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Northumberland County Council

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Date: 28 September 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OSC** to be held in the **NEW meeting Space, Block 1, Floor 2, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF** on **WEDNESDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2021** at **10.00 AM**.

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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



Daljit Lally, Chief Executive
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF
T: 0345 600 6400
www.northumberland.gov.uk



AGENDA

PART I

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(Pages 1
- 18)

Minutes of the following meetings of the Communities and Place OSC, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair:

- a) 4 August 2021
- b) 25 August 2021

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest) they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact Legal Services at monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

4. FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

(Pages
19 - 26)

To note the latest Forward Plan of key decisions. Any further changes made to the Forward Plan will be reported to the Committee.

SCRUTINY OF CABINET REPORT

The following report will be considered by the Cabinet on 12 October 2021. The Committee's comments will be presented to the Cabinet by the Chair when it determines the report. The Committee is requested to consider issues arising from the report.

The Cabinet Member requested to attend for the following item is Councillor Wendy Pattison, Portfolio Holder for Adults' Wellbeing.

5. INTEGRATED DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES FOR NORTHUMBERLAND – PERMISSION TO TENDER

(Pages
27 - 32)

To seek permission to go to the market to commission a range of services to provide an Integrated Domestic Abuse Service for Northumberland

which will allow the Council to meet its statutory duties. The length of contracts will be 2 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

The Cabinet Member requested to attend for the following item is Councillor Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council.

6.1 Northumberland Climate Change Update

(Pages
33 - 56)

To provide an update on progress against the Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23, published in January 2021.

The Cabinet Member requested to attend for the following item is Councillor Wojciech Ploszaj, Portfolio Holder for Business

6.2 NE Bus Service Improvement Plan

(Pages
57 - 66)

To receive a presentation from Neil Easton, Public Transport Manager on progress developing the NE Bus Service Improvement Plan.

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

7. COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT

(Pages
67 - 74)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates within a work programme which is agreed at the start of the Council year. The programme is reviewed at each meeting so that it can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Committee and take account of any changes to the latest Forward Plan (which outlines decisions to be taken by the Cabinet). The Committee is asked to review and note its work programme for the 2021/22 council year.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

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.

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NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee** on Wednesday, 4 August 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillor N. Oliver
(Chair, in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Bridgett, S,	Morphet, N.
Cartie, E.	Mather, M.
Gallacher, B.	Robinson, M.
Hardy, C.	

CABINET MEMBER

Horncastle, C.W.	Community Services
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

J. Farrier	Head of Commercial and Resources, Active Northumberland
S. Nicholson	Scrutiny Co-Ordinator
P. Soderquest	Head of Housing and Public Protection
N. Turnbull	Democratic Services Officer
N. Walsh	Head of Cultural Services
M. Warnes	Chief Executive, Active Northumberland

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Castle, Richardson and Watson.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Communities & Place OSC held on 30 June 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

10. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Bridgett reported that he would need to disclose an interest if there was any discussion on the Energising Blyth Programme, included within the Forward Plan, as he was a member of the Advance Board who were handling the project. During the meeting he stated that he would also need to disclose a personal interest and would not take part in discussions regarding Advance Northumberland and their properties in the Hirst area.

11. FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of key decisions (February to May 2021). (Schedule enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix A).

In answer to a question, the Scrutiny Co-ordinator agreed to check the position regarding the Energising Blyth Programme which was not identified for scrutiny.

It was confirmed that the project was being regularly scrutinised by elected members at Blyth Town Council who were meeting monthly to discuss and receive updates on the project.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. SCRUTINY OF CABINET REPORTS

The Committee were advised that the following report would be considered by the Cabinet on 7 September 2021. Members were requested to comment on the proposals in the report.

12.1 Private Sector Housing Strategy 2021-2023

The report presented the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2021-2023, which contained details of the proposed strategic objectives for the Council's Private Sector Housing Service for the following three years. (A copy of the report is attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B.)

Councillor Horncastle, Portfolio Holder for Community Services, introduced the report making reference to the Northumberland Corporate Plan for 2018-21 and principles within the Draft Northumberland Local Plan which identified that having a roof overhead and a decent home was fundamental to the health and well-being of everyone living in Northumberland.

The strategy set out how the Council would work with partners, stakeholders and local communities to deliver services to support good quality housing and management standards within private sector homes in Northumberland and built on the aims and objectives of the previous strategy.

The following priorities were identified:

- Increase access to affordable homes in the private sector through bringing empty homes back into use.
- Ensuring a healthy private rented sector through improving the condition, safety and energy efficiency of private sector housing.
- Provide advice and support and take action where necessary for homeowners, landlords and tenants in the private sector.
- Provide services to assist access to sustainable tenancies in the private rented sector.

The following issues were raised by members:

- Some areas had a high percentage of empty properties and powers were needed to address exterior problems, in addition to internal standards, particularly where landlords were absent, as it impacted on attracting new residents.
- Registration or licensing of private landlords should be compulsory, rather than a voluntary scheme, as current.
- Covid-19 had demonstrated the strength of communities in areas but also the importance of quality housing given the restrictions and time spent at home. Individuals active in communities had been highlighted and should be invited to be involved in discussions in estate regeneration.
- Awareness of enforcement powers and protection available to tenant from legislation be raised.
- The Council needed to demonstrate it cared, was approachable, used enforcement powers to the widest extent when needed and could protect tenants.
- Refurbishing sub-standard properties in the public and private sectors was challenging as well as making properties more energy efficient and contributing to climate change aspirations.
- Up to date contact details be provided for social housing providers.
- It was hoped that implementation of the new Council Tax scheme which progressively increased the charges on empty properties, would act as an incentive to landlords to take action. Circumstances should be looked at on a case-by-case basis.
- Discussion be held with the Climate Change team regarding loan arrangements with Northumberland Community Bank to enable individuals to install otherwise expensive energy improvements and whether something similar could be used for private landlords to bring properties to a better standard, when new windows, doors, roofs were required.
- Fuel poverty was increasing in rural areas where raising standards was generally more expensive due to the construction of older properties, some parts of the county did not have access to mains services, including those in the National Park or part of the Ministry of Defence estate; communities were also impacted by second home ownership.
- Implementation of national aspirations would require commitment by government for the installation of energy efficient measures which were

more expensive to retrofit in older homes and less suitable as they required a well-insulated property. It was hoped that technological advancements would assist.

- Clarification be obtained regarding the Carbon Reduction Implication of the report given the energy efficiencies required in Priority 2.

The Head of Housing and Public Protection and Portfolio Holder for Community Services provided the following information in answer to questions:

- Comprehensive discussions were ongoing with officers and partners about housing issues.
- 83% of properties in Northumberland were privately rented or owned.
- Approximately 3 years ago, the proportion of privately rented properties exceeded social housing nationally.
- They wished to engage with landlords in the private sector to improve management standards and quality of housing in Northumberland. Many already participated in a yearly landlords' forum and they needed to engage with those not already involved. Engagement was a better method than enforcement, particularly with limited resources.
- Tenants and landlords needed to be made aware of their legal responsibilities and entitlement and raise awareness that complaints by tenants to the Council would not lead to eviction.
- Supporting tenants to maintain tenancies reduced impact on the homelessness service.
- Some estates had larger scale voids, higher levels of deprivation and antisocial behaviour. However, strong communities also and they needed to be supported to make them nicer areas to live by addressing the aforementioned issues with partners such as the police and colleagues in Local Services.
- Housing staff were trained in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to assess the condition of properties and take a range of enforcement action, but only if invited by the tenant or someone on their behalf which could include an elected member. Landlords were informed about visits and given the opportunity to attend.
- Consideration was being given to the introduction of a pilot selective licensing scheme, within a defined geographical area. This would set standards for the condition of properties and tenancy agreement after where evidence demonstrated this was required. It had to be balanced against the potential of properties being left empty to avoid payment of the fee by landlords.
- The Council had no ability to prevent or interfere with housing payments made by government departments.
- Options for estate regeneration were being considered by the Council and Advance Northumberland.
- Homes England administered grants on behalf of Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to increase net housing stock. This could entail some remodeling work which could include retention of some housing stock and demolition of others, to find the right

solution for each area, following an options appraisal to address issues within a locality and engagement with communities.

- The Council worked closely with social housing providers who were not included under the strategy.
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders were an enforcement tool which allowed authorities to take over management of a property, when granted by the Property Tribunal, normally for a 7-year period, before being handed back to the landlord. However, this was not always financially viable if significant capital investment was required. Other similar schemes had been funded through Homes England, including purchase of housing stock; work in default and a trial scheme to purchase and dispose of property.
- Implementation of the Government's Green agenda and ceasing use of the installation of domestic gas boilers required viable alternatives.

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

13. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

13.1 Active Northumberland Annual Outcome Report 2020-2021

13.2 Active Northumberland Annual Service Report April 2020– April 2021

The Committee received Active Northumberland's Annual Outcomes Report 2020-21 and Annual Service Report for 2020-21, as requested by the Committee at the meeting on 13 January 2021. (A copy of the reports are attached to the signed minutes as Appendices C and D.)

Nigel Walsh, Head of Cultural Services explained that he was responsible for the leisure client function and was joined by Mark Warnes, Active Northumberland's Chief Executive and Joanne Farrier, Head of Commercial and Resources. He referred to the 4-year partnership agreement with Active Northumberland to manage the Council's leisure services at 9 leisure centres and a number of additional sites. Partial and full closures during the pandemic had a significant impact on access, participation and revenue generation.

Joanne Farrier presented the Annual Service Report and Annual Outcome Report for 2020-21 and provided a brief background for Active Northumberland, a registered charity formed in 2014 from the merger of 4 different leisure service providers. The presentation set out:

- Background information on the facilities managed, Board members, number of employees.
- Vision
- Enhancement of Website and App to enable online digital booking, online digital exercise classes during lockdowns, outdoor fitness sessions and bootcamps when permitted, use of facilities and staff as test centres.

- Financial highlights: a loss of £1.85 million at 31 March 2021; management of utility consumption and work to mitigate utility tariff increases; comparison of income streams between 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- Participation and performance.
- Pursuance of Quest quality assurance accreditation.
- Future Aims for 'Mams on the Move', group exercise programme, Learn to Swim and working with swimming clubs to develop a performance programme to represent the county nationally.
- Catering Opportunities, rebranding of HIVE cafes and promotion of good nutrition and importance of hydration.
- Service Improvement Aims.
- Capital and remedial works - essential work had been brought forward to minimise the impact on customers when sites reopened; development of spa services to aid mental wellbeing.

The following issues were raised by members:

- Investment in existing or provision of new facilities were required in towns such as Rothbury and Bedlington and should be included in any strategic review. Residents and school children from Rothbury were incurring significant mileage to use facilities and access swimming lessons in Alnwick, contrary to the green agenda. It was suggested that the Councillor raise this issue with the Portfolio Holder and Leader as it was an issue for the Council's Administration and not within the responsibility of Active Northumberland. Opportunities for the site at Rothbury were being investigated. The nature and size of the county meant that there were access issues, particularly for residents in rural areas.
- Consideration be given to opportunities to improve the fitness of residents with long covid, such as a mobile scheme, as travelling from rural areas would be exhausting.
- Provision of equipment and/or specialist staff which could be used by amputees, people with other disabilities or recovering from long covid.
- In areas of deprivation, some families did not have the money to pay for children to use facilities at leisure centres and many others, such as the elderly, were not comfortable using sports centres and gyms. Sports Development teams used to work with community centres and this should be recommenced. Active Northumberland worked closely with NCC Sports Development Team and School Sports Team which had ceased during the pandemic, but they would welcome efforts to get individuals, including the elderly, back into centres.
- It was essential to promote the benefits of exercise at an early age and therefore the development of schools' sports development was critical.
- The role of Active Northumberland was incredibly important to the health of individuals at more risk from the effects of the virus.
- The table on page 36 of the papers be reviewed to include information on performance in addition to outcomes from the previous year and objectives for the current year.

The following information was provided in answer to questions:

- Some adaptations had been implemented at new facilities but Active Northumberland were willing to work collaboratively with the Council to obtain expert advice to better understand demand and requirements of all users.
- Accessibility had been recognised and digital services had been made available free of charge during the recent lockdown periods. It was recognised that this was not suitable for all, but the digital offering would continue to be developed.
- The Council's partnership agreement with Active Northumberland was due to be reviewed and would include: performance, value for money, whether priorities for the Council were the same, public perception, availability of digital offer and potential impact on income generation. Many issues needed to be balanced to maximise the benefits of the investment. Collaboration with the Integrated Health Team, Public Health and Sport Development were essential.
- Active Northumberland's policy on refunds were that payments were non-transferable and non-refundable, although each request was considered on a case-by-case basis. All members had received a refund of during the various lockdowns with thousands of transactions processed by a few staff who had not been furloughed. If an individual was required to isolate and was unable to attend sessions, the money was credited to their online account so they could use the funds to repurchase a session in the future.
- The majority of the loss for 2020-21 had been mainly due to lost revenue although business grants and a successful bid to the national leisure recovery fund had contributed to reduce the amount. Staffing and utility costs were the largest areas of expenditure; utility costs continued whether the centres were open or not. They had been careful how the centres had been run when closed such as turning down lighting, pool temperatures, and plant and machinery although it still been necessary to treat water in pools, run pumps and filtration, given the uncertainty regarding the period of closure. Emptying pools could have incurred problems in the future with a reduction of pressure on pool liners and tiles.
- All premises were open but some of the smaller centres were not open full time due to a dramatic reduction in membership numbers. Outdoor activities had recommenced in March and all activities and clubs had now restarted. The new Ponteland Leisure Centre had opened briefly in October and was being well used. They hoped to reengage with members who had left through marketing, telephone engagement and email campaigns. They were focusing on different memberships including one for junior members and a staff offer for NCC employees, both of which had very popular.
- Work on the transformation programme continued although Covid-19 had forced them to look at the operation of the business and work more effectively and efficiently. Key performance indicators were monitored regularly and fed into the outcomes framework and objectives were provided on a quarterly basis to the Head of Culture.
- Changing priorities included ensuring that staff were safe and use of an online booking system which had assisted in the aim of reducing queues in reception. Extra support had been provided via telephone calls for the exercise referral and weight management programmes and the elderly.

Individuals had found it easier to talk on a 1 to 1 basis. Continuation of smaller groups or virtual sessions had been requested. This would be reviewed to see whether it could be sustained.

The officers were thanked for the report and presentation. The Chair requested that the committee have the opportunity to feed into the review of the partnership agreement prior to the signing of the new agreement on 31 March 2022. Members also thought it important to receive an update which considered the impact on membership numbers and whether the business plan and priorities had changed.

Members were invited to contact officers at Active Northumberland, at the earliest opportunity, if they became aware of issues that had arisen within their wards as it would be beneficial for all to work collaboratively. It was suggested that feedback could also be obtained from Town and Parish Councils.

The Committee expressed their admiration to the team for recently saving a life at Willowburn Sports Centre.

RESOLVED that:

1. Active Northumberland's Annual Outcomes Report 2021-21 and Annual Service Report for 2020-21, be received.
2. Active Northumberland be thanked for their work during the pandemic, including support to communities, schools and health services, which had been incredibly valuable as well as reopening centres quickly when permitted.
3. The Committee were encouraged by the optimism for the future whilst noting the challenges ahead.
4. An update on the development of the partnership agreement, membership numbers, challenges, business plan and priorities be presented to the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in early 2022.

14. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report

The Committee reviewed its work programme for the 2021/22 council year. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix E).

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator provided the following update on reports after the discussion at the previous meeting: -

Climate Change Action Plan – 6 October 2021
NE Public Transport Strategy Update – 6 October 2021 (date to be confirmed).
Active Travel and School Safety – October 2021 (date to be confirmed).
Active Northumberland – January / February 2022 (discussed earlier in the meeting).

Members with any queries or suggestions were asked to contact the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Chair or Vice-Chair.

Members enquired whether the Communities & Place OSC could receive:

- A presentation on Broadband and Telecoms, particularly the recently announced North of Tyne Combine Authority fund for 5G technologies in rural areas.
- An update on Community Policing from the Police Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable of Northumbria Police.
- Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service on the recent audit and the position on retained firefighter availability.
- Highway maintenance.
- Update on performance from Neighbourhood Services following the summer grass cutting season and impact on the arrangements for enhanced services with Town and Parish Councils.

The requests would be referred to the Chairmen's Group.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

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NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee** on Wednesday, 25 August 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillor N. Oliver
(Chair, in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Cartie, E.	Mather, M.
Castle, G.	Richardson, M.
Hardy, C.	Robinson, M.
Morphet, N.	

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

C. Angus	Scrutiny Officer
P. Jones	Service Director – Local Services
R. O’Farrell	Executive Director - Place
N. Turnbull	Democratic Services Officer

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bridgett and Gallacher.

15. FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of key decisions (August to November 2021). (Schedule enclosed with the signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

16.1 Overview of the Fleet Replacement Programme in 2020/2021

The Committee were provided with an overview with the delivery of the Council’s fleet replacement programme in 2020/2021 and an update on the progress made in current financial year 2021/2022. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the signed minutes).

Paul Jones, Service Director – Local Services, explained that it was essential that the fleet replacement programme was delivered in a timely manner to ensure delivery of front-line services, secure benefits of new technology,

minimise impact on the environment and make a positive contribution to tackling climate change. He reported that:

- Service reviews and challenging the need for vehicles had resulted in a number of vehicles being removed from the program.
- Of the 391 vehicles scheduled to be replaced during 2021/22, 117 had been rescheduled.
- The programme had been severely impacted by the pandemic and to a lesser extent, Brexit. There were significant delivery delays due to closure of businesses, reduced capacity during lockdowns, world-wide shortages of semi-conductors and other parts from suppliers.
- Service critical vehicles had been promptly replaced to ensure service resilience.
- Purchase of some vehicle types had been delayed to enable assessment of reduced payloads, following the introduction of new standards, and potential replacement with electric vehicles (EV).
- Cost and differential impact of cost, particularly for larger electric vehicles and their current availability, was being closely monitored. Financial assistance would be sought from Council for any increased costs to purchase EV.

The following information was provided in answer to questions from members:

- Vehicles were primarily purchased outright and sold at auction at the end of their life to maximise returns. Operating or finance leases were also considered when viable to do so, although negotiation of extensions incurred additional premiums and they also had strict return conditions and values. Reviews were undertaken quarterly and generally it was cheaper for the Council to borrow at lower rates. Some specialist plant and equipment were bought second hand, although the majority was purchased new.
- Some vehicles with quick change bodies had been purchased to enable use all year round and ensure vehicles were not standing unused for many months. Examples included gritters which were also used as tar tankers for road maintenance. Some vehicles were dedicated solely as gritters due to the nature of their use. The fleet was kept under review as it was not beneficial to have high value vehicles sat unused.
- Services were challenged as to whether vehicles needed to be replaced; this had resulted in the removal of 18 vehicles from the programme in 2020/21. This challenge included specifications, as a standardised fleet was also cheaper to purchase and maintain. Other vehicles had been added due to the increased capital allocation for highways maintenance to do more in-house and reduce cost and reliance on third party contractors.
- Acquisition of additional gulley tankers would require consideration as a growth item and an additional financial allocation through the budgetary process.
- Use of new vehicles in parks was beneficial to the teams in saving time and enabling them to undertake more work.

- New vehicles were generally quieter than older vehicles and it was suggested that lower volumes of traffic during the pandemic could have impacted on the background noise and influencing perception of noise levels of ride on lawnmowers.
- The none removal of grass arisings contributed to blocked drains and associated problems.
- The new chipping spreading paving machine, to be used mainly on rural roads, had been purchased under an invest to save opportunity. Income generation work was also undertaken for other local authorities when capacity and capability permitted, given seasonal constraints. This was not at the detriment of the council's own programme.
- The specification had now been agreed for 6 compact sweepers which would be replaced during 2021-22. The replacement cycle had been reduced on other equipment due to issues with reliability.
- Ancillary equipment on vehicles, such as jettors on gulley wagons, would be checked and reported back.
- It had been necessary to ensure there was an adequate charging infrastructure at depots when 'greening' the fleet. Improvements were being made to depot-based charging network to accommodate the growing EV fleet. This had necessitated 'power up' bids and other climate change improvements at key operational depots, such as PV on roofs and ground source heat pumps, as part of the Council's climate change action plan. Capacity and availability with the local grid was an issue nationally for larger vehicles. Planning permission had been obtained by estates management for the construction of solar PV car ports with EV charger capacity at County Hall.
- There was concern regarding the environmental impact of alternative fuel sources, e.g. hydro treated vegetable oil. The Energy Savings Trust had been engaged and were considering 'greening' the fleet, feasibility of EVs and alternatives, as EVs might not be suitable across the whole fleet. Technological advances and availability of models were being closely monitored.
- Quick change body jet patchers had been acquired following trials although they had been expensive to operate and provided a temporary repair. A change of approach to a greater proportion of permanent repairs on the road network had resulted in them being replaced with hot box vehicles.

The officers were thanked for the informative report and work undertaken by Local Services, which had continued with little interruption during the pandemic.

RESOLVED that:

1. The work undertaken to deliver a challenging fleet replacement programme during 2020/21 and 2021/22, be noted.
2. Cabinet be recommended to consider an invest to save or business case to acquire more gulley wagons to increase capacity as part of the capital programme budget discussions.

16.2 Northumberland Waste Management Strategy - Kerbside Glass Collection Trial Update

The report provided an update on the kerbside glass recycling trial which had commenced in November 2020, including key performance measures on recycling yields, resident participation and acceptance levels. A final report on the trial and proposed next steps for the roll-out of an enhanced glass recycling service was to be presented to Cabinet in October 2021. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the signed minutes).

Paul Jones, Service Director – Local Services, stated that whilst the Council provided a very good performing waste service which was cost effective and, reliable, no significant improvements had been made to recycling rates for a number of years, with continued high landfill diversion rates. This needed to be addressed as part of the Climate Change Action Plan.

He referred to recent Government policy reviews and consultations and the expectation that local authorities in England would need to achieve a recycling rate in excess of 50% with a wider range of materials collected at the kerbside and more consistency between areas. This was expected to be financed through 'new burdens' funding for local authorities and taxation on manufacturers and retailers under the 'producer pays' principle.

Modelling in 2019 identified the preferred way forward to improve recycling on a phased approach which included kerbside collection of glass, more plastics including pots, tubs and trays and food waste. Cabinet had agreed to a kerbside glass collection trial in October 2020 to test assumptions and put the Council in the best position to bid for funding and implement changes as quickly as possible.

The trial had commenced in November 2020 with approximately 4,000 households in Morpeth, Bedlington, Hexham and Alnwick/Lesbury. A 140-litre wheeled bin had been provided and was emptied every 4 weeks. An average yield of 71 kg per household was projected for the year which compared favourably with neighbouring authorities.

Noise monitoring and ear defenders had been provided for employees to reduce exposure to noise to an acceptable level but also allow them to hear noise from road vehicles and instructions from colleagues.

89% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied following a survey undertaken in May 2021. Monthly collections were also working well with more than sufficient capacity in bins which were rarely full and not always presented.

To date they had been unable to assess the additional benefit due to the Covid-19 pandemic as residents had been unable to go to hospitality venues resulting in more alcohol being consumed at home. There had been a 22% increase in glass collected at HWRC's and bring sites since 2019/20 and they were unable to distinguish what impact the trial had on diversion rates from these facilities.

The report to Cabinet would consider next steps, whether the trial be extended beyond November 2021 to obtain additional data now that there were no restrictions in place, and timing of rolling out kerbside collection of glass given availability of Government funding.

The Service Director – Local Services, replied to members questions with the following information:

- Whilst average put out rates were relatively low, this could be due to a number of factors: whether residents were recycling or perhaps continuing to put glass in general waste, the size of the container and if only half full it might not be considered necessary to have it emptied every month. Consideration also had to be given to average yield and participating residents responses to the survey. Smaller households had capacity to put the bin out less frequently and there could be capacity to increase the number of households participating in the trial, if extended. Other factors would also need to be taken into account including extension of the working day if there was a larger round, capacity of vehicles and potentially extra trips to unload etc.
- A comingled collection of glass and other recycling material required consideration of the contamination risk from glass shards amongst fibre material, health and safety risks, separation of materials, end uses and quality. The lifecycle of the material needed to be assessed to ensure robust, high value end uses in the UK to ensure maximum environmental return. Some local authorities had invested in the mechanical removal of material at the front end of the process, however this resulted in lower values and minimal usage due to contamination of other materials.
- Glass collected in Northumberland was taken to transfer stations for storage to enable efficient transportation in bulk to end users for remelt, which provided the highest value, into other glass products or for construction uses, e.g. sandpaper.
- Glass manufacturers wanted large pieces of glass for remelt which was obtained with less handling. Introduction of colour segregation technology would mean that clear glass would increasingly no longer need to be separated from brown and green glass. Some breakage was desired when collecting glass to maximise refuse vehicle loads.
- The Government had recently consulted on a glass deposit return scheme, or reverse vending, which was actively being considered.
- Private waste producers made their own arrangements for the collection of waste. The Council offered the full range of waste collection to business premises with a reduced cost for material which could be recycled to recognise the financial benefits received by the Council from the sale of the material.
- Transport emissions were taken into account in the calculation on 140 tonnes of carbon dioxide saved through usage of conversion factors developed from high level industry lifecycle assessment modelling across a range of European recycling plants.
- If the glass recycling trial was expanded across the county, it was expected that investment would be required in additional refuse vehicles

and crew with new collection arrangements. Overtime had only been used during the trial period to enable an assessment.

Members commented that the trial had been well received and more residents wanted to be included.

The officers were thanked for the report.

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of the report, be noted.
2. The success of the glass recycling trial scheme to date, in terms of high customer satisfaction levels and very high yields of glass collected per household, be noted.
3. The Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the trial and expansion of glass recycling across Northumberland.

17. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report

The Committee reviewed its work programme for the 2021/22 council year. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes).

Members with any queries or suggestions were asked to contact the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Chair or Vice-Chair.

Members enquired whether the Communities & Place OSC could receive information on:

- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot
- Priority be given to the implementation of a policy banning dogs in fenced off Council sports areas. This had been raised previously but reports had been received regarding a recent incident at Ridley Park tennis courts. It was queried whether this could be added to the policy which banned dogs from fenced off children's play areas.
- Youth Services Outreach Programme and anti-social behaviour.
- Bulky Waste Collection Services (charges and subsidies).

The requests would be referred to the Chairmen's Group.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

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Forward Plan

FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS OCTOBER 2021 TO JANUARY 2022

DECISION	PROPOSED SCRUTINY DATE	CABINET DATE
<p>Approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2022/23</p> <p>Since 1 April 2013 the Council is required to have its own council tax support scheme to provide assistance to council tax payers on low incomes. The scheme needs to be approved annually and assistance is by way of a reduction in the amount of council tax that is due.</p> <p>The Council Tax Support Scheme needs County Council approval. (C. Wearmouth/G. Barnes 01670 624351)</p>	CSEG 11 October 2021	12 October 2021 Council 3 November 2021
<p>Northumberland Waste Management Strategy – Outcome of Kerbside Glass Recycling Trial</p> <p>To report the key outcomes of the kerbside glass recycling pilot scheme which has been in operation since November 2020 and to recommend the next steps for this scheme and the estimated costs for rolling-out a kerbside glass collection service across the county. The report will also highlight how the roll-out and timing for this enhanced glass recycling service will be dependent upon the outcome of the latest consultation exercises undertaken as part of the Government’s new Resources and Waste Strategy and provision of new burdens funding by the Government.</p>	C&P 6 October 2021	12 October 2021

(J. Riddle/ P. Jones 01670 623432)		
<p>Energising Blyth Programme (Energy Central Campus) This report seeks to update Cabinet and seek key decisions regarding arrangements to support the development and establishment of the Energy Central Campus. This project is one of the priority schemes in the Energising Blyth Regeneration Programme including projects supported by the Future High Streets Fund and Blyth Town Deal. (W. Ploszaj /R. Strettle – 07770642773)</p>	CSEG 11 October 2021	12 October 2021
<p>Integrated Domestic Abuse Services for Northumberland – Permission to Tender To seek Cabinet’s permission to go to the market to commission a range of services to enable the Local Authority to meet the duties of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (W. Pattison/ Lesley Pyle - (01670) 622724)</p>	C&P 6 October 2021	12 October 2021
<p>School Organisation Plan 2021-2024 This report asks Cabinet and FACS to note the second iteration of the School Organisation Plan 2021-2024 for Northumberland, the first iteration being for 2018-2021. The report also asks Cabinet to approve the circulation of the plan to schools and academies for information and feedback prior to its subsequent publication.</p> <p>The report asks Cabinet and FACS to note that School Organisation Plans are no longer required statutorily. However, Cabinet approval was given to publish a School Organisation Plan for Northumberland in 2018 in order to</p>	FACS 7 October 2021	12 October 2021

<p>provide schools, parents, partner organisations and interested parties with an overview of the school system in the county and to highlight trends, plans and potential proposals in relation to schools. This latest version of the plan covers the period 2021 to 2024, but it will be subject to annual update in order to capture changing information or circumstances relating to schools and academies as appropriate. (G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston – 01670 622281)</p>		
<p>Education Infrastructure Contribution Policy This report asks Cabinet and FACS to note the update of the Education Infrastructure Contribution Policy. The policy was first approved by Cabinet in 2017 but has not been updated due to proposals by Planning Services to create an authority-wide contributions policy and by Government to overhaul the current system of securing developer contributions, neither of which have as yet been implemented.</p> <p>However, the report ostensibly requests Cabinet’s approval to increase the amount of contribution requested within the policy from developers in relation to Special Educational Needs infrastructure in order to reflect that the percentage of the population of school-age students in Northumberland with complex needs has risen from 3% to 4% since 2017. Cabinet and FACS are also asked to note that some minor non-material amendments have also been made to update the policy. (G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston – 01670 622281)</p>	<p>FACS 7 October 2021</p>	<p>12 October 2021</p>
<p>Transfer of redundant public toilet to Newbiggin Town Council</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>12 October 2021</p>

<p>To seek a resolution on the recommendation of the Local Area Council in response to a petition on the proposed transfer of a redundant public toilet building to Newbiggin Town Council (J. Riddle/G. Gavin – 07500127242)</p>		
<p>Thirston Neighbourhood Plan To seek approval to formally 'make' the Thirston Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan passed independent examination in June 2021. A local referendum will be held in the Parish of Thirston on 16 September 2021 and it is expected that there will be a majority vote in favour of using the Plan to make decisions on planning applications. The Council will then be obliged by statute to make the Neighbourhood Plan unless it considers that doing so would breach European Union obligations, and that action should be completed within 8 weeks of the date of the referendum. (P. Horncastle/R. Naples - 07966 331548)</p>	N/A	12 October 2021
<p>Culture and Creative Zone Pilot for Northumberland To consider and agree the preferred location for the creation of a Culture and Creative Zone pilot for Northumberland with the support of funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority (W. Ploszaj/J. Rose 01670 624747)</p>	CSEG 11 October 2021	12 October 2021
<p>Proposal to amalgamate Seaton Sluice Middle and Whytrig Middle Schools on an Existing Site This report sets out a proposal to amalgamate Seaton Sluice Middle School and Whytrig Middle School in new shared buildings with Astley Community High School, necessitating the formal closure of Seaton Sluice Middle</p>	FACS 7 October 2021	12 October 2021

<p>School. This proposal has been put forward by the federated Governing Body of the Seaton Valley Federation which governs all 3 schools. This proposal has arisen as an extension of the project to reprovide new buildings for Astley Community High School and Whytrig Middle School on their current site, these two schools already being co-located in Seaton Delaval. The initial project was limited to the reprovision of new buildings for Astley High School and Whytrig Middle school; however the Governing Body has identified a number of educational and financial reasons why it would be beneficial for all students within the Seaton Valley Federation to be co-located on one site, which are outlined in the report. Therefore, the Governing Body has requested the Council to undertake the required consultation on the amalgamation of Seaton Sluice Middle School with Whytrig Middle School.</p> <p>Under the proposal, as Seaton Sluice Middle School would effectively close, it falls within the requirements of <i>The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013</i> which requires that statutory consultation be undertaken. While the proposal to provide new buildings on the current Astley High School site itself does not require a statutory process to be undertaken, it is following a separate process to gain the necessary Cabinet approvals. This report is therefore limited to a request for approval from Cabinet to begin formal consultation on the relocation of Seaton Sluice Middle School.</p> <p>(G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston – 01670 01670 622281)</p>		
<p>Proposals for Atkinson House</p>	<p>FACS 7 October 2021</p>	<p>12 October 2021</p>

<p>This report sets out proposals for Atkinson House Special School in Seghill, a secondary provision for boys with Social, Emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs in Northumberland. The proposals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To relocate the school to a new site at the former Richard Coates CE Primary School building in Ponteland; • To change the designation of the school from single sex provision to co-educational provision in light of the growing number of girls who are being assessed as having SEMH needs in Northumberland. <p>The nature of these proposals require that a statutory process would need to be undertaken prior to any final decision being made by Cabinet. Cabinet is therefore also asked to permit the initiation of the statutory process, beginning with approval for a six week informal public consultation process. Cabinet may be requested to permit the publication of a Statutory Proposal in relation to these proposals at a future date following the outcome of consultation. (G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston – 01670 01670 622281)</p>		
<p>Newcastle Airport - Shareholder Loan Guarantee The purpose of the report is to consider the provision of a loan facility to Newcastle International Airport Limited (NIAL) to support the waiving of loan covenants with its major lenders. (R. Wearmouth/ A. Elsdon 0779 665 2072)</p>	CSEG 11 October 2021	12 October 2021
<p>Budget 2022-23 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-26 This report provides an update on the development of the</p>	CSEG 8 November 2021	9 November 2021

<p>2022-23 Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period 2022 to 2026. This report also details budget proposals for 2022-23 to meet the budget gap, as a basis for budget consultation, prior to the receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23 in December 2021 (R. Wearmouth/ A. Elsdon 01670 622168)</p>		
<p>Northumberland Street Naming and Numbering Policy The report seeks agreement to a policy determining how street names and numbering will be accepted by the Council. The report will set out what is acceptable and what is not, a policy in terms of names being used for deceased people and also what charges may be levied for the work involved in processing a request for a street name. (C. Horncastle/D. Wilson 01670 623704)</p>	C&P 27 October 2021	9 November 2021
<p>Revision of Morpeth Conservation Area Boundary This report will seek approval to adopt revisions to the boundary of the Morpeth Conservation Area (C. Horncastle/ S. Rushton 01670 622650)</p>	N/A	9 November 2021
<p>Approval of the Council Tax Base 2022/23 The Council is required to set its council tax base annually. The tax base must be set between the 1st of December and 31st January. The tax base is a measure of the Council's taxable capacity which is used for the setting of its council tax. Legislation sets out the formula for calculation. Cabinet has delegated authority to approve the tax base.</p>	CSEG 6 December 2021	7 December 2021

(R. Wearmouth/G. Barnes 01670 624351)		
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Northumberland County Council

CABINET

12TH OCTOBER 2021

Integrated Domestic Abuse Services for Northumberland – Permission to Tender

Report of: Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr

Report of Cabinet Member: Councillor Wendy Pattison, Portfolio Holder for Adults' Wellbeing

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek permission from Execs to go to the market to commission a range of services to provide an Integrated Domestic Abuse Service for Northumberland which will allow the Council to meet its statutory duties. The length of contracts will be 2 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

Recommendations

Execs is recommended:

- To note the information presented in this report regarding the procurement of a contract for an integrated domestic abuse service.
- To note that the total value of the four-year contract is approximately £2,595,101. Further detail of spend is outlined below.
- To authorise the Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Children's Services to undertake a procurement exercise and award of the contracts.

Key Issues

The new Domestic Abuse Act was passed into law in April 2021. With this new Act a range of new duties were placed on Local Authorities, including the need to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation services in their areas, this covers:

- Refuge accommodation

- Specialist safe accommodation
- Dispersed accommodation
- Sanctuary schemes
- Move on or second stage accommodation

Each Tier 1 Local Authority is also required to establish a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board that meets quarterly and has responsibility to prepare and publish a strategy for the new provisions of newly legislated support for domestic abuse, as well as continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategy. The Northumberland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board had its first meeting on the 29 June 2021, chaired by Graham Reiter, Service Director Children's Services.

Outlined below are the commissioning intentions which will enable the Local Authority to meet its duties of the new Domestic Abuse Act.

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Housing, and Communities Local Government (MHCLG) advised local authorities of their 2021-22 allocation to meet new statutory duties in February 2021. Whilst this funding is welcome and allows the Council to address levels of unmet need by building upon its core financial commitment of £207,000 per annum, the timescale involved provided a short lead in time in which to develop commissioning intentions.

To support this process, a scoping exercise was undertaken with a Task Group (formed of both internal and external stakeholders) to gain an understanding of existing service provision in Northumberland, the aim of which was to avoid duplication. A needs assessment has also been undertaken.

Although the MHCLG recognise the risks that short term contracts pose they are unable to confirm year two and three allocations until after the annual spending reviews. In order to approach the market with a viable offer, supporting value for money considerations and reducing operational risks, it is proposed that contracts are awarded for 2 years with the option to extend for a further 2. They will be structured to ensure that a risk of a funding reduction in year 2 is mitigated by being able to reduce the contract values, accepting that there would be an associated reduction in service delivery. Contracts will commence in February 2022 ensuring that the funding allocation can be used within the appropriate financial year which will allow for a procurement exercise to be undertaken and seamless transition from existing arrangements, where they exist.

The findings from the needs assessment from our current providers and using internal resources are as follows:

Domestic Abuse Support Service Northumberland commissioned to provide a fully integrated service with a single point of contact available 24 hours a day

- Slight increase in new clients accessing the IDVA Service
- Refuge has been at full capacity throughout 2019/20
- The number of children supported by refuge has increased.
- Over the same period the number of new clients supported by outreach has increased

Acorns-organisation commissioned to provide therapeutic support to children impacted by domestic abuse

- In the year ending March 2021, 235 referrals received since the start of the project in November 2018
- 95 children and young people remain on the waiting list (71%). Demand for Acorns significantly outstrips provision due to the limited funding available.

Housing

- In 2020/21 160 (20%) individuals approached the homeless team due to domestic abuse. This reflects a continued increase which has been seen since 2018.

Adult Social Care

- The number of domestic abuse related enquiries has increased year on year and has more than doubled from 2019/20 to 2020/21 (34 to 88).
- Referrals due to domestic abuse where those referred had identified mental and physical health issues has increased significantly.

Rural Northumberland

- Domestic abuse is less visible in rural areas as services are usually more dispersed.
- They are often close-knit communities causing problems of confidentiality
- Because of rurality access to services and the distance and availability of emergency services and refuges spaces can be a challenge.
- All of these issues may lead to survivors needing to relocate to more urban areas.

From the findings of the scoping exercise and needs analysis the following is proposed.

1. **An integrated Domestic Abuse Support service - £460,000** per annum to provide an assessment hub, refuge, dispersed properties, IDVA, Sanctuary Scheme, Outreach, Groupwork and finally establish a Service User Forum. This provision will be for both male and female victims of domestic abuse over the age of 16.
2. **Children's Counselling and Therapeutic and Outreach Support - £100,000** per annum to support children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. The key elements of this provision will be to provide an initial response, counsel those in need via play therapy and finally establish a children and young people's service user forum. This will be an outreach support service for children and young people.
3. **Perpetrator Service - £100,000** per annum to work with both male and female (aged 18 and over) and operate as a single point of entry for referrals and subsequent delivery for residents who agree to engage and take responsibility and wish to change their abusive behaviour. The service will focus on increasing the safety of partners, children and family members to reduce the incidents of domestic abuse within these relationships
4. **Adult Counselling Service - £30,000** per annum to work with both male and female (aged 18 and over) to support those who have experienced domestic abuse, which will allow victims to explore how they feel and discuss experiences in a safe non-judgemental environment.
5. **Domestic Abuse in Rural Northumberland - £49,999** per annum to work with males and females who reside in the North and West of the county to offer both face to face and virtual sessions, one to one sessions and support groups. Additionally, to work with other agencies to raise awareness in the communities of domestic abuse and sign-post service users to where additional support is available.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:	<p>This procedure follows LA Statutory regulations (2012) that ensure transparent commissioning procedure is followed on behalf of Local Authority commissioning of services. Furthermore, will ensure that NCC meets its new statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p>
Finance and value for money:	<p>The MHCLG have provided additional funding to NCC to enable new duties to be met. Commissioning intentions have been developed to reflect both the statutory requirements and local needs analysis. Through adopting an integrated model, the aspiration is that service users will receive an integrated service and can move from being a victim to a survivor due to the integration of services.</p> <p>Contracts will be awarded in February 2022 allowing funding to be allocated within the appropriate financial year. Value for money will be achieved via an open market procurement exercise.</p> <p>The cost of this tender exercise will be met from existing budget.</p>
Legal:	<p>The Local Authority now has a legal duty to provide these services as part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p>
Procurement:	<p>The value of the proposal requires that an open market procurement exercise be undertaken in order to be compliant.</p>
Human Resources:	<p>TUPE considerations for current provider staff will be the responsibility of the successful provider and built into the contract arrangement</p>
Property:	<p>This will be the responsibility of the successful provider and will be built into the contract arrangement</p>
Equalities: (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment considered the equality agenda and ensures that minority groups are catered for within the service specification.</p>
Risk Assessment:	<p>The Local Authority is required to ensure commissioning of services is competitively tendered. If this tender is agreed by Cabinet, the risk of challenge will be mitigated.</p>

Crime & Disorder:	The range of services covered by the commissioning intentions includes support for perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse.
Customer Considerations:	The customer needs are at the centre of the procurement process and subsequent service delivery. It is a requirement that the customer is consulted about service redesign, and this will be assessed throughout the life of the contract. The service providers will be expected to hold regular service user forums to gain feedback from service users. This feedback will form part of discussions at the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board with service providers being an integral member of the Partnership Board.
Carbon Reduction:	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	Health and wellbeing are at the centre for this procurement process. The aim of these services is to ensure victims can find safe accommodation, access service provision to support with accessing additional services where appropriate.
Wards:	All Wards

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet>

Report Sign Off

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Neil Masson
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	Guy Renner-Thompson Wendy Pattison

Report Authors:

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Northumberland County Council

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 6TH OCTOBER 2021

NORTHUMBERLAND CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

Report of: Matt Baker, Service Director for Climate Change, Business Intelligence and Corporate Performance

Cabinet Member: Cllr Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council

Purpose of report

To provide an update on progress against the Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23, published in January 2021.

Including progress against the two key pledges of reducing Northumberland County Council carbon emissions by 50% by 2025 and of reducing Northumberland's entire carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030.

Recommendations

1. Note governance arrangements and grants of over £8m awarded to date in FY 2021/22 with a further £6m identified.
2. Note the progress made to date, including achieving the 50% reduction in County Council emissions, ahead of the 2025 target, and the 8% reduction in County emissions.
3. Note and support the strategic changes implemented to embed Climate Change into everyday ways of working, which may result in recommendations to change or adjust key decisions (Policy, Planning, Procurement, Performance).
4. Pro-actively engage with the Climate Change team to enable even more engagement with residents, communities, and local businesses.
5. Continue to engage directly with the Climate Change service, to scrutinise and support key decisions, but also to be active in considering the Climate Change impact when providing scrutiny across all areas of the Council.

Executive Summary

1. Robust governance of the Climate Change programme has been established including:
 - a. A steering group made up of external representatives of climate action groups, business, agriculture and the third sector which meets quarterly.
 - b. A cross-party working group made up of elected members representing Conservatives, Labour, Independent Group and Green Party which meets quarterly.
2. The following progress has been made following the commitment to make Climate Change a key priority for the Council.
 - a. Following the analysis of CO2 emissions produced by Northumberland County Council in the financial year 2020-21, the target of reducing emissions by 50% against 2010 levels has now been achieved 4 years ahead of the 2025 deadline. This result is sensitive to the impact of a fall in business miles as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - b. Following the release of the most recent emissions data for Local Authorities (2019), Northumberland now needs to reduce annual emissions by 681 kt CO2 in order to reach net-zero emissions by 2030, a reduction of 8%.
3. In 2021/22, we have so far been successful in attracting over £8m and bids are in progress to access an additional £6m.
4. It should be noted that our target to be net zero by 2030 is sensitive to a number of key national policy decisions and solutions. In particular:
 - a. Decarbonisation of and access to the national grid at the required scale.
 - b. The Hydrogen strategy.
 - c. The Environment Bill.
 - d. Ban on internal combustion engine cars.
 - e. Revisions to the 'National Policy Framework'.
 - f. Affordability, especially for residents, to adopt and run green solutions.
5. To make Climate Change part of everything we do at the Council four strategic changes to ways of working have been introduced to Policy, Planning, Procurement, Performance and People:
 - a. All key policy decisions will be subject to a Carbon Impact Assessment. Outliers will be escalated through governance channels as required.
 - b. The Climate Change Team now act as consultees to all planning applications that could have a positive or negative impact on emissions.
 - c. Working in partnership with the procurement team a specific focus on Net Zero is included in the procurement / commissioning process for all new contracts.
 - d. The activities undertaken to deliver net zero are monitored through the Corporate Performance Cycle.
 - e. We are implementing Carbon Literacy training across the Council to support the culture change required to deliver net zero.
6. We are consulting and engaging with our residents in a number of ways:
 - a. 10 Climate Change community groups participated in the pilot Community Climate Champion Scheme.
 - b. Extending the Climate Champion Scheme to another 15 communities, before we scale the approach across all Wards, Town and Parish Councils.
 - c. Live town hall events have been held online to engage with the public through the Pandemic.

- d. Over 5000 residents have signed up to be part of the Council's resident network for climate change.
- e. We are engaging with schools to integrate Climate Change into the core curriculum.
- 7. We are consulting, engaging and training all our staff through rolling out Carbon Literacy Training across the entire Council.
- 8. Projects are underway across the 5 direct action areas identified in the climate change action plan 2021-23 namely Heat, Transport, Renewable Energy, Sequestration and Waste. When delivered these projects will deliver a 31.5 ktCO2 reduction.
- 9. Working across a number of service areas we are actively exploring opportunities to deliver innovations and improvements to existing resident facing services where there is a net zero opportunity, examples include:
 - a. With Planning as part of day-to-day planning work (application by application) alongside more strategic work to change how organisations offset emissions to have a more immediate impact on local communities.
 - b. With Housing to explore opportunities to connect traditional maintenance activities to innovations, like solar roof tiles and local 'smart-grids', that may help residents save money and carbon.
 - c. With Neighbourhood Services to explore a more radical approach to decarbonisation of the fleet through a mixture of transport technologies.
 - d. With Children's and Adults' services to connect some of our most vulnerable residents to grants that target fuel poverty and climate change.
 - e. With Estates to accelerate the decarbonisation of the Council's estate.
 - f. A significant increase in the scale of our interventions (number and impact) is required to deliver net zero by 2030. Work is underway to create year on year targets for decarbonisation across the priority action areas. This data will inform and shape project priorities beyond 2023 and funding requirements to achieve net zero (Revenue and Capital).
- 10. Key to delivering Net Zero will be local, national and global behavioural change alongside specific actions we can take to attract Private Sector investment and create effective delivery partnerships. To help Northumberland residents benefit as much as possible from the growth in the green economy a number of activities are underway:
 - a. Working with Economy & Regen and Advance, a Net-zero Investment Strategy is being developed to put Northumberland at the forefront of the green job revolution and help to create a supply chain that works for rural counties.
 - b. We are building relationships with key partners including Borderlands and the North of Tyne Combined Authority. We will use the Climate Change evidence base to inform our work with these partners, to inform decision making and help our residents get fair representation and value for money from these devolution deals.
 - c. We are building relationships with the government departments who are crucial to delivering net zero, like BEIS and government delivery partners, like the Northern Powergrid. We also have a small amount of ministerial engagement on a key project for 'off grid' communities.
 - d. We are also building delivery partnerships with organisations, like the National Park Authority, the Forestry Commission and the business community.
 - e. Where the market cannot offer affordable solutions for our residents and communities, we are considering the viability of delivering more services to residents: in-house, using not for profit organisations and potentially through a new arm's length Council-owned Green Company.

Link to Corporate Plan

The Climate Change programme contributes to all the priorities included in the Northumberland County Council Corporate Plan 2018-2021:

- How - efficient, open and work for everyone: We will listen to and consider public views as we develop and implement our plan and we will empower local communities to do their part to tackle climate change.
- Living - living, safe, healthy and cared for: We will work to reduce the impact of fuel poverty and climate change on community wellbeing.
- Enjoying - love where you live: We will conserve and protect our exceptional natural environment assets.
- Connecting - access to the things you need: We will promote resident access to sustainable transport options and renewable energy sources.
- Learning - achieve and realise your potential: We will encourage the uptake of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills to support the development of our green economy.
- Thriving - attract more and better jobs: We will position the county as a national exemplar location for renewable and low carbon energy generation and other green industry.

Introduction

Having declared a Climate Emergency in summer 2019, Northumberland County Council made the following two pledges:

- Reduce Northumberland County Council's own carbon emissions by 50% by 2025 against a 2010 baseline.
- Work with national government to reduce the county of Northumberland's total carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030.

Since making the declaration, a programme of work has been set up and a dedicated team established to support work towards these ambitious targets. The first detailed Climate Change Action Plan (2021-23) was published in January 2021 and set out projects scheduled for the next two years together with a modelled route to net-zero. This modelling set out for the first time, the scale of the net-zero challenge in terms of the number of residents whose homes would need to decarbonise, the number of vehicles which would need to be replaced by zero tailpipe emissions and the number of trees and other land use changes which would need to be implemented to bring emissions down to net-zero.

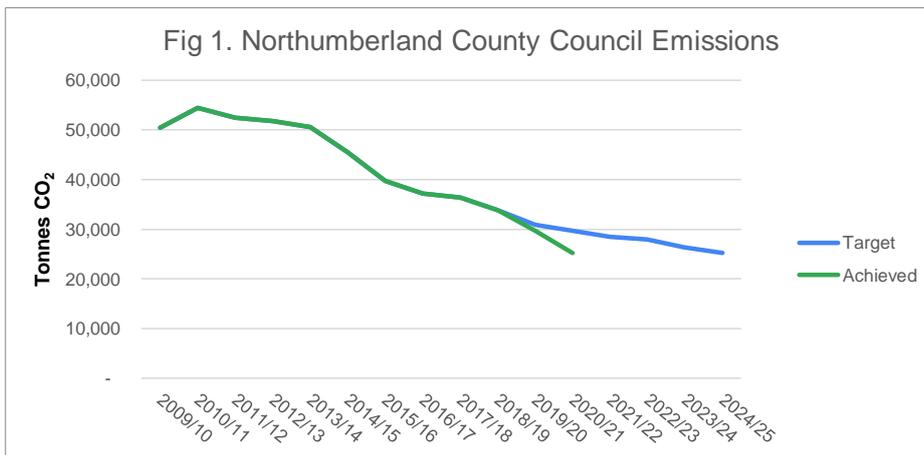
Since the publication of the Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23, the Council has been making progress against the various projects and targets set out within. This report outlines that progress.

1. Northumberland County Council Carbon Emissions

In its statement of intent, published upon the declaration of a Climate Emergency in June 2019, the Council set out a Carbon Management Reduction Commitment which would take the Council's total carbon emissions from 50.46kt CO₂ in 2010 to 26.96kt CO₂ in 2025, a reduction of 50%.

1.1. County Council Emissions

Using information available up and to including the 31st March 2021 the Council is now reporting emissions of 25.21kt CO₂ compared to 50.5kt CO₂ in 2010 and therefore has achieved a 50% reduction in emissions - see figure 1.



The reduction in emissions in 2020/21 exceeded both our target and our most ambitious forecast, the main drivers for the reduction in emissions were:

1. A reduction in business travel and fleet mileage.
2. The completion of the LED roll out to UMS street lighting.
3. An increasing number of Council buildings are having their electricity supplied, in part, by solar technology.
4. The fleet replacement programme.

Important Note:

- A number of Council controlled schools have become academies; these have been removed from both the baseline and reported position.
- The Covid-19 pandemic forced a rapid change in the way our employees work and move around the county. This has resulted in a significant drop in emissions from areas such as business mileage. While we don't expect these emissions to return to pre-pandemic levels, they could rise as the pandemic fades and we move to a hybrid way of working.

Next Steps

The Council must not be complacent in continuing to tackle its emissions both in order to maintain its performance against its stated target and also to continue to build its reputation as an exemplar of good practice.

To ensure that the Council's carbon emissions continue to fall, a number of key projects are underway.

Fleet Replacement Programme

The Council is in the process of replacing its small van fleet with electric vehicles (EVs) as internal combustion engine (ICE) vans reach the end of their lifespan. A target of replacing 70 vans by 2023 a total of 56 vans are in the pipeline this financial year. This will lead to a CO₂ reduction of 200 tonnes per year.

We have now moved on to looking at the next class of vans (transit size) and whether these could be replaced by EVs. Currently, there is nothing on the market which meets service needs. The market is however, changing rapidly so ICE vans are currently being repaired and maintained beyond their normal lifespan as we await electric alternatives.

In addition to vehicles, replacement of handheld equipment such as brush cutters and hedge trimmers with electric alternatives has also been underway.

Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund

The Council has been successfully awarded £3m in grant funding towards decarbonisation of its estate. This project is installing Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHPs) in the following 6 locations:

Willowburn Leisure Centre
Swarland Primary School
Stamfordham Primary School
Stannington Primary School
Belford Fire Station
Lindisfarne Centre

This will lead to a CO₂ reduction of 333 tonnes CO₂ per year and will be completed this financial year.

Solar Car Port

The Council is in the process of building a solar car port over its County Hall car park. In conjunction with the already installed roof mounted solar, once complete, this will supply 50% of County Hall's energy demand and save 269 tonnes CO₂ per year. This project was delayed due to procurement issues and is now scheduled for completion by summer 2022.

Business Miles

In the financial year 2020-21, business mileage reduced by 63.7% compared to the previous year. This was driven by the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing rapid change to virtual meetings in place of physical.

As the WorkSmart programme begins to push an era of hybrid working, the Council's business mileage claims are likely to rise again.

In order to reduce the risk of business mileage rising to pre-Covid levels, each service area will be asked to agree KPIs which balance service need against a business mileage reduction target. These KPIs will be monitored through the corporate performance system.

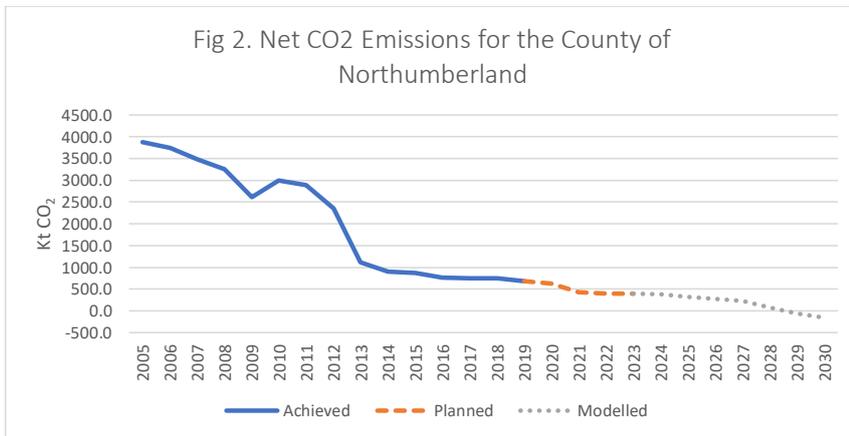
Detailed baseline

Alongside these activities we are building a detailed baseline position of all the Council's sequestration and carbon saving opportunities to inform future projects.

1.2. Net-Zero Northumberland

In our statement of intent, published upon the declaration of a Climate Emergency in June 2019, the Council set out our ambition to 'work with the Government to achieve carbon neutrality for the county of Northumberland by 2030.' In our Climate Action Plan 2021-23, the Council set out the known projects it would lead until 2023 and set out a model for reaching carbon neutrality, also known as 'net-zero' by 2030.

At the time of its publication, the most recent figure for Northumberland's net emissions as published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), was 731kt CO₂ (2018). Since then, the data for 2019 has been published which puts this figure at 681 kt CO₂. This is a reduction of 60 kt (8%) against the emissions reported in 2018. Compared to the national average for Local Authorities, which saw a reduction of 34 kt (3.6%) against the emissions reported in 2018. Figure 2 below shows the trajectory of carbon emissions in Northumberland since 2005 up to the most recent report in 2019.



2. Key dependencies

The planned and modelled emissions to 2030 are dependent both on central government policy and on our local action.

2.1. Grid Decarbonisation

The use of renewables to power national electricity demand is the single biggest external influencing factor on our ability to reach net-zero as a county.

Current projections indicate that by 2030, the electricity grid will have decarbonised substantially. We estimate this will reduce emissions from electricity use in Northumberland by 298 kt CO₂. The Council does not have direct control on this trajectory and must keep a watching brief in order to assess the local implications if national targets are not met.

2.2. Hydrogen

According to the UK Hydrogen strategy policy paper, hydrogen will play a key role in meeting the 2050 net-zero goal targeted by the UK.

As a first step, the UK has set an ambitious production of 5GW of energy by 2030 using what is known as low carbon hydrogen. Within the North East, the key areas for hydrogen have been identified as transportation, distributed generation and power-to-gas, where intermittent renewables are integrated into the grid by producing hydrogen at times of high generation but low demand.

Due to the immaturity of the technology, hydrogen is not currently part of our plans to reach net-zero by 2030. However, if the government strategy comes quickly to fruition, hydrogen could become a source of low-carbon energy within our net-zero target timeframe.

2.3. Environment Bill

The new Environment Bill has now proceeded to the House of Lords and is likely to become law imminently. The main aims of the Bill are to:

- Transform our environmental governance once we leave the EU by putting environmental principles into law, introducing legally binding targets, and establishing a new Office for Environmental Protection.
- Increase local powers to tackle sources of air pollution.
- Protect nature and improve biodiversity by working with developers.
- Extend producer responsibility, ensure a consistent approach to recycling, introduce deposit return schemes, and introduce charges for specified single use plastic items.
- Secure long-term, resilient water and wastewater services, including through powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand.

Work is underway across relevant parts of the Council to prepare for the changes the new Environment Bill will introduce. This includes the pilot Local Nature Recovery Strategy which will in due course detail a local plan to protect nature and improve biodiversity. In addition, work in Neighbourhood Services is underway to plan for the increase in waste collections which will be required through the new consistent approach to recycling.

2.4. Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)

New Environmental Land Management Schemes are being designed by DEFRA that will reward environmental land management across:

- Sustainable Farming Incentive
- Local Nature Recovery
- Landscape Recovery

These schemes are intended to support the rural economy while achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and a commitment to national net zero emissions by 2050. Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering the following:

- Clean and plentiful water
- Clean air
- Thriving plants and wildlife
- Protection from environmental hazards
- Reduction of and adaptation to climate change
- Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment

These schemes will be relevant to the Climate Change Programme, in particular the LNRS and the Great Northumberland Forest.

2.5. UN Climate Change Conference COP26

COP26 will be held in Glasgow from 31st October to 12th November 2021. The run up to this year's summit in Glasgow is the moment (delayed by a year due to the pandemic) when countries update their plans for reducing emissions. The commitments laid out at COP21 in Paris did not come close to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, and the window for achieving this is closing. COP26 is aiming to be a decisive summit where countries agree to much more significant measures to reduce global warming than at Paris.

With COP26 taking place in the UK, there will be global focus on the UK's response to Climate Change. A bid has been made to showcase the work of the Borderlands Energy Masterplan in the UN Pavilion for which we are awaiting the outcome. We will also look to harness the awareness raised by COP26 for climate change by running a range of communications and engagement activities which are currently being designed.

2.6. Internal Combustion Engine Ban

Government have brought forward the proposed ban on the purchase of new internal combustion engine (ICE) cars to 2030. This legislation will drive a shift towards zero tailpipe emissions vehicles which we are factoring into our modelling. Any changes to this legislation will affect the reduction of emissions from private vehicles.

2.7. National Planning Policy Framework

The revised National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Changes to national planning policies such as building regulations can impact our ability as a Council to reach net-zero emissions.

2.8. Affordability of Green Solutions

Whilst many of the technologies exist to reach net-zero, there are still many barriers to applying them in the homes and businesses across our county. Not least amongst these is

affordability. Many solutions such as air or ground source heat pumps are expensive to install and can be expensive to run.

3. Changes to how the Council works to support climate change

Through enhancing the processes at key decision points across the Council and ensuring the highest levels of carbon and climate literacy across the entire workforce we are starting to put climate change at the centre of what we do as a Council.

3.1. Policy and Carbon Impact Assessments

To ensure that carbon emissions are considered in all key projects and policy decisions, a Carbon Impact Assessment has been designed which will be used by officers to calculate a carbon score against their proposals. This can then be considered by both executive and elected decision makers. A separate paper has recently gone to Execs and Informal Cabinet detailing this process. Carbon Impact Assessments will begin to be carried out across key parts of the organisation from September 2021, this will cover Member's Priorities, Service Strategies and Service Delivery activities. The output from the carbon impact assessment will be used as a tool to flag and resolve policy conflicts.

3.2. Planning

As the Northumberland Local Plan nears adoption, the Climate Change team are working closely with colleagues in Planning to support the additional implementation of supplementary planning documents which will support the net-zero target. These will encourage developers to adopt renewable technologies to reduce the carbon impact of developments.

The Climate Change Team are now appointed consultees in the planning process and are receiving relevant planning applications in order to review and comment from a climate change perspective.

3.3. Procurement

The Council now has in place a Procurement Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy which aims to address sustainability in our supply chain.

The Procurement CSR policy seeks to minimise or eliminate carbon emissions, waste and other negative environmental impacts within the Council's commissioned services and wider supply chain. The policy includes six strategic commitments for mandatory consideration at the early stages of every procurement and commission of external goods, works and services over £50,000.

- Waste Reduction
- Improve Social Value
- Improve Health & Wellbeing
- Reduce CO₂ & Green House Emissions
- Combat Modern Slavery
- Increased use of SME and local suppliers

This policy recognises that, whilst wider supply chain issues are outside the scope of the Council's 2030 net zero target, the Council has an ethical and moral responsibility to reduce global emissions and environmental degradation in any way that it can.

3.4. Performance

From Q1 2021, progress of the Climate Change programme will be monitored through the quarterly corporate performance report. Climate Change will report against a number of agreed performance indicators relating back to member priorities. These are:

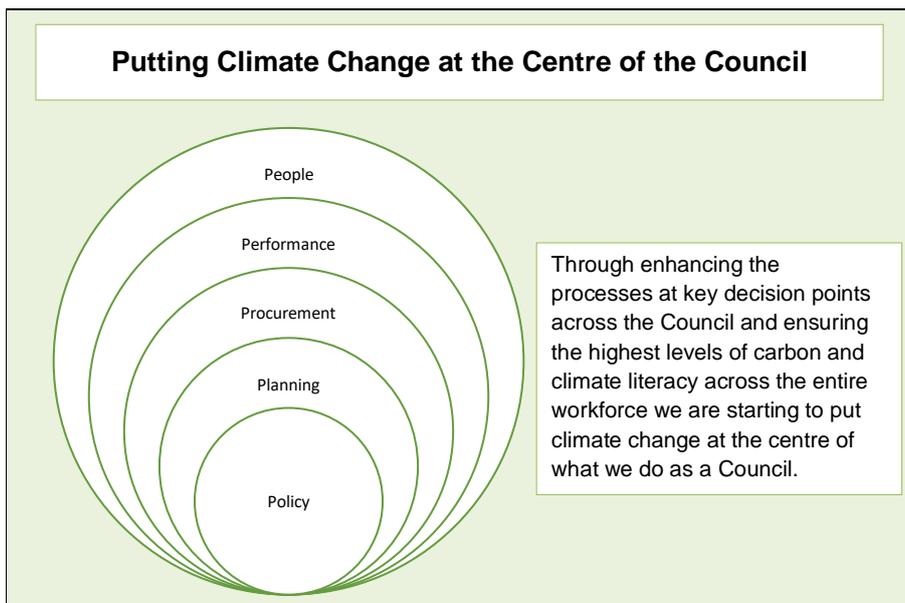
1. Council owned carbon emissions
2. Fleet replacement
3. Tree planting
4. Recycling
5. EV Charge Points
6. County owned carbon emissions

Key external factors such as grid decarbonisation and electric vehicle take up will also be tracked. Associated risks will be flagged to the Climate Change team in order to make key strategic decisions in good time.

Individual projects will report through the agreed governance mechanisms to the Programme Manager and Service Director. A monthly programme status report is compiled for the Service Director and can be provided on request. This report will also be presented at quarterly meetings of Steering Group and cross-party Working Group.

3.5. People and Carbon Literacy Training

The Council has begun offering a carbon literacy training programme to its workforce in order to ensure the impacts of climate change and the means of mitigating them are understood across the organisation. This training has received positive feedback and so far, a total of 39 members of staff have completed the training.



4. Engaging with our residents and communities

Delivering net zero is fundamentally a massive behavioural change programme, not just for Northumberland but for the world. To help deliver this for the county we are placing a significant focus on partnerships and engagement with our residents, businesses, visitors and partner organisations.

4.1. Community Climate Champions

The Community Climate Champion scheme was set up to give residents and community groups the opportunity to educate their communities and empower them with their own community climate Action Plans at a local level.

This approach has now been piloted and was largely successful. 9 action plans were developed through the pilot and feedback was positive. The action plans were developed by champions in the following locations:

- Ashington
- Felton
- Alnwick
- Corbridge
- Haltwhistle
- Humshaugh
- Rothbury
- Slaley
- Newbrough, Fourstones and Warden

The pilot process is currently being reviewed and phase 2 will be launched at the end of September, inviting a further tranche of up to 15 community climate champions to join.

In the longer term, we will be developing a toolkit to allow community groups to develop action plans based on relevant local datasets without the need to go through an involved process with the Council. This will allow the model to be scaled up significantly and is expected to be available from early 2022, including with Town and Parish Councils.

4.2. Additional Community Engagement

In addition, where groups including Town and Parish Councils have proactively sought support, we have with members and communities on case-by-case basis to help develop their plans.

The Climate Change Team is building a database of which Town and Parish Councils have declared a climate emergency or wish to take action against climate change. Following this process, we will pursue a coordinated engagement approach to all Town and Parish Councils.

In addition to the Community Climate Champions Scheme we have a number of other ways of engaging with residents. A monthly newsletter goes out to 5331 subscribers. We have

held 3 virtual events for residents and have a 4th scheduled on 29th September. In addition, we have attended 9 community based or national events to share the County's plan for climate change.

4.3. Climate Change Steering Group

The membership of the Climate Change Steering Group has been increased to ensure that the interests of business, farming and the third sector are included alongside the climate action groups which already attend.

4.4. Schools and Education

As part of the school's outreach scheme pilot the Climate Change Team and a local climate champion visited Bothal Primary School in Ashington. The creation and launch of a programme within the school was discussed, with the next action being a meeting with the head of curriculum teachers and the Climate Change Team to begin creating the programme for Bothal School. The plan is to extend the pilot from here into other schools in the county.

Community Partnerships in action

We are actively supporting the community in Humshaugh to support their local ambition to be net zero by 2030.

Humshaugh Parish has an area of 1,200 ha and in 2011 had a population of 622 living in 290 households. With subsequent developments households now number approximately 350. In 2020 Humshaugh Net Zero (HNZ) was established. HNZ is a Community Interest Company set up with support from Humshaugh Community Ventures Ltd. HNZ will evaluate how Humshaugh could achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and develop and implement plans for so doing.

A household carbon footprint survey was undertaken by HNZ, in association with Newcastle University, which estimated total Parish emissions at 5,300 tonnes of CO₂ per annum.

Plans include projects to decarbonise Humshaugh First School, the Village Shop, Village Hall and Church together with other commercial enterprises in the parish.

To evaluate low carbon electricity generation and heating options HNZ secured a £37,000 grant from the Rural Communities Energy Fund (RCEF). A wide range of technologies have been investigated by independent consultants.

4.5. Free Tree Scheme

To help increase tree planting across the county, and further increase negative emissions, the Council aims to giveaway thousands of young tree saplings to residents, community groups and schools to plant on their land every year until 2030. The Council's ultimate ambition is to give away a free tree for every household in the county.

Whilst this scheme will not have a significant impact on emissions, it has proved an excellent way of engaging residents around climate change and disseminating information.

In 2020, 7,000 of the allocated 15,000 trees were distributed to residents and groups. This was due to the impact of local and national lockdowns through the late autumn and early winter distribution period. The surplus trees were planted by the Council on Council-owned land.

In 2021 we are aiming once again to give away 15,000 free trees. Booking has just opened with 6612 trees being claimed as of 13/09/21.

5. Council Led Projects

The total reduction in emissions up to 2023 from Council-led projects is estimated at 31.5kt CO₂. A summary of the projects underway is provided below.

5.1. Heating New and Existing Buildings

Green Homes Grant

The Council has been successful in receiving an award of £3m in grant funding towards improving energy efficiency in some of the County's most inefficient and low-income homes.

This project is in the process of installing external wall insulation, air source heat pumps and solar PV onto a target of 340 homes (140 social, 200 private). This will have an anticipated carbon saving of 197 tonnes CO₂ per year.

Funding for the next round of this programme has already been awarded which will allow measures to be introduced to a further 200 private homes.

Additional future funding has been signposted by BEIS and the Council will be bidding for this as it becomes available.

Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Grant

Up to £10,000 worth of funding available for your home¹

Northumberland e-on

Improve your home with the Green Homes Grant

Launched by the Government, the Green Homes Grant is a scheme to help homeowners pay for energy saving improvements to their homes, helping to reduce energy bills and improve home warmth. We're delivering this scheme in partnership with Northumberland County Council.

Turnover to find out what you could benefit from and how to apply.

Through this grant we are able to use funding made available through central government to help some of our most vulnerable residents save money on their fuel bills and at the same time reduce the Carbon footprint of both Privately owned and Local Authority owned domestic properties.

This is the first of a pipeline of similar grants being made available through BEIS.

District Heat Networks

Work continues to develop the proposals for low carbon district heat networks in our main towns. Funding has been awarded for the first stage of investigation (heat mapping) in Alnwick, Ashington, Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth which is about to go to procurement. Completion of this process is expected in December 2021

Funding has also been awarded for the second stage of design (technoeconomic feasibility) in Blyth and Cramlington. This is also going to procurement and completion of this process is expected in February 2022. Providing the network is proven to be viable, this will lead to a programme of capital works in 2022.

5.2. Transport

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

The Council continues to improve the EV charging network in Northumberland. In Financial Year 2020/21 an additional 12 charging points were installed in Council-owned car parks. 22 new charging bays will be installed in public car parks in 2021/22. In addition, £130,000 of funding was awarded through the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) for the installation of 30 'on-street' charge points targeted at residents without off-street parking. These will be installed by December 2021. This means that an additional 52 charge points will be installed this financial year.

Furthermore, the solar car port at County Hall will include 120 charge points for Council staff by summer 2022.

We anticipate a growing demand for charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking as the deadline for the sale of new ICE vehicles approaches (2030). It is therefore anticipated that the Council will continue to bid for funding from OZEV towards this in future years.

5.3. Renewable Energy

The solar car port reported under section 2 is the main project being delivered towards renewable energy provision.

5.4. Carbon Sequestration

Since the Council made the facilitation of large-scale woodland creation and tree planting a priority in 2019, over 767 hectares of woodland have been created with an additional 240,000 trees planted elsewhere. It is estimated that this additional woodland has the potential to sequester up to 59.75 ktCO₂ by 2030.

A programme manager and environment analyst have been recruited to the Great Northumberland Forest programme and a formal launch event is scheduled for this autumn.

The programme continues to engage with landowners and to identify land which may be appropriate for woodland creation and will henceforth report its progress against these targets through the corporate performance system.

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5.5. Waste

Developing the Council's circular economy strategy will be at the centre of our approach to Waste. This will link closely to the Net Zero Investment Strategy. Our circular economy strategy will set out the Council's role in shifting the Council and the County from today's take-make-dispose mindset, to a restorative—using and reusing as efficiently as possible culture.

A paper has also been drafted for Cabinet regarding the glass recycling pilot undertaken in 2020/21. Funding has been requested to extend this for an additional year which would see a further 250 tonnes of glass collected from the kerbside in pilot areas. Currently, the carbon impact of this process is not fully understood, and work is ongoing to address this.

In the longer term, the Government's national waste strategy is likely to impose a statutory requirement to collect both glass and food waste from the kerbside. Work is ongoing to assess both the financial and carbon impact of providing this service.

6. Service Innovations and the Pipeline after 2023

A significant increase in the scale of our interventions (number and impact) is required to deliver net zero by 2030. Work is underway to create year on year targets for decarbonisation across the priority action areas. This evidence base will inform and shape project priorities beyond 2023 and funding requirements to achieve net zero (Revenue and Capital).

Whilst we are building the complete picture, a number of activities are underway to enhance existing ways of working to integrate climate change into key decision-making points for services that can have a significant impact on achieving net zero, including:

- With Planning as part of day-to-day planning work (application by application) and more strategically to influence how organisations offset emissions to have a more immediate impact on local communities.
- With Housing to explore opportunities to connect traditional maintenance activities to innovations, like solar roof tiles and local 'smart-grids', that may help residents save money and carbon.
- With Neighbourhood Services to explore a more radical approach to decarbonisation of the fleet through a mixture of transport technologies, including alternative fuels as a steppingstone to full decarbonisation.
- With Children's and Adults' services to connect some of our most vulnerable residents to grants that target fuel poverty and climate change.
- With Estates to accelerate the decarbonisation of the Council's estate.

Beyond 2023, there are a number of projects we are already planning for, alongside work that is underway to determine a detailed evidence base for the targets these projects need to achieve in order to deliver net zero by 2030. Projects in the pipeline include:

6.1. District Heat Networks

The projects set out previously will take several years to reach their full potential. Beyond the initial stages of feasibility and phase 1 capital build, we intend to develop and grow these networks to serve many more customers in our towns with low-carbon heat.

6.2. Off Electricity Grid Properties

The Council is part of a working group seeking ways to provide properties not currently connected to the Electricity Grid with low carbon electricity generation solutions.

6.3. Electric Vehicle Charging at Scale

As we approach the 2030 ban on Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles, it is anticipated that between 600-1000 charging points will need to be made available to residents who park on the street. The Council is investigating how the current pilot of on-street charge points can be scaled up to meet this demand. Alongside which the Council is exploring how to encourage the behavioural shift needed at the scale required to reduce the county's transport emissions.

6.4. Opportunities to increase the scale of tree planting

Working with the Great Northumberland Forest team, elected members, landowners and the farming community, we are exploring opportunities to increase the rate and scale of planting 'the right tree'.

6.5. Peat

Peat could help sequester large amounts of carbon within Northumberland if restored and managed correctly.

Work has already been undertaken by the Northumberland National Park Authority to restore 150 hectares of peat on the Cheviot summit with a carbon sequestration potential of -585 tonnes CO₂ per year. Further restoration has taken place outside the NNPA both north of the A69 through the work of the Northumberland Peat Partnership and south of the A69 through the North Pennines AONB.

The Northumberland Peat Partnership has recently bid for funding to undertake more comprehensive conditional surveys of peat across the county in order to understand what restoration work is required and what the CO₂ sequestration potential might be.

6.6. Home Energy Improvements

Additional future funding has been signposted by BEIS for continued energy efficiency improvements of low-income homes. The Council will be bidding for this as it becomes available. This includes future iterations of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LAD 2 and 3), the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).

7. Benefiting from the Green Economy

Through a range of activities designed to ensure we benefit from the expected surge in the green economy our ambition is to help residents feel valued and connected to their communities and the regional green vision.

7.1. Net Zero Investment Strategy

The NCC Net-zero Investment Strategy will create a robust framework to assist the region in attracting the 1.6bn of investment needed to become net-zero, create 11,000 green jobs and improve the quality of lives (socially and economically) for Northumberland residents.

Allowing Northumberland to be at the forefront of the green job revolution and specifically help to create a supply chain that works for a rural county. Through the strategy we will create the conditions where our economy (jobs, skills and employers) enables a vision for Northumberland in 2030 where we:

- Are known as the greenest county in England, especially through our role as the 'lungs of England'.
- Make the most of all our resources (renewables, sequestration, circular economy).
- Heat and power our homes and communities in the most sustainable way possible, accounting for the complexities of rurality.
- We get around the county in a sustainable way, including through active transport.

We will work closely with the Regeneration and Economy service and with Advance to develop and deliver this strategy.

7.2. Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal includes a £31m fund for low carbon energy investments, and a £10m fund for natural capital investment across the two Countries. Designed to drive economic growth through new job creation there is a specific aim to decarbonise through emission reductions from businesses and residents, transport and travel and sequestration. There is a strong focus on more community and distributed energy systems to ensure growth is inclusive to the areas that make up Borderlands. A Low Carbon Energy Masterplan will be published by the end of the year to showcase the calculated economic and social opportunities and needed priorities for investment, followed up by costed, community driven Local Area Energy Investment Plans one of which will be set up within Northumberland (by the end of 2022). Working closely with the Climate Change team, this work will support emission reductions, engagement and clean growth investments and has a number of strategic objectives which support climate ambitions of Northumberland.

7.3. North of Tyne Combined Authority

Collaboration with NOTCA exists at a number of levels. Members of the Climate Change Team sit on the NOTCA low carbon working group which shapes the combined authority's approach to climate change initiatives and ensures alignment with County plans. Responses from the NOTCA citizens assembly on climate change have been compiled and responded to by the Climate Change Team. Work is taking place in Northumberland already to address the majority of issues raised.

We are also working with NOTCA to ensure we get the maximum return for residents through the NOTCA Green New Deal Fund.

7.4. Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Hub

The Climate Change Team works closely with the LEP and the LA7, it represents both informally to share best practice, and through the Energy Accelerator. The Accelerator provides funding and support for feasibility work with the aim of bringing projects from concept to capital build as quickly as possible.

Implications

Policy	Proposes Council policies should be aligned to mitigate climate change and support carbon reduction.
Finance and value for money	There are no direct financial implications associated with this report Notes that Climate Change work will be subject to corporate performance reporting in order to monitor success including value for money.
Legal	N/A
Procurement	Refers to corporate social responsibility procurement policy.
Human Resources	Possible implications on business mileage. Training of staff in carbon literacy.
Property	N/A
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Where possible projects and programmes will assist residents in fuel poverty and try to bring about fairer and more equal access to more affordable energy.
Risk Assessment	See corporate risk register
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Customer Consideration	Residents of the council can expect the Council to lead a move to a net zero target by 2030. The Council will work to involve all residents and businesses in this process.
Carbon reduction	Adopting recommendations in this paper will either directly or indirectly lead to significant carbon savings.
Wards	All

Background papers:

Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that relevant officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	Full name of officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Helen Lancaster
Finance	Andy Stewart
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Northumberland
County Council

North East Enhanced Bus Partnership

6th October 2021

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Strategic Importance of Buses in the Region

- 162.4 million passenger journeys on region's bus network in 2018/19
- Only 68% of NE households own a car (compared to 74% nationally)
- 30% of NE bus journeys are to employment
- Vital role in social inclusion – school, shopping, health, key services
- Part of the solution to air quality and carbon reduction commitments through modal shift from private cars
- Bus companies are also big employers in region, with over 6000 jobs in the industry

Northumberland Bus Network

Fully commercial bus network

Northumberland Public Bus Service Route Lines (Not subsidised by Northumberland County Council)



Published November 2014. Scale: 1:525,000
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Northumberland County Council

Fully or partly subsidised bus network

Northumberland Public Bus Service Route Lines



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Impact of Covid-19 on bus services in Northumberland

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent advice to stay at home and avoid unnecessary travel has had a profound effect on the public bus network over the last 18 months. There have been over 6.5m fewer journeys in 2020/21 when compared with the previous year.

The resulting decline in patronage has meant that, in common with other regions, the Northumberland bus network is now being heavily supported by the public purse, due to farebox revenue that allows commercial bus services to make a return on costs having been decimated.

Bus Passenger Patronage in Northumberland (Total Boardings)

	2019/20	2020/21	% prior year
April - June	2,174,000	357,000	16.4%
July - September	2,487,000	915,000	36.8%
October - December	2,282,000	836,000	36.6%
January – March	1,904,000	788,000	41.4%

Indicative revenue of bus operators

Funding Stream	Pre COVID-19 Revenue	Revenue (April - March 21)
From Fares	61%	25%
Concessionary Travel (LA)	23%	23%
Secured Services (LA)	10%	10%
Bus Services Operator Grant (DfT)	6%	12%
Bus Services Support Grant (DfT)	0%	30%

Future Funding of the bus network:

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Bus Service Improvement Plan & Enhanced Partnerships

LTA invited to bid for additional funding post March 2022

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What the DfT wants us to do...	How the DfT wants us to do it...
<p>Be Ambitious Be Successful Be in a Partnership: joint working with operators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the use of buses;• Attract lapsed, existing and new users;• Reverse decades of decline in passenger numbers;• Reformed network;• Improve public confidence;• Address misconceptions, and;• Encourage people to use bus.	<p>Aim high Deliver at speed Meet the October 2021 and March 2022 deadline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More frequent;• Faster & more reliable;• Better integrated with other modes & with each other;• Greener;• Accessible and inclusive by design;• Innovative;• Seen as a safe mode of transport;• Cheaper;• More comprehensive;• Easier to understand;• Easier to use, and;• Better to ride in.

A Successful Bus Service Improvement Plan / Enhanced Partnership

- Share of £3bn transformational funding for buses
 - Deliver on the governments levelling-up agenda
- Support a green recovery to make region a healthier and more vibrant place
- Benefit local economy
- Every £1 invested in bus infrastructure can generate more than £8 of economic benefit
 - Bus revenue funding delivers £3.70 of economic benefit for each £1 spent

Vision for Buses "Ten Solutions"

An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand

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Faster and more reliable journey times

Better intergration through modes

A simple and flexible fares structure

More early morning and evening services

Clear and consistent information that is easy to access

Improved safety and security

Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries

Cleaner and greener vehicles

A first-class customer experience

Delivering our Transport Plan commitments

- Changing road space so buses can travel faster and more reliably around region
- Dealing with traffic pinch points through bus priority
- Major investment in longer term solutions – rapid bus corridors, lower fares, greener vehicles, better frequencies
- Address sparsity of transport in rural and isolated areas through more demand responsive transport
- More integrated and smarter ticketing, better information
- Improved safety and security on transport

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Northumberland County Council

Communities and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2021-2022

1. Terms of reference:

- (1) To maintain an overview of the Management Agreements in place between the County Council and Active Northumberland, Woodhorn Museum Charitable Trust and Northumberland Tourism.
- (2) To monitor, review and make recommendations about:
 - Development Planning
 - Neighbourhood Planning
 - Conservation
 - Housing
 - Climate Change
 - Countryside, Biodiversity and Landscape Quality
 - Waste Management and Energy Use
 - Public and Community Transport Network and Travel to School
 - Highway Maintenance, Streetscape and the Local Environment
 - Local and Neighbourhood services
 - Crime, Community Safety, and Fear of Crime, including CONTEST, Prevent and Channel
 - Antisocial Behaviour and Domestic Violence
 - Fire and Rescue
 - Emergency Services and Emergency Planning
 - Customer Services
 - Provision of Cultural and Leisure Facilities
 - Improving Quality of Life through Access to Culture and Leisure;
 - Supporting Economic Growth in the Arts, Culture and Leisure Sectors

2. Issues to be Timetabled/Considered

Northumberland County Council
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-2022

6 October 2021

Integrated Domestic Abuse Services for Northumberland

Northumberland Waste Management Strategy – Outcome of Kerbside Recycling Scheme

Climate Change

NE Public Transport Strategy Update

Cabinet's permission will be sought to go to market to commission a range of services to enable the Local Authority to meet the duties of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The Committee's views will be sought in advance of that.

To report to Cabinet the key outcomes of the kerbside glass recycling pilot scheme which has been in operation since November 2020 and to recommend the next steps for this scheme and the estimated costs for rolling-out a kerbside glass collection service across the county. The report will also highlight how the roll-out and timing for this enhanced glass recycling service will be dependent upon the outcome of the latest consultation exercises undertaken as part of the Government's new Resources and Waste Strategy and provision of new burdens funding by the Government. The Committee's view will be sought prior to determination by Cabinet.

To consider progress on the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan.

To receive an overview on progress on developing the strategy.

27 October 2021

Northumberland Street Naming and Numbering Policy

Northumberland Infrastructure Funding Statement

The report will seek Cabinet's agreement to a policy determining how street names and numbering will be accepted by the Council. It will set out what is acceptable and what is not, a policy in terms of names being used for deceased people and also what charges may be levied for the work involved in processing a request for a street name. The Committee's view will be sought prior to determination by Cabinet.

To consider the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement in respect of Section 106 Agreements.

<p>Customer Complaints Update</p> <p>Fire and Rescue</p>	<p>To receive an update on Customer Complaints since the annual report was presented to the OSC in February.</p> <p>To receive an overview of the Fire and Rescue Service.</p>
<p>1 December 2021</p>	
<p>Local Services</p> <p>Active Travel and Road Safety</p>	<p>To provide an overview on the operation and challenges of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Services • Highways Maintenance • Waste Management <p>To examine the Council's policies and/or actions to encourage behavioural change and take up of walking and cycling and other sustainable transport around schools.</p>
<p>29 December 2021 (TBC)</p>	
<p>12 January 2022</p>	
<p>2 February 2022</p>	
<p>Active Northumberland</p> <p>Empty Homes in Northumberland</p>	<p>To receive an update on the development of the partnership agreement, membership numbers, challenges, business plan and priorities.</p> <p>To provide an update on the Council's initiatives to bring empty homes into use.</p>

2 March 2022

Library Service Strategy 2021-26

To update the Committee on the implementation of the Strategy.

6 April 2022

27 April 2022

Northumberland County Council
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report 2021-2022

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
1.	30 June 2021	Funding for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	RESOLVED that, the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the recommendations contained in the report.	Cabinet noted the Committee's comments when it determined this report on 13 July 2021.
2.	30 June 2021	Unreasonably Persistent and Vexatious Contact Policy	RESOLVED that, subject to members' comments, the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the recommendations contained in the report.	Cabinet noted the Committee's comments when it determined this report on 13 July 2021.
3 Page 72	4 August 2021	Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2020-23	RESOLVED that, the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the recommendations in the report.	The Committee's comments will be considered by the Cabinet when it determines the report on 6 September 2021.
	4. 5.	4 August 2021 Active Northumberland Annual Outcome Report 2020-2021 Active Northumberland Annual Service Report April 2020– April 2021	RESOLVED that: 1. Active Northumberland's Annual Outcomes Report 2021-21 and Annual Service Report for 2020-21, be received. 2. Active Northumberland be thanked for their work during the pandemic, including support to communities, schools and health services, which had been incredibly valuable as well as reopening centres quickly when permitted. 3. The Committee were encouraged by the optimism for the future whilst noting the challenges ahead. 4. An update on the development of the partnership agreement, membership numbers, challenges, business plan and priorities be presented to the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in early 2022.	The Committee will receive an update on the development of the partnership agreement, membership numbers, challenges, business plan and priorities on 2 February 2022.

6.	25 August 2021	Overview of the Fleet Replacement Programme in 2020/2021	<p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The work undertaken to deliver a challenging fleet replacement programme during 2020/21 and 2021/22, be noted. 2. Cabinet be recommended to consider an invest to save or business case to acquire more gulley wagons to increase capacity as part of the capital programme budget discussions. 	The Committee will continue to monitor this issue through annual reporting.
7.	25 August 2021	Northumberland Waste Management Strategy - Kerbside Glass Collection Trial Update	<p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contents of the report be noted. 2. The success of the glass recycling trial scheme to date, in terms of high customer satisfaction levels and very high yields of glass collected per household, be noted. 3. The Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the trial and expansion of glass recycling across Northumberland. 	A further report will be presented to the Committee on 6 October 2021 prior to determination by the Cabinet on 12 October.

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