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Northumberland County Council

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Date: Wednesday, 12 January 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OSC** to be held in **MEETING SPACE - BLOCK 1, FLOOR 2 - COUNTY HALL** on **WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022** at **2.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally
Chief Executive

To Communities and Place OSC members as follows:-

Any member of the press or public may view the proceedings of this meeting live on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/NorthumberlandTV>. Members of the press and public may tweet, blog etc during the live broadcast as they would be able to during a regular Committee meeting.

Members are referred to the risk assessment, previously circulated, for meetings held in County Hall. Masks should be worn when moving round but can be removed when seated, social distancing should be maintained, hand sanitiser regularly used and members requested to self-test twice a week at home, in line with government guidelines.



Daljit Lally, Chief Executive
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AGENDA

PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

8. REVIEW OF STORM ARWEN RESPONSE: SCOPING REPORT

(Pages 1
- 6)

The report seeks agreement for the scope of the review following Storm Arwen, including terms of reference list of consultees.

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussion or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

Name (please print):
Meeting:
Date:
Item to which your interest relates:
Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):
Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):
Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?

1. Registerable Personal Interests – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or

b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

2. Non-registerable personal interests - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

3. Non-participation in Council Business

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.



Northumberland County Council

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 JANUARY 2022

REVIEW OF STORM ARWEN RESPONSE: SCOPING REPORT

Report of: Jackie Roll, Head of Electoral and Democratic Services

Purpose of report

Immediately following Storm Arwen, a scrutiny review was requested to examine the response of the County Council and involved partners, the impact on Communities and lessons learned for the future. This report sets out the scope of the review including terms of reference and a list of consultees.

Recommendation:

To consider and agree the following:

- **Consider the terms of reference/scope of the review**
- **Agree the membership of the review committee**
- **Agree a list of consultees/interviews**
- **Agree how communities will be consulted**
- **Agree a timetable for the review to be completed**
- **Agree that the findings of the review will ultimately be reported to full council**

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the “How”, “Living”, “Connecting” priority included in the current NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2022

Key issues

Many residents and business have been affected by Storm Arwen with recovery efforts still underway. The response to Storm Arwen was a multi-agency approach with LRF partners including the military being involved.

A large number of homes and businesses were left without power across the county for up to two weeks. The Council immediately initiated its emergency planning arrangements, establishing an incident room and a co-ordinated, multi-agency response. This included, for example, welfare visits, calls and necessary follow-up support to vulnerable residents and clients known to Social Services and wider Health Services. Alongside this, Council services undertook a wide range of repairs and clean ups to roads and infrastructure. These activities were undertaken largely within the resources of council services, local partners, councillors and volunteer organisations. However, when it became clear that power would not be restored to a significant number of homes in the timeframe initially anticipated, a major incident was declared on 3 December. This helped military support to be sought to significantly widen door-to-door welfare visits to all households that remained without power at that time.

It is possible that extreme weather events may become more frequent due to climate change and the longer-term aspects of the review will consider what we can learn from this incident to strengthen the response to extreme weather events in the future.

Background

On 26th November 2021, Storm Arwen brought winds of up to 100kmh to Northumberland. Storm Arwen resulted in widespread damage leaving many without power for up to two weeks. The storm affected many areas in the Northeast, including neighbouring authorities, with Northumberland being the worst affected.

The Local Resilience Forum's (LRF) Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) was called together to deal with Storm Arwen, initially chaired by the Police. The lead was passed to Northumberland County Council on 28 November and an incident room was established at West Hartford Fire Station with members of Northumberland County Council, Northumbria Police, Northumberland Fire and Rescue and latterly Northern Powergrid and then the military. The TCG continued to meet virtually throughout the incident.

A major incident was declared on 3 December 2021 and a request for Military support was submitted. The military were dispatched to support the Council with door-to-door welfare checks across the County. This was to enhance and accelerate the operational work that had already been taking place in communities.

The Major Incident was stood down on 8 December and the incident room was closed. The Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA) request expired at 23:59 on 8 December.

Terms of Reference

The review aims to examine the disruption caused by Storm Arwen and the response to that disruption, as well as identifying gaps in current systems and ways of improving future

policy and plans, both within the County Council, and also with partner organisations and the community to ensure we can build better resilience for events in the future.

The review will include:

- Reviewing council policies and procedures
- Gathering evidence from members of the public
- Gathering evidence from partner organisations and County Council officers
- Gathering evidence from MPs, County Councillors, and Town and Parish Councillors

Public Engagement

It is vital, in order for this review to provide learning and strong recommendations for improvement, that residents are involved throughout this review. Members of the public will be encouraged to submit their experiences to the Committee for inclusion in the review. The Council will seek both positive and constructive feedback from communities to help understand the impact the Storm Arwen response has had and what the Council can do to better improve its resilience.

Community engagement will run parallel with the formal evidence gathering sessions. Initial discussions have taken place with the research sector to ascertain the best way to enhance community involvement with this review. Due to the nature of research and the teams involved, it is anticipated there would be minimal costs included.

Partner Organisations

The response involved partners from a range of other organisations and their experience and feedback is vital to ensuring this review is comprehensive and meaningful. It is expected that this review will call on evidence from partner organisations such as:

- Northern Powergrid
- Scottish Power
- Telecommunication operators (e.g., BT, EE, O2)
- Northumbria Water
- Northumbria Police
- Voluntary Services (e.g., Mountain Rescue, Red Cross)
- Military

Other Evidence

Evidence will also be sought from MPs, County Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors and most importantly our residents.

The review will examine a number of documents involved in the response including evidence from debrief sessions internally and with partner organisations. Evidence gathering sessions will be held through the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in which key stakeholders will be invited to attend and share their experience of the Storm Arwen Response.

Proposed Timetable for Review

It is proposed that the review will be completed as follows. The dates will be finalised as participants availability is confirmed:

Stage	Participants	Committee	Date
Agreement of ToR		Communities and Place OSC	12 th January 2022
Community Research	Residents and Businesses		January 2022 – March 2022
1 st Evidence Gathering Session	Industry Partners (NPG, NWL, Telecommunication companies)	Review Committee	Mid-February 2022
2 nd Evidence Gathering Session	Internal Partners (Officers, LRF)	Review Committee	End of February 2022
3 rd Evidence Gathering Session	MPs, Councillors, Town and Parish Councillors, Voluntary sector	Review Committee	March 2022
Interim Progress Report		Communities and Place OSC	April 2022
4 th Evidence Gathering Session	Feedback from community research	Review Committee	April 2022
Final Report		OSC/ Full Council	July 2022

Discussions are on-going with a number of research teams who could work to collect the views of the community for this review. Northumberland residents are at the heart of this review and the public will have the opportunity to provide their feedback throughout the process.

Evidence Gathering Sessions

The number of evidence sessions may change. It is possible that evidence given during these sessions may need further follow up in other sessions or via other means such as

written responses. The number of required evidence sessions will not be known until the 1st session has taken place.

It is recommended that the evidence sessions are undertaken as part of a task and finish group.

Consideration of Findings

The findings will be considered in a written report and recommendations to full council and may be subject to Scrutiny by the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Conclusion

The scope of the review is designed to ensure that a comprehensive review is undertaken of the response to Storm Arwen and to make recommendations for the future with the community at their heart.

Recommendation

To consider and agree the following:

- **Consider the terms of reference/scope of the review**
- **Agree the membership of the review committee**
- **Agree a list of consultees/interviews**
- **Agree how communities will be consulted**
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REPORT AUTHOR:

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