

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NH on Tuesday, 10 September 2019 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor G Stewart
(Chair, in the Chair)

MEMBERS

T Cessford
A Dale
R Gibson
C Horncastle

N Oliver
KR Quinn
A Sharp
KG Stow

OFFICERS

G Harrison
L Howley
D Hunt
G Gavin
N Turnbull

Highways Maintenance Senior
Team Leader
Community and Environmental
Health Manager
Area Manager (West),
Neighbourhood Services
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT

Inspector Pam Bridges and PC Barry Emery, Northumbria Police
1 member of the public
1 member of the press

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors CR Homer and I Hutchinson.

59. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Tynedale Local Area Council held on 13 August 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

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 gully 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 prioritise 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.

66. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 8 October 2019 at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham at 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____