

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Planning Committee** held at Meeting Space - Block 1, Floor 2 - County Hall on Tuesday, 11 January 2022 at 4.00 pm.

PRESENT

T Cessford (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

A Scott
S Fairless-Aitken
D Kennedy
N Oliver
A Sharp
H Waddell

A Dale
JI Hutchinson
N Morphet
J Riddle
G Stewart

OTHER COUNCILLORS

G Sanderson
R Wearmouth

Leader
Deputy Leader and Portfolio
Holder for Corporate Services

OFFICERS

G Binning
D Brown
S Daniell
A Fisher
P Hedley
D Hunt
N Turnbull

Chief Fire Officer and Director of Public Protection
Strategic Performance & Risk Office, Fire and Rescue Services
Business Improvement and Inspection Manager, Fire & Rescue Service
Construction Manager
Chief Fire Officer
Neighbourhood Services Area Manager
Democratic Services Officer

73 MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that following the byelection in the Hexham East ward on 16 December 2021, Suzanne Fairless-Aitken had been elected and had become a member of the Tynedale Local Area Council.

The Chair reported that a number of matters due to be considered by the County Council on 5 January 2022 had been deferred, including the item on the Local Area Council review and therefore no decision had been made regarding the future structure or number of Vice-Chairs.

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74 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Horncastle.

75 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

76 **PETITIONS**

This item was to:

a) Receive any new petitions:

There were none to consider.

b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

There were none to consider.

c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:

There were none to consider.

77 **LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

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

Neighbourhood Services:

- Following another challenging year, teams had emptied bins, kept streets clean and continued the recovery work following Storm Arwen, over the festive period. Immediately after the storm, they had assisted with clearing the road network, before moving to parks, cemeteries and other public open areas with high footfall. Plantations and urban woodlands would be cleared in due course and everyone was thanked for their patience as it would take time before a full recovery was made.
- Essential services had not been disrupted by Covid although 3 staff were currently absent in the west area with 20 members of staff across the county in Neighbourhood Services. Messages regarding good hand cleanliness, use of face coverings and social distancing were emphasised to ensure that front line services were not affected.
- Approximately 250 additional properties had been added to the kerbside glass recycling trial in Hexham from 14 January 2022. Extra collections continued at bring sites.
- There had been some missed waste collections from higher ground the previous week due to wintry road conditions.
- Normal grounds maintenance and street cleansing work had resumed following the storm. Requests for areas requiring hedges and shrubs to be trimmed or leaves cleared should be emailed to officers.

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- Additional sweepers had been deployed to help remove the large volume of detritus generated by the storm.
- The process to recruit seasonal summer staff had commenced.

He placed on record his thanks and appreciation for the huge efforts by the front-line teams over a continuing difficult period. This was supported by the Chair and members of the Local Area Council.

Responses to issues raised by Councillors included:

- Alerts regarding missed bins were placed on the Council's website and circulated via social media channels. It was agreed that ward members would also be sent an email notification. In the majority of cases, residents were advised to present their bins for collection the following day, unless the weather and road conditions meant that this would not be possible and alternative advice provided.
- Arrangements were made with developers regarding the collection of bins on new and partly constructed sites depending on the size of the development, number of houses in occupation and access. He would discuss a site in Corbridge with Councillor Oliver the following day.
- It was likely that landowners were making their own arrangements regarding fallen trees which would be difficult for the Council to ascertain and therefore removal of logs by individuals was not queried.
- Some locations required frequent checks to ensure that gulleys and drains were not blocked by leaves and other detritus.

Councillor Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Local Services reported that it had been necessary to bring forward waste collection for 40,000 households due to the days on which Christmas Day and Boxing Day had fallen in 2021. The communication messages had worked well with only a small number of missed bins.

The following issues were also raised by Councillors:

- It was suggested that a framework be established regarding fallen trees including contact information for the various departments involved to make it easier for residents who needed to make insurance claims.
- There was concern regarding drainage around the new High school site in Hexham.
- The staff were thanked for their prompt response to install physical barriers to prevent access under fallen trees resting on electricity cables after Storm Arwen. It had been surprising and worrying that drivers had ignored the road closure signs, given the precarious and potentially dangerous situation.

Technical Services:

- The number of actionable defects had reduced following highways inspections which were up to date in the Tynedale area. Actionable defects were being repaired within the specified timeframe.
- The gully wagon had returned to its normal rota following Storm Arwen clean-up work. Significant work had been required to clear the hierarchy of roads including the A68. Damage had been caused to gulleys with upended trees

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and root balls. Work continued on U and C classified roads with extra staff resources and equipment, including gully wagons, street sweepers and tree teams. It was anticipated that a further 6 weeks would be required to complete the full clear up operation.

- A dedicated drainage gang continued to work renewing gully pots, cross drains, ditching etc.
- 24 of 28 highway investment schemes in the Local Transport Plan had been completed to date and an update was given on the status of outstanding schemes.
- Flags to Flex work was due to start within the next 4 – 6 weeks.
- 100,000 metres² of permanent surfacing had been completed within the current financial year to date.
- A summary of Members' schemes completed within the previous month was provided. Road markings would be renewed in the summer when durability would be longer lasting.
- They were now halfway through the winter services period; there had been a few marginal condition forecasts to deal with and a couple of snow events on the highest parts of the network.
- Operations were covid compliant with revised risk assessments and operational procedures. Managers and supervisors conducted winter services activities in the main remotely using the web-based software systems.
- Salt heaps and grit bins were replenished regularly by dedicated teams when requests were received by the area office.
- The staff had been incredibly busy with the winter services rota, storm clean up and the general day to day work.

The Chair, on behalf of all Tynedale members, thanked the Local Services staff for their hard work, particularly in inclement weather.

The following issues were discussed:

- Use of stronger, thicker paving flags and strategic placement of bollards were to be installed to stop vehicles cracking new paving when replaced in the summer holidays at Hencotes by St Cuthbert's Close.
- The design was to be amended and finalised for the Fellhouse/Woolfhill junction.
- Reports of inadequate repairs to the road network by utilities to be given to the Streetworks Team to enable inspection and the relevant contractor charged for repairs.
- Requests for the spray width of gritting to be widened, to include adjacent paths as well as roads, to be emailed with precise locations e.g. Aydon.
- Investment was required in underground pipe infrastructure given the number of gas and water leaks which impacted on highways programmes, Kevin Mavin, Network Co-ordinator, was thanked for the invaluable assistance he provided.

Updates were to be obtained for Councillor Cessford (Priestland) and Morphet (gully wagon) following the meeting.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

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The meeting adjourned for a short period and resumed at 4.48 pm.

78 NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE: COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-26 CONSULTATION

The Local Area Council received a presentation from the Chief Fire Officer on the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2026. (A copy of the power point presentation and draft plan were enclosed with the signed minutes). He introduced his colleagues also in attendance: Graeme Binning, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Deborah Brown, Strategic Policy, Risk and Performance Officer and Simon Daniell, Community Safety Team Leader.

He explained that all fire and rescue authorities were required to produce a Community Risk Management Plan which must:

- reflect up to date risk analyses;
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities would best be used to prevent and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities;
- outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources;
- set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- cover at least a three-year time span;
- reflect effective consultation throughout its development; and
- be easily accessible and publicly available.

The plan would need to be reviewed as often was required, for example, as it had been in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. An annual update reviewed performance, changes to risk and whether this impacted on the service.

The plan set out the definition of risk as a 'combination of the likelihood and consequence of a hazardous event' and provided more information to explain the risk analysis process and the 10 most frequently attended incidents in the previous 5 years. Over 90% of attendances were attributable to these incident types and rarely changed which allowed the service to target resources effectively. Dwelling fires were highlighted as one of the top incidents and the plan set out what they did to reduce risk and what they planned to do, to further reduce risk.

The fire and rescue service also needed to be prepared to respond to emerging risks, which although infrequent, had the potential for a high impact. This included:

- Climate change and extreme weather events.
- Pandemic.
- Future housing and commercial development.
- Ageing population and increased vulnerability.
- British Volt.
- Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Rail Line.

The aims and priorities for 2022/23 were outlined.

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Consultation on the plan had commenced on 5 January 2022 and was due to close on 16 February 2022. Councillors and members of the public were encouraged to respond to the survey or provide feedback to allow the fire and rescue service to better shape and deliver their service.

Comments from the committee and responses from the Chief Fire Officer were as follows:

- An audit of clad buildings in the county had been undertaken following the Grenfell tragedy and some remedial action had been taken. There were no buildings over 18 metres high with external cladding that fell within the Grenfell review categories for recommendations and actions; it was therefore a low risk and not included within the CRMP.
- The fire and rescue service were not a statutory consultee on planning applications but did respond to surface water flooding incidents. They worked with colleagues in Local Services regarding clearance of drains or culverts or identification of areas where there were repeat flooding problems. He agreed to speak to Councillor Kennedy outside the meeting regarding flooding concerns at properties near the new high school in Hexham.
- The plan was more user friendly, however it was suggested that measurements should be in kilometres² and miles².
- It would be more beneficial to set out the range of areas that stations covered rather than an average, as it would explain the difference in response times, particularly in rural areas. The average had been calculated as part of a national comparison.
- Recruitment of Retained Duty Service personnel was problematic across the UK. The service was reviewing how flexible, dynamic and creative it needed to be including review of contracts to remove historical requirements, realistic expectations of candidates in terms of fitness and technical capabilities, provision of support through the pre-selection and testing process, removal of the requirement to start the process over if a candidate failed assessment in one area. They had moved to a continuous recruitment process to have officers ready before they were needed and would have 30 new RDS candidates available in the first 6 months of 2022.
- The fire and rescue service did not work with Highways England on specific performance measures or outcomes when managing accidents on roads. They did however work together if there would be an impact on the road infrastructure which would affect the fire and rescue service's ability to respond to incidents. Information was also occasionally exchanged between both parties when undertaking road safety analysis and reviews.
- The youth cadet scheme was currently running at 7 fire stations in Northumberland and discussions had recently been held about the scheme starting at another. This included Hexham, Allendale and Haltwhistle. Councillor Scott requested she be involved in discussions regarding a scheme at Prudhoe.
- Information was to be checked from the Met Office in the Flooding and Water Rescue section on page 23. It was believed that more information should be included, as whilst there was expected to be fewer rainy days in summer, the amount of rain that fell would increase by approximately 14% under a 2oc warming scenario and 28% under a 4oc warming scenario.
- The service was working with Newcastle University to understand why more outdoor fires were being started by young people and if incidents were being

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recorded accurately. A range of preventative measures and reactive work was carried out by fire crews and the community safety section in areas where these were prevalent. They worked with communities to obtain intelligence and worked with schools to influence behaviour in the longer term. They specifically worked with young people who set fires under 'Programme Extinguish' to understand why, other risk factors and worked with partners in other organisations for referrals. This included colleagues in Northumbria Police given the success of previous anti-social behaviour work.

- Fluctuation in outdoor fires was driven by the weather with spikes being seen in spells of good weather during school holidays. A reduction in the number of fires had been seen during the pandemic lockdowns and had increased when restrictions had eased. This was believed to be due to sections of the population visiting the countryside who did not understand the countryside code, set campfires and used disposable barbeques in areas where they should not, as they did not understand the risk of wildfires. Northumberland FRS was the national lead for wildfires and had developed the National Fire Chiefs Council education media programme for wildfire events.

Councillors expressed their admiration to officers for the commitment of those in the service, their professionalism and prompt response to incidents.

RESOLVED that the report and presentation be received and that the comments be noted.

79 **BUDGET 2022-23 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

Councillor Sanderson, Leader of the Council and Councillor Wearmouth, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services gave a presentation to outline the approach being taken to set the budget for the next financial year, looking at the current position, challenges and opportunities and the impact this would have on the delivery of services. The detail regarding initiatives and schemes would be presented at a separate meeting. (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes.)

The presentation highlighted:

- The work of frontline services during the pandemic, and following Storm Arwen, was appreciated and acknowledged with no budget cuts being proposed.
- Health inequalities to be addressed across the county with a summit planned in March 2022 to make meaningful change with partner organisations.
- Unexpectedly, employment rates were largely comparable with pre-pandemic rates at 4.1% which was lower than regional and national figures and the economic performance of the county was quite strong. Targeted interventions hoped to address areas where unemployment figures were higher, including those within the 18–24-year-olds, areas where there were job vacancies and the necessity of introducing a real living wage in adult social care to retain staff who were leaving for jobs in other sectors.
- The vision and aims of the Corporate Plan identified 48 key priorities with targeted actions to enable their delivery. Examples included strengthening relationships with town and parish councils, welcoming new businesses, free town centre car parks etc.

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- The overall funding context for the 2022/23 budget was set out; the increase in Council Tax precept remained at 2% without holding a referendum with an additional 1% for Adult Social Care for the next three years.
- Areas were outlined where the Council intended to invest in the future of the county.
- A review of the Budget for 2022-23 and the Medium-Term Financial Plan required savings of £9.704 million to balance the budget. A provisional savings requirement of £28 million had also been calculated for the following two financial years. The approach to identifying spend and savings within the budget were outlined with proposed savings by Portfolio Holder, although some of these included opportunities for income generation.
- The consultation was due to close on 21 January 2022. Over 200 responses had been received to date which was helpful when assessing areas which operated well and those that didn't, as well as suggestions where more funds should be allocated, before the budget was finalised and published ahead of scrutiny and consideration by Full Council on 23 February 2022.

The following issues were discussed:

- How unemployment was to be addressed, welcoming new industries and their supply chain, investment in further education and skills at Northumberland College and the Energy Central Learning Hub for vocational skills. Borderlands funding was available for projects in Haltwhistle and Bellingham and the Heritage Action Zone in Hexham and exploration of opportunities for sustainable jobs in farming and climate change in rural areas.
- Details of career support via advisors, the Kick Start programme and apprenticeships would be provided outside the meeting.
- Investment in public toilet provision would be welcomed in Hexham.
- Partnership working with Northumberland County Council on tourism would be welcomed by Hexham Town Council.
- Dualling of the A1 was required at the earliest opportunity and should be supported by all. Delays had been due to environmental audit work and an announcement on funding was expected in June 2022, subject to the aforementioned.
- Concern regarding the increase in the RPI and inequalities of those individuals on short term contracts and using foodbanks. A paper written by Alan Milburn, the former Secretary of State for Health, on tackling health inequalities was commended as a useful document.
- Progress on improving broadband and mobile telephone reception in rural areas had stalled and was required to enable individuals to work from home and operate businesses. A procurement exercise was believed to be underway to improve broadband speeds for the hardest to reach homes. Northumberland was included within the first group and it was expected that progress would be seen in the near future. It would be beneficial to receive an update from the Broadband Team.
- It would be more helpful to receive a longer-term financial settlement from the government. A thorough analysis was required of all areas across the Council to drive efficiencies and transformation, scrutiny of this was encouraged. There was concern that the Council's balances would be used to balance the budget and significant savings would be required in the next few years. The only certainties with regard to income related to Council Tax and business rates and there was shared frustration regarding the notification

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system of local government financing. However it was expected that different elements of funding from national government would reduce the amount required to be saved in the future.

- Representatives from the administration sat on the Local Enterprise Partnership and North of Tyne Combined Authority to support businesses and promote local interests. Whilst funding streams had switched from European to Shared Prosperity, the latter would be used to replace projects in the rural economy.
- Once the public consultation ended, all members would be invited to attend and review the budget proposals when it was considered by scrutiny.

The Chair thanked the Councillors Sanderson and Wearmouth for their presentation.

RESOLVED that the presentation be received.

80 **LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated. (A copy is enclosed with the minutes.)

Members were invited to email any requests to the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer between meetings.

Items to be referred to the LAC Chairs Briefing for consideration for inclusion in the work programme:

- Broadband Update
- Outside Bodies
- Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plans

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

81 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 15 February 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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Northumberland
County Council

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service

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Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 Consultation

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Minute Item 78

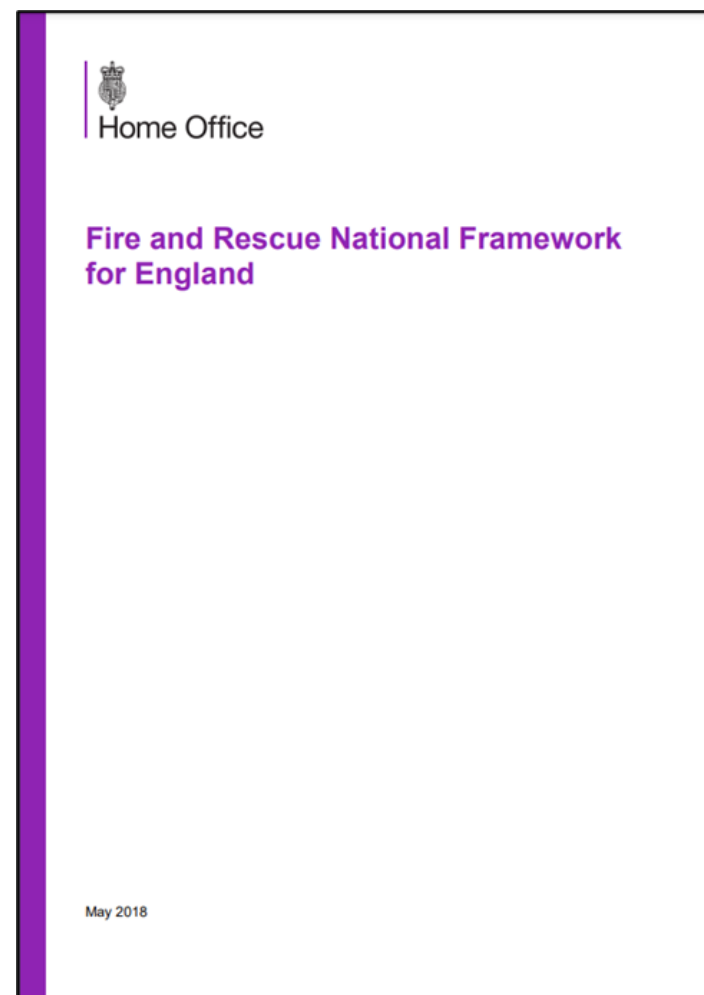
Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018)

Priorities

- make appropriate provision for fire **prevention** and **protection** activities and **response** to fire and rescue related incidents;
- **identify and assess** the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related **risks** their areas face;
- **collaborate** with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
- **be accountable** to communities for the service they provide; and
- develop and maintain a workforce that is **professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse**.

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Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26

Each plan must:

- reflect up to date risk analyses
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities;
- outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources;
- set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- cover at least a three-year time span;
- **reflect effective consultation throughout its development;** and
- be easily accessible and publicly available.

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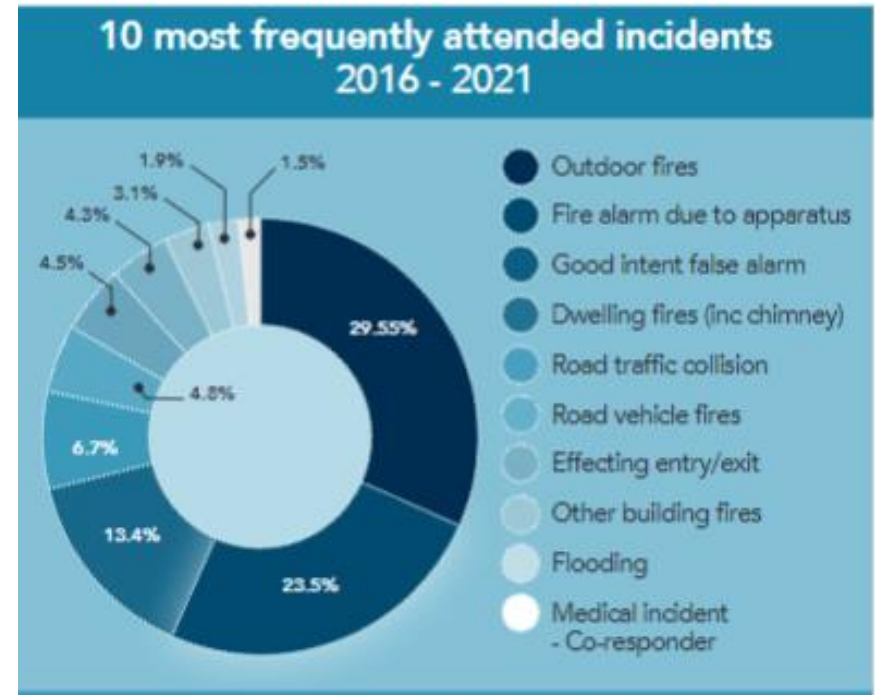


Understanding risk

Risk is a 'combination of the likelihood and consequence of a hazardous event'

- In the case of fire and rescue related risks, hazardous events are the incidents that we attend.
- We have a responsibility to identify the incidents we attend, and to work with our communities and partners to minimise or prevent the likelihood of these happening.
- In the last 10 years we have reduced the number of incidents we attend by 21%.
- Incidents attended during 2020/21 was the lowest in the last 10 years, and 11% lower than in 2019/20.
- 10 incident types account for over 90% of all incidents attended by the service.

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Example: Dwelling Fires

- During 2020/21 we attended **199 house fires** in Northumberland.
- 90% accidental.

What is the current status of our Core Measures? **Accidental Dwelling Fires** Accidental Dwelling Fires Detail Accidental Dwell...

Accidental Dwelling Fires

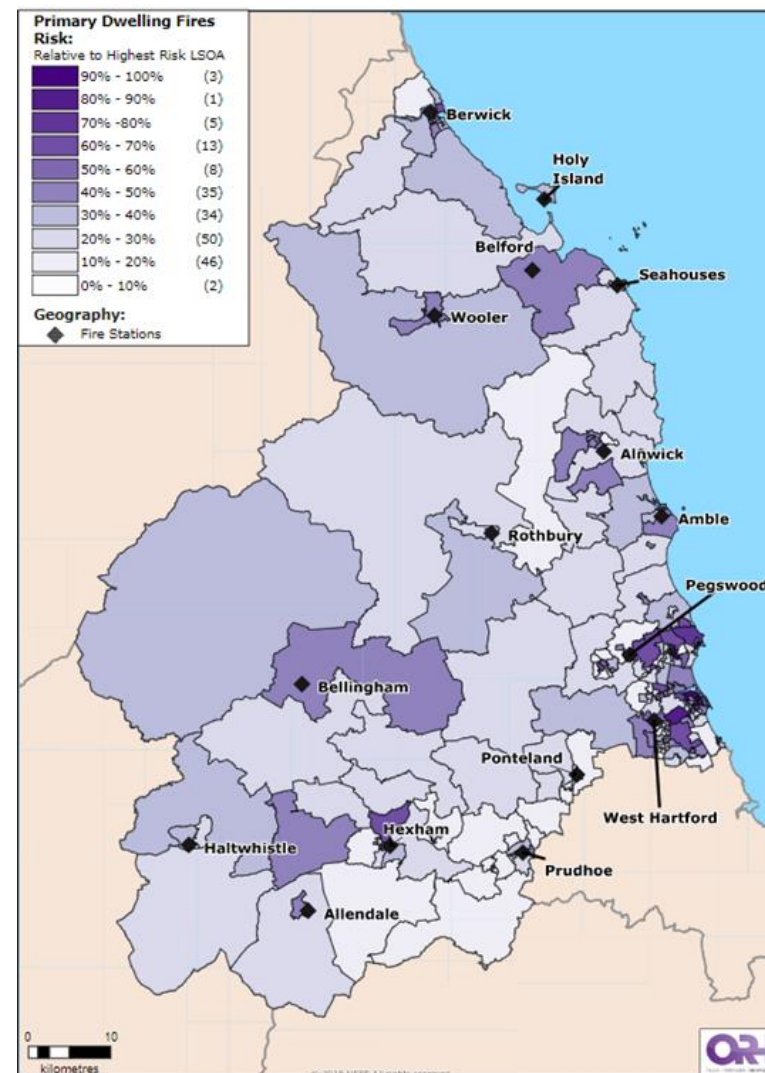


Accidental Dwelling Fires - Year to Date Summary

| Year of Fin Year | ADF YTD Status | Number of fires | ADF Lower Action Limit YTD | ADF Lower Warning Limit YTD | ADF Adjusted Mean YTD | ADF Upper Warning Limit YTD | ADF Upper Action Limit YTD |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| FY 2021 | Within expected variation | 65 | 10.5 | 34.6 | 82.7 | 130.8 | 154.8 |

Accidental Dwelling Fires - Monthly

| Month of TIM.. | ADF Monthly Status | Number of Fires | Lower Action Limit | Lower Warning limit | Mean | Upper Warning Limit | Upper Action Limit |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| October 2021 | Within expected variation | 10 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| September 20.. | Within expected variation | 5 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| August 2021 | Within expected variation | 9 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| July 2021 | Within expected variation | 12 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| June 2021 | Within expected variation | 8 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| May 2021 | Within expected variation | 6 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |
| April 2021 | Within expected variation | 15 | 1.50 | 4.94 | 11.81 | 18.68 | 22.12 |



Mitigating Risks: Dwelling Fires

What we do to reduce risk

- Deliver a targeted safe and wellbeing programme, ensuring people remain at the heart of what we do.
- Work in collaboration with partners to develop prevention policy.
- Deliver robust safeguarding referrals leading to positive outcomes for those at risk.
- Deliver training for Community Risk and Response personnel and assess operational and command competence.
- Undertake fire investigations to ensure learning.
- Continue to develop our use of social media platforms to share key messages with our communities.

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What we plan to do to further reduce risk

- Introduce additional measures to monitor the success of our safe and wellbeing programme, ensuring we are targeting those who are at high or very high risk of having a fire in their home.
- Introduce Community Safety training and qualifications.
- Work with partners to further share relevant data to assist risk profiling and targeting.
- Pilot the NFCC national risk model for Dwelling Fires.
- Launch an NFRS website.
- Develop and implement CFMIS online services to allow for online referrals.
- Implement robust quality assurance processes.
- Evaluate the success of our safe and wellbeing programme.

Emerging Risks

We must be prepared to respond to the range of risks that are currently infrequent yet have the potential for high impact.

- Climate change and extreme weather events.
- Pandemic.
- Future housing and commercial development.
- Ageing population and increased vulnerability

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- British Volt
- Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Rail Line



Aims and priorities for 2022/23

To support Northumberland County Council vision and principles, and to deliver our vision of **'Making Northumberland Safer'** we have developed the following aims:

- Reduce the number of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies occurring in Northumberland
- Reduce the number of deaths and injuries and mitigate the commercial, economic and social cost of emergency incidents
- Safeguard the environment and heritage sites (both built and natural)
- Support communities to protect themselves from harm
- Provide value for money through the provision of a lean, efficient and resilient service

Our priorities for 2022/23 are as follows:

1. Deliver service improvements as outlined in our Continuous Improvement Plan.
2. Deliver the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) risk model for dwelling fires as a pilot in Northumberland.
3. Undertake a review of protection delivery across the organisation utilising using the NFCC Fire Standard and Implementation Tool.
4. Undertake a review of prevention delivery across the organisation utilising using the NFCC Fire Standard and Implementation Tool.
5. Apply robust risk modelling to inform and further develop our Community Risk and Response operating model.
6. Undertake a review of response standards for Northumberland.

We welcome your views

Consultation on our plan opened on Wednesday **5 January 2022** and closes on Wednesday **16 February 2022**.

You can complete our survey online at:

www.haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/nfrs/crmpconsultation2022

Hard copies of the survey can be requested by contacting fireconsult@northumberland.gov.uk

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Local Area Council Meetings Budget and State of the County

Councillor Glen Sanderson
Leader of the Council

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Minute Item 79

State of the County: Covid latest

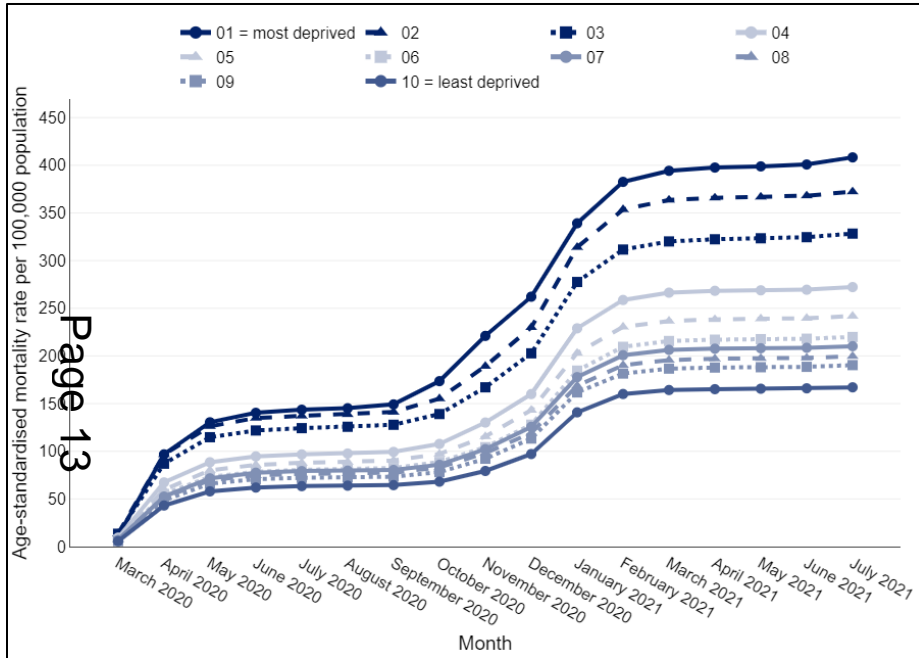


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State of the County: Covid & Inequalities

National inequalities and Deaths from Covid

- Nationally, evidence indicates a higher rate for deaths involving Covid in the more deprived areas of England. The gaps between the most and least deprived areas for this measure widened as the Pandemic progressed.

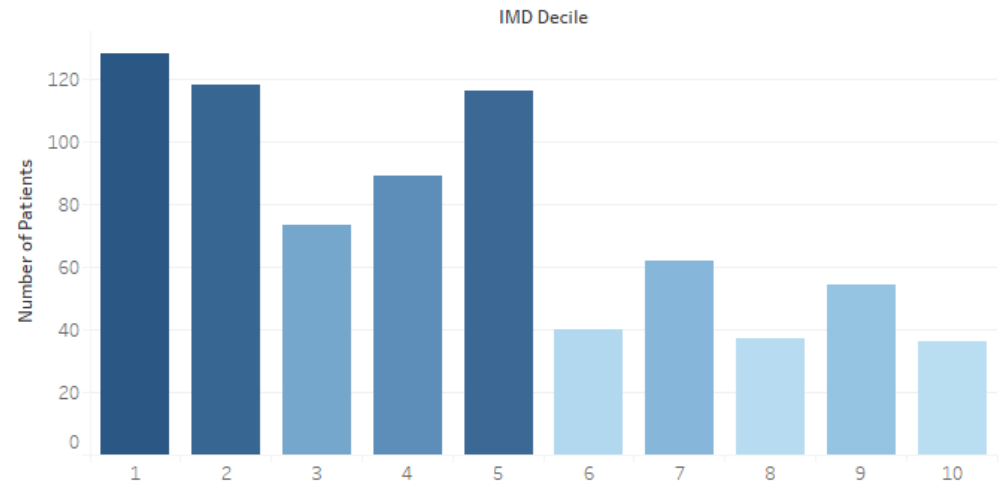


Cumulative age-standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population, for deaths involving COVID-19 in England by deprivation decile, March 2020 to July 2021

Acknowledgement: Sarah Sowden

<https://analytics.phe.gov.uk/apps/chime/>

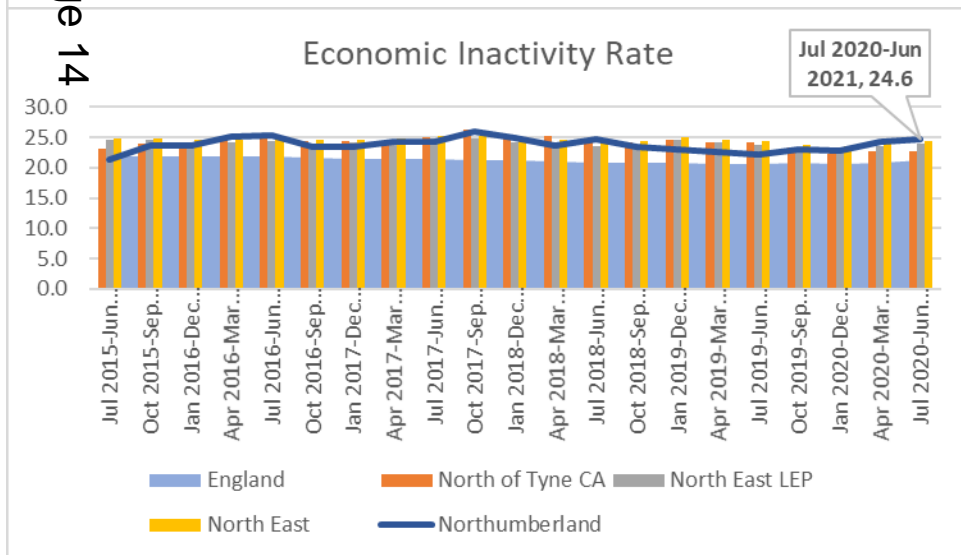
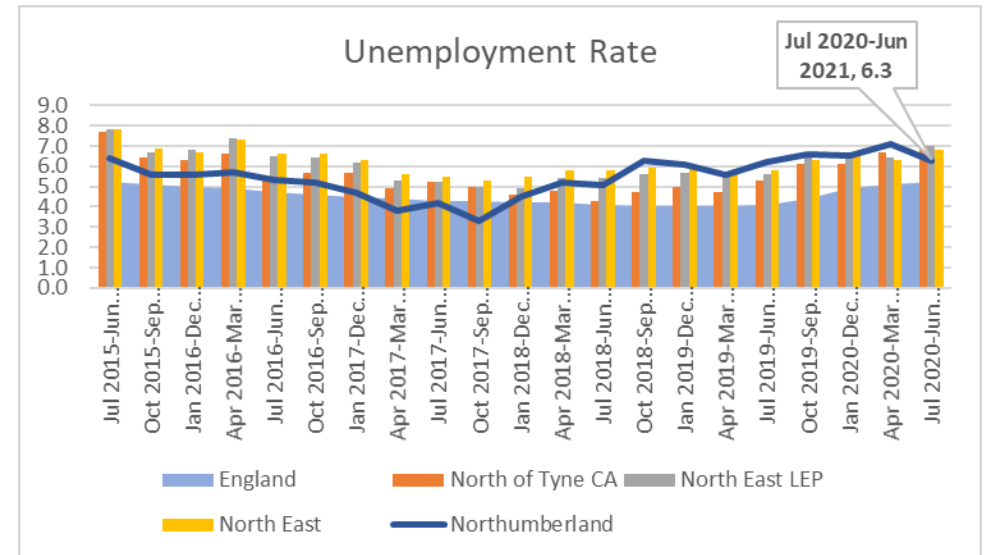
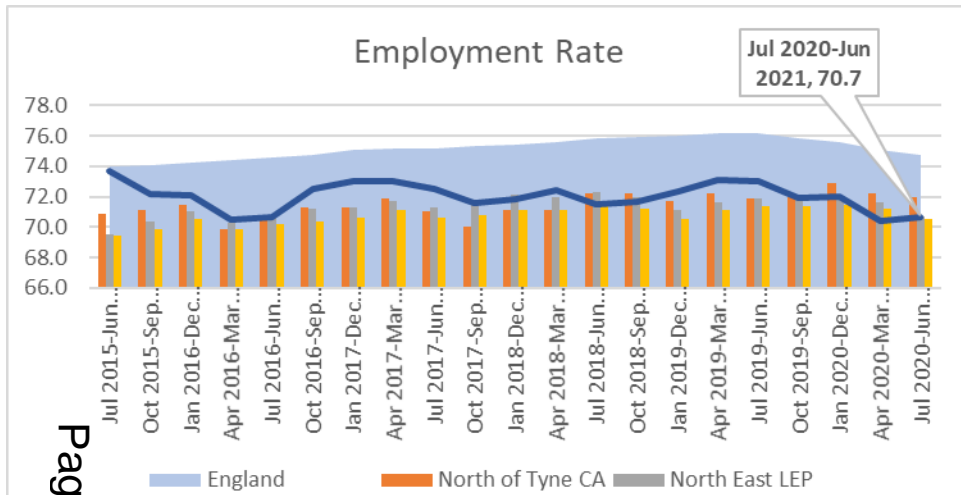
Deaths by IMD Rank



Local inequalities and Deaths from Covid

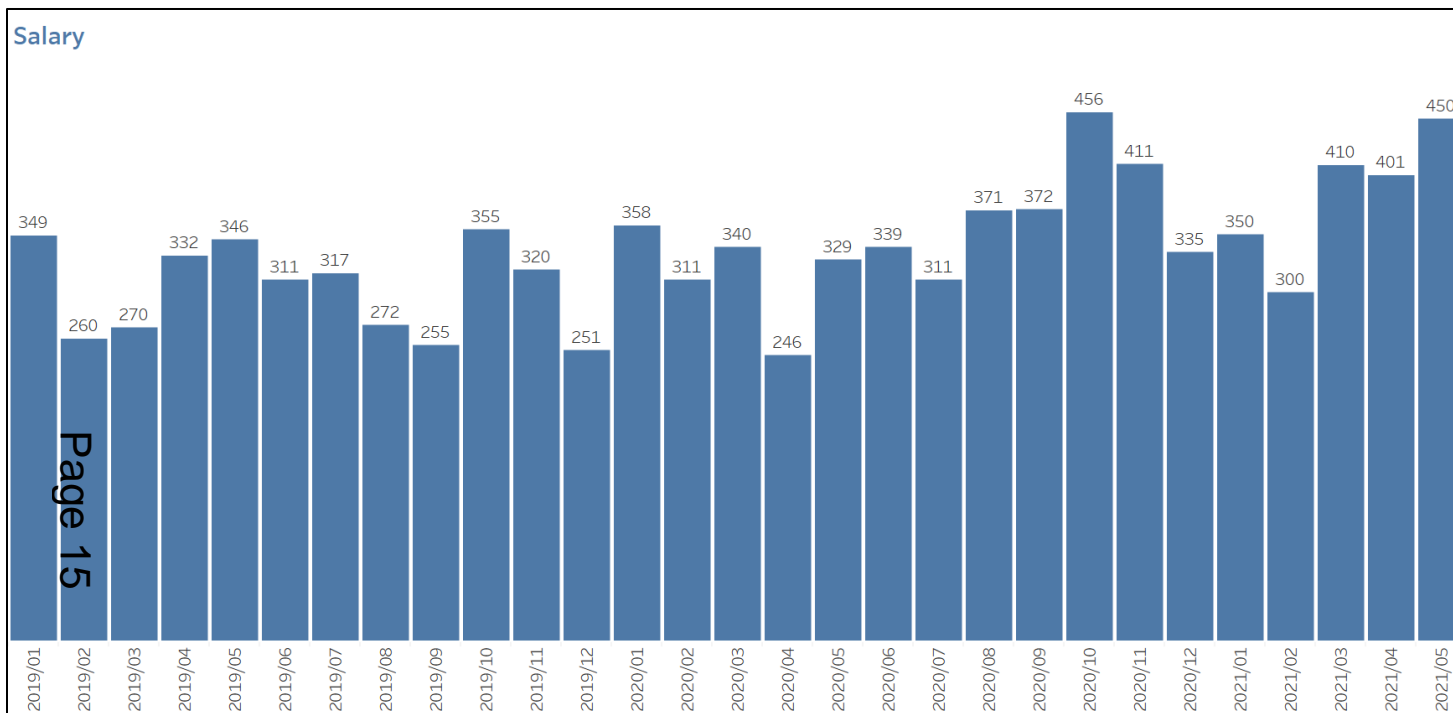
- Locally, evidence indicates a link between higher rates for deaths involving Covid and deprivation in the County although the pattern is less even than the national trends, suggesting other factors influencing Covid-related deaths beyond deprivation.

State of the County: Economic Recovery



Latest key indicators show employment increasing slightly and unemployment falling. Claimants of unemployment benefits in general are 25% less than the same time last year (October 21 compared with October 20). Economic inactivity indicates increasing numbers of early retired and long-term sick. Latest estimates for number of workless households in Northumberland (2020) are 19,300 (19.2%) a slight fall on 2019.

State of the County: Income



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Headlines:

- Average weekly wages have fluctuated markedly during the Pandemic, as sectors have experienced differential impacts. As the lockdown restrictions gradually eased from Spring through the Summer period, average weekly earnings have risen steadily and are now above the immediate pre-Covid period. Seasonal variations and other economic factors (e.g. labour supply shortages in some sectors) make it difficult to make more definite forecasts in the short-term. For now, the growth in average wages, are cautiously welcomed.

Corporate Plan: Vision and Aims

“In everything we do, we will listen to and communicate with residents, businesses and partners and, ensure value for money in our services. We will pull our weight regionally and nationally, working with our partners to secure maximum benefit for residents and businesses.”

- **Thriving** – We will vigorously secure more and new investment and jobs into the County.
- **Living and Learning** - We will care for our residents, supporting the most vulnerable in our society. We will ensure the best education standards for our children and young people.
- **Enjoying and Connecting** - We will maintain, protect and enhance the environment, prioritising our commitments on Climate Change. We will deliver high-quality services in all our communities and secure investment in housing and transport across the county

The refreshed Corporate Plan sets out 48 key priorities, with targeted actions and measures of success to deliver on our vision and aims.

Corporate Plan: continued

Our refreshed Corporate Plan has two overarching priorities:

- 1. Driving economic recovery**, through growth, investment and jobs; and,
- 2. Tackling health inequalities in our communities** through addressing the wider determinants, including income, education, housing and environment.

Budget 2022-23: Overall funding context

- All councils are operating in a period of financial uncertainty including:
 - Ongoing significant budget pressures (including social care, waste);
 - Cost pressures arising from changing demographics, pay and price inflation;
 - Ongoing impact of Covid-19 upon the Council's expenditure and income
 - Pressures on national public finances more generally

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Government published SR 2021 (for consultation) on 27 October 2021, covering the three-year period 2022 to 2025.

- SR 2021 advised that the council tax referendum limit would be set at 2.00% and that councils could increase the precept in relation to Adult Social Care (ASC) at a rate of 1.00% per annum over the next three years.
- Provisional settlement was for 1-year only with an average real-terms increase of 6.9% a year in core spending power for local government (compared to 2021-22).
- The provisional settlement confirmed the council tax referendum limit would be set at 2.00% for 2022-23, councils could increase the precept in relation to ASC at a rate of 1.00% and could carry forward any used ASC precept increase from 2021-

22.

Continuing to invest in our future

- Delivery of our Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23 namely Heat, Transport, Renewable Energy and Waste.
- Attracting investment and high-quality jobs to the county, including the British Volt Gigafactory as well as the wider development of Northumberland Energy Park
- Deliver the Borderlands Place Programme alongside other initiatives to drive rural economic growth
- Deliver the Energising Blyth Programme investment and secure 'Levelling Up' funding to deliver town regeneration across the county
- Re-open the Northumberland Line to passenger transport and develop an 'Economic Growth Corridor' along its route
- Secure funding for major road and junction infrastructure in the county, including at Moor Farm, A1 dualling and construction of the Blyth Relief Road
- Progress delivery on planned sites for extra care housing
- Deliver school builds at Berwick, Seaton Valley and James Calvert Spence
- Investing in our parks, open spaces, public conveniences and town-centre parking
- Deliver maintenance and investment in our roads, walkways and cycle paths,

Budget 2022-23: Spend and Savings

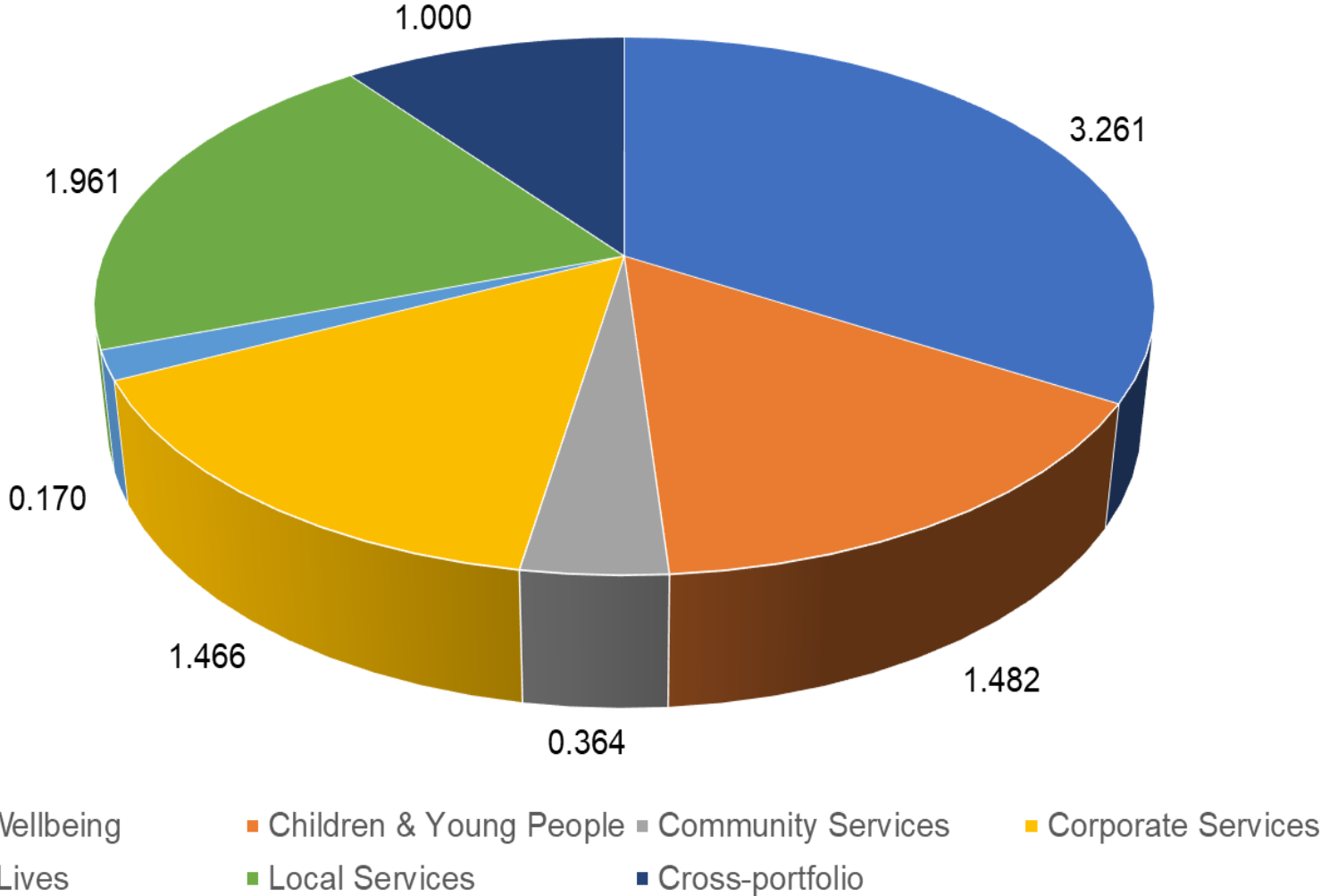
- In line with previous practice the Budget for the next year and the MTFP model has been reviewed. A savings requirement of £9.704 million has been identified as required to balance the budget for 2022-23
- A provisional savings requirement of £28 million has been calculated as necessary for the following two financial years.

Approach to identifying spend and savings:

- Reviewing services in order to keep reductions to front line services to a minimum
- Ensuring that service and financial planning is fully aligned with the Corporate Plan
- Maintaining the Council's strong financial position so that it has sufficient reserves
- Maximising income generation while managing risk
- Ensuring the Council demonstrates value for money in the delivery of its priorities
- Investing to save so one-off resources can be used to generate future saving

Proposed Savings by Portfolio Holder 2022-23 (£m)

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Next steps

- Invite views from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Local Area Councils.
- Final version to be considered by Full Council 23 February 2022.



Northumberland
County Council

Any questions?

www.northumberland.gov.uk

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