue Service in response to a complaint regarding a residential flooding incident at a dwelling and had concluded that appropriate decision had been made.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

DISCUSSION ITEMS - CORPORATE

123. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-22 and Budget 2019-20

The Local Area Council received a presentation which outlined the Council's strategy to its Medium Term Financial Plan and budget. The presentation provided details of the approach to setting the budget for the next financial year and the broad impact this would have on the delivery of services. (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the minutes of the meeting.)

Councillor Oliver, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services gave the presentation which covered:

- The context and direction of the Council for the next 3 years.
- Funding analysis for the period 2014-2022.
- The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.
- Proposed savings for 2019-22 by directorate and summary by year.
- The change in the amount of debt between March 2013 and December 2018.
- The proposed capital programme for the years 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22.
- Total investment in the key theme areas of living (£104.32 million) enjoying (£66.07 million), connecting (£215.61 million), learning (£184.94 million) and thriving (£ 202.18 million).
- A summary which included:
 - The Budget position, whilst challenging, was under control, however, a further £36 million of savings had yet to be identified.

- Increased costs and growing pressures remained, particularly in adult and children's services..
- Investment from North of Tyne Devolution Deal and Borderlands Growth Deal would make a difference to people's lives and act as a catalyst for further investment.

In response to a number of queries that Councillor Dale raised regarding capital investment, the children's services budget and use of general reserves which would impact on the Treasury Management Policy, Councillor Oliver agreed to meet with Councillor Dale with the Service Director - Finance, in order to provide the information that she required.

Councillor Daley confirmed that the budget papers would be released 24/25 January 2019 when the detail would be available regarding the administration's proposals. All members would be invited to the meeting of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 February 2019 when the budget would be discussed.

In answer to a questions the following information was provided:

- Councillor Oliver was unaware of any specific proposals that would affect the west or rural areas as reductions would be shared fairly across the whole of the county. They were investing in the road network and supportive care and were proposing cuts where they would have the least impact on front line services. Hence the proposals for road closure charges.
- Councillor Riddle confirmed that there were no proposals within the budget for the closure of fire stations although they would be investing in equipment.

RESOLVED that the presentation be received.

124. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

At 7.33 pm Councillor Stewart proposed the suspension of standing orders in order to continue the meeting beyond the 3 hour limit which was seconded by Councillor Quinn.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, standing orders be suspended and the meeting continue over the 3 hour limit.

125. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Update on Haydon Bridge Partnership

Dean Jackson, Service Director - Education and Skills, and Sue Aviston, Head of School Organisation and Resources, gave a presentation to update

Members on schools in the Haydon Bridge Partnership. (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the minutes of the meeting.)

The presentation included:

- Approval of £5.1 million in the school estate to support the reorganisation including £4.5 million investment in Haydon Bridge High School, £360,000 classroom extension at Otterburn Primary School and £366,000 classroom extension at Greenhaugh Primary School.
- Building works update. Work was due to start at Haydon Bridge High School on 29 April 2019. Otterburn Primary School extension had been approved earlier in the meeting. Greenhaugh Primary School application was due to be considered by Northumberland National Parks Development Management Committee on 23 January 2019. A bidders day was to be held at the end of January 2019 to hopefully increase contractors interest in the Tynedale projects.
- An update on the appeal to the Schools Adjudicator re Bellingham Middle School. Clarification had been requested regarding a number of points in the written reasons for the decision to reject the Council proposal to close the school.
- Decision awaited following the consultation by Wise Academies to close the Haltwhistle Middle Academy and extend the age range at Haltwhistle First Academy to become a primary school.
- Consultation to begin on proposals with regard to the federation of West Woodburn First School with Otterburn First School.
- One-off exception agreed to the Home to School Transport policy to provide transport to Bellingham Middle School for children whose applications for a place in year 4 were made before the 16 November deadline.
- Update on arrangements at Haydon Bridge High School to improve the curriculum and provision of additional support.
- Latest educational outcomes for Haydon Bridge at Early Years and Foundation Stage and Keys Stages 1, 2 and 4 which showed an improvement in results.

The Service Director - Education and Skills and the Head of School Organisation and Resources were thanked for their informative presentation and input to improve the future of Haydon Bridge High School. Members of the Local Area Council and the public were delighted to learn of the improved results and hoped that recent measures and improvements would be reflected in an increase in applications for school places.

The following comments were made by members, a number of whom were former pupils of Haydon Bridge High School:

- Whether there had been an increase in in year admissions? The officers did not have figures at the meeting. Notification of school places for September 2019 would be released on 1 March 2019.

- The contribution made by officers over recent months was appreciated and it was hoped that improvements would continue.
- It was important that residents had a choice of high schools.
- The improved school results needed to be communicated to parents to give them faith that attending Haydon Bridge High School would provide their children with the best education.
- The local members for Bellingham was pleased that the middle school would not be closed but disappointed that this would result in a reduction in the investment which 'North Tynies' still needed.
- Concern regarding pupil travel times.
- The surplus of school places would need to continue to be monitored.
- The uncertainty in the period before and after Bright Tribe withdrew their sponsorship and the impact on the Ofsted inspection.
- Councillor Daley, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, and Cabinet were thanked for their support to the school and the financial input to resolve the budget deficit.

Councillor Horncastle gave a brief outline of his involvement in the Interim Executive Board. Councillor Horncastle, Councillor Daley, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Cabinet and officers were thanked for the support given to the school financially and in officer time.

Councillor Daley reiterated the administrations promise to listen to residents and deliver key priorities such as parental choice. He welcomed the proposals for the vocational centre and confirmed that the school would continue to receive all of the support that was required. They now needed parents and the local community to support the school and for the pupil numbers to increase. In answer to a question on the recovery of funds from Bright Tribe, Councillor Daley confirmed this was being challenged with the Department for Education and Regional Schools Commissioner. However, he thought it important that they moved on from the inherited position.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

126. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2018/19

The Local Area Council received a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes as at 1 January 2019. (A copy is attached to the minutes as Appendix C.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

127. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated.

(A copy is attached to the minutes as Appendix D.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

128. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 February 2019 at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham at 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____