NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON AND SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At the meeting of the **Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council** held at Meeting Space - Block 1, Floor 2 - County Hall on Wednesday, 19 January 2022 at Time Not Specified.

PRESENT

M Swinburn (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

L Bowman P Ezhilchelvan B Flux M Robinson R Wilczek W Daley D Ferguson S Lee C Taylor R Wearmouth

OTHER COUNCILLORS

OFFICERS

G Binning M Carle	Deputy Chief Fire Officer Neighbourhood Services Area Manager
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T Crowe	Solicitor
S Daniell	Community Safety Team Leader
T Gribbin	Neighbourhood Services Manager
P Hedley	Chief Fire Officer
J Murphy	South East DM Area Manager

43 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chair requested members to stand for a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Paul Scott who had died suddenly. Condolences were conveyed to his family.

44 **PROCEDURE AT PLANNING MEETINGS**

The Chair explained the procedure for planning committees as outlined in the report.

45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dunbar.

46 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 17 November 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

A member queried the position on the Bedlington Development as a presentation had been promised. This would be followed up.

The Chair informed members that the order of the agenda had been changed slightly due to the availability of members/officers.

47 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Robinson declared an interest in agenda item 13, as his wife was a Care Worker.

48 BUDGET 2022-23 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Councillor Wearmouth, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services provided a power point presentation and referred to the current Covid numbers which were decreasing. Feedback from the Government was likely to see the end of restrictions towards the end of January. (Copy of the presentation would be attached to the signed minutes).

He stated that Councillor Sanderson was immensely proud to be the Leader of the Council in a County which looked as good as Northumberland despite the effects of Covid and Storm Arwen which had hit the county and communities in different ways.

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 prepandemic 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, rail stations at Ashington, Bedlington and Cramlington.

- 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:-

- Loss of jobs and the contribution of 8% towards council tax. 92% of support was provided, which was the second most generous across the region. The unemployment figures would be circulated. Additional jobs would be created by British Volt, JDR cables, development of the Coty site, Techflow in Cramlington and planning applications on the southside of the A1.
- Providing jobs and ensuring people were ready to work, physically and mentally by a Ready to Work pilot in Northumberland.
- The real living wage in the care sector
- Flexibility to help small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and pop-up shops to get business underway
- Local energy: heating homes from surplus heat should be written into the budget
- Generation of income

(Councillor Flux joined the meeting at 4.45pm)

- Investment in the infrastructure in Cramlington for the elderly the Places Programme needed to consider mobility and accessibility for vulnerable residents.
- Young people should be made aware of employment and vacant posts and University Technical Colleges. The Education Team looked at what jobs were coming into the county and putting programmes in place. More information would be presented to FACS in the future.
- Data would be extracted for those areas with job expansion.
- It was expected that a White Paper would be presented the first week in February on the Levelling Up Fund.
- The Government settlement had been more generous than had been anticipated
- Income from Local Services came in from a mixed amount of money, £1.4 m from waste, planning application fees and pre-planning advisory service,
- A summary would be provided on Community Services and a breakdown

explained in the budget.

- A response would be provided on the 5G query.
- All care workers would receive a wage increase. A recent report had been agreed by Cabinet, in addition to a Workforce Retention and Recruitment Fund for bonus payments for home care workers.
- Further details on library and youth services would be presented to Scrutiny in the near future.
- Education regarding costs in waste recycling would be taken to a future informal cabinet.
- The details of external contractors and in-house services would be taken up with Councillor Riddle.
- British Volt had recently advertised jobs.
- A lot of work had been carried out with employers for 16-24 years olds regarding education and learning.
- The Council carried out external services which required experience and specialism for other authorities which generated income.
- The Local Plan which was due to be implemented had initially been criticised by the Inspector because of too much employment land, but more space would be required in Cramlington and other areas

Councillor Wearmouth was thanked for his presentation.

A short recess took place at 17:03 to allow officers to set up the planning presentation.

The meeting recommenced at 17:05 with Councillor Wilczek in the Chair.

49 DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The committee was requested to decide the planning applications attached to the report using the powers delegated to it. Members were reminded of the principles which should govern their consideration of the applications, the procedure for handling representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of permission or refusal of planning applications.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

50 21/02154/FUL

Loft conversion to increase ridge height plus dormers, single storey- front and rear extensions Woodland View, 4 Shields Road, Hartford Bridge, NE22 6AL

Richard Whittaker, Planning Officer described the application by presentation and plans on screen.

Following the presentation, Judith Murphy, Development Manager referred to the windows at the western elevation and explained if members were minded to approve the application, they would consider the following additional condition:

Final details of the design and size of the Velux windows on the western elevation

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. Thereafter, the Velux windows shall be installed and retained in perpetuity as approved.

Reason: in the interests of neighbour privacy.

Kim Bambrough was in attendance and spoke in objection of the application:

- She thanked the committee for allowing her to attend the meeting and explained that she was speaking on behalf of immediate neighbours, herself who resided at 4b, 4a and 6 Shields Road.
- The overall problem was loss of privacy to all neighbours from the proposed build.
- While it was accepted that the two Juliette balconies and dormers on the south side were problematic with a total loss of privacy to 4b, the installation of roof lights would still cause loss of privacy.
- Privacy would be compromised in their garden and the bar area rooflights would overlook on to their bedroom, shower rooms and main living area.
- The proposed front door would also look directly in the living area.
- Presently there were large conifers obscuring their view, but these could be cut back in the future.
- As the problem with the Juliette balconies and dormer window had been recognised, why had the same consideration not been given to 4a and 6? 4a would be completely overlooked on the east side from the new proposed upper floor west elevation. This is supposed to be 4a's forever home where the7 should be safe and secluded.
- Increase of footprint to no, 4a.
- No 6, would also lose total privacy in their back garden and in full view of the west facing balcony and the kitchen and social area would be in full view. The garden was a sanctuary for her neighbour who was recovering from an illness and who spent time gardening and relaxing in the garden.
- The height of the proposed extension would block all of the light to the rear garden of number 6 in the winter months.
- When a previous development was approved at the bottom of garden of number 6, it was stated that no privacy would be lost as no windows were allowed, why was this different now?
- It was stated that the roof ridge lines of 4, 4a, 4b and 6 were of different heights, but 4, 4a and 6 were roughly the same height and 4 and 4b were exactly the same rough height. It had been a stipulation in 2010 when 4b was built its height was not to exceed the roof height of no. 4.
- It was accepted that all the properties were of individual design, but the overall aesthetics of this building did not blend in with existing homes. The properties on Shields Road were either bungalows or Dutch bungalows, not a complete two storey house, this was a total over development and if sold, could become a 7 bedroom property.
- She thanked the committee for listening to her objections.

Councillor Robinson spoke as Ward Member:-

 He would not normally get involved in domestic planning issues and believed that people could do whatever they wanted to reasonably do within the confines of their own home, garden etc, with the codicil that it did

not impinge on others nearby. After being contacted by neighbours and visiting the property, he could not see how this was possible with the proposed conversion. There were issues with overlooking, lack of privacy, access, highway, material and build density issues.

- He understood some of the officers comments but was perplexed with other comments.
- Material consideration was more than apparent.
- The build was classed as overdevelopment and out of keeping with surrounding houses.
- Access issues with a shared drive for materials and vehicles.
- Overlooking and loss of privacy was more than apparent given the height of the proposed build and its windows.
- There were too many issues to overcome and suggested a refusal would be appropriate in this case.

Michael Whale, applicant was in attendance and spoke on the following:-

- The primary reason for the build was to have more space and bedrooms for their 5 year old grand-daughter and also their adult daughter who had health conditions.
- He had employed an experienced architect and highly qualified structural engineer to look through the design to align with planning policies and regulations with a design that was consistent with the Hartford Bridge residents.
- In the pre-design and design they had been respectful of the neighbours and had modified the design as they moved forward.
- On a point of privacy, one of the drivers of the application was to help create more privacy for themselves. The occupier of no. 6 steps out onto his land onto driveway looking straight into his bedroom and kitchen. He had informed the occupier of no. 6 earlier that day for doing the same thing.
- 4b could see into his bedroom from their upper and lower floor windows.
- If the proposed build was allowed, the windows would have the same roof height and same level of privacy as the neighbours.
- He had taken feedback from neighbours when considering the design. The residents at no. 6 had even suggested they should have bigger dormers, and he had informed the resident of no. 4 to inform them of his intention.
- There had been a lot of comments made that he had been unable to reply to, misinformation, exaggeration and misinterpretation of the plans.
- They had respectfully followed the process and had not been disingenuous and had submitted a plan that was consistent with Hartford Bridge residents. He thanked members for the opportunity to speak

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

- The application had been put on the Chairs referral list and it had been decided that the application should be brought before the Committee for decision. There had been a number of objections from the same person raising different objections but not objections from 17 people.
- There should be 21 metres between the windows of habitable rooms, but there were no habitable rooms directly facing each other.
- The application sat to the east of 4, there was a kitchen window but the

facing elevation of the application site was the one where the condition had been added to increase the privacy distance.

- Velux windows came under Permitted Development.
- The Juliet balcony sat just proud of the window and served as a protection barrier.
- The comments from the Town Council did relate to some material planning considerations, eg, overlooking, design, impact on the highway, loss of light that could form a refusal to the application.
- The increase in the roof height would be roughly 1 metre on the western side, 1.7 on the front and to the southern side an increase from 5.9 to 6.4. The overall height would be 6.4 metres.
- The Town Council's response was that the proposed development was out of character with other buildings in the immediate vicinity and had requested a site visit as the application should be determined by the Planning Committee and not via Officer approval.

Councillor Daley proposed the recommendation for approval, along with the additional condition. This was seconded by Councillor Flux.

Councillor Daley stated that he was satisfied with the officer report and that the application should be determined by the Planning Committee. Councillor Taylor had concerns over the impact of privacy, overlooking to neighbours, loss of light, and the impact on the surrounding highway network . Councillor Flux sympathised but stated that all the buildings were different and could not say that the development was out of character and on that basis he had seconded the recommendation for approval.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows:-

FOR: 8; AGAINST: 1.

It was therefore:-

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report with the additional condition:-

Final details of the design and size of the Velux windows on the western elevation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. Thereafter, the Velux windows shall be installed and retained in perpetuity as approved.

Reason: in the interests of neighbour privacy.

51 APPEALS UPDATE

The report provided information on the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

A short recess took place at 17:55 to allow planning officers to vacate the meeting.

The meeting recommenced at 18:00.

Councillor Swinburn in the Chair.

52 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Police and Crime Commissioner, Kim McGuinness was in attendance and gave an overview of policing and community safety matters in the Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley area.

The four main key issues were:-

- Anti-Social Behaviour. In the past different parties had not talked to each other making it difficult to work get an outcome. Two meetings had been held with Council Leaders, the Fire Services and the Police with Housing being invited to the next meeting to see if a better outcome can be achieved.. This would be underpinned by an Operations Group to deliver priorities.
- Safer Transport Northumbria App funding had been received from the Safer Street Funding to improve safety especially for women. Communities were asked where people felt less safe. The App worked anywhere in the region on anywhere on public transport with a particular push for public transport.
- Police and Crime Plan communities had been consulted to determine what the priorities were. Further consultation would be carried out with residents to include priorities.
- Operation Payback proceeds of crime money is given back to the community to spend for small residents' association to run projects and initiatives. Members were asked to promote this. There was also a Youth Fund attached to that.

In response to questions, the following comments were made:-

- 101 reporting was incredibly difficult and under resourced but work was being carried out in the background regarding crisis call handling for all emergency services. 58 call handlers had been recruited, emergency call handling was a specialised job and took long time to train. The system was now being monitored weekly.
- The On-line form reporting was complicated and needed to be simplified.
- Traffic and road policing needed to be a priority and the Community Speed Watch was running again. This was an area that fell between the gaps between police and council. This had been a problem for a long time, and it was hoped that the Cramlington and Seaton Valley councils would support the process and more volunteers would increase the coverage.
- The Police could enforce drivers ignoring Except for Access signs but would need to be informed about it. If there was a particular problem, the police should be informed.
- If speeding issues were not being enforced, officers need to be informed in order to action.
- The Safer Northumbria Transport App was just for transport at present which was a discreet and safer way for people to report any issues.
- The contact details for Operation Payback were on the Police website,

Facebook and Twitter.

- Community Speed Watch Inspector Phil Patterson would organise training for Bedlington.
- Lack of communication to emails/letters.
- The request for a fixed camera along the dual carriageway of A1171 would be Council's responsibility but the request would be followed up and a response provided.
- The Youth service was vital, but no funding was forthcoming at present. It
 was important that every child should have access to a quality service to
 be given the best chance in life, and less likely to get involved in crime.
 The PCC was happy to come to the area, but a multi-agency approach
 was also needed. The Chair extended an offer for Seaton Valley
 Community Council to contact Cramlington Town Council's Youth
 Community Team.
- The campaign with motor bikes and quad bikes was still ongoing. The police relied heavily on community intelligence and there was a record of who kept what vehicle.
- The capture of data on the Safer Travel App.
- One of the main agenda items on the ASB Collaboration was seasonality which was a big part of hotspot mapping. A meeting was being organised between interested parties to start some forward planning.
- Some land had been identified for motorbike tracks but had fallen through and new appropriate places were being investigated.

As the meeting was nearing the three hours allowed as in the Constitution, the Chair requested that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue, which moved by Councillor Daley and second by Councillor Flux and supported by members.

Councillor Bowman left the meeting at 6.53 pm.

- Community system messaging would be rolled out in the north east. Three locations were being trialled, with good feedback. Some media would be put out regarding electric scooters.
- Thanks were conveyed for the way the Police had dealt with a tragic case in Cramlington last year
- A summit in the community was requested to bring the NHS, Fire Service, Police and Ambulance Service together to engage young people. The Police were already convening regional wide and there was a vacancy on the Board for a Councillor from Northumberland which had not been filled. This was brought to the attention of the Business Chair.

The PCC and colleagues were thanked for attending the meeting.

A short recess took place to allow officers to vacate the meeting.

53 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been received.

54 **PETITIONS**

55 YOUTH SERVICE PRESENTATION

This item was deferred to the meeting in March.

56 LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received the following updates from Mick Carle, Highways Delivery Services Area Manager:

All Highways Inspectors and maintenance crews continued to work Inspecting and fixing carriageway defects, making repairs, and making safe category one defects across the Southeast area.

The gully emptier was fully deployed dealing with reported issues and cyclic maintenance. Additional gully emptier resource had been deployed off issues caused by Storm Arwen. All work was being recorded and planned using Carbon Tech software.

Larger Tarmac Patching has been carried out in the Cramlington Cycleway Improvements.

The area teams were continuously looking and programming future planned works for both patching and drainage improvements.

LTP Carriageway Resurfacing schemes had been carried out in Arcot Avenue, Cramlington and Milbank Crescent, Bedlington Footway and Carriageway LTP Resurfacing had been identified and programmed for Stead Lane, Bedlington.

A Pedestrian Dropped Kerb scheme started on Cramlington Cycleways in January.

A Traffic Safety Scheme at The Avenue, Seaton Delaval (Pegasus Crossing) had been carried out.

Winter Services continued. There had been an average winter so far in both snow and precautionary gritting.

A small restock of salt was being carried out across the county which would ensure sufficient resilience levels for the remainder of the winter period. This included a 5000 tonne strategic store located in Powburn.

Members made a number of comments including:-

A list of where work had been carried out on trees following Storm Arwen. The impact on the day to day job and capacity. A dropped kerb was requested opposite Westlea cemetery Additional funding for trees in Cramlington east. Funds for the slow down signs at Atlee Bank Changing the sign to the entrance of Cramlington Village

Tony Gribbin, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager gave the following

updates:

It had been an extremely challenging year and the hard work of teams continued to recognised.

Immediate work had started with clearing of roads and cemeteries from the impact of Storm Arwen, which would take a long time to recover.

Waste collection had worked very well over the Christmas period with 95% presentation of bins and very few reports of missed bins or complaints.

Winter maintenance works would get completed.

There was one road sweeper deployed in the area and recruitment would be starting soon for seasonal staff.

It was business as usual for street cleansing.

The Bereavement team was coping well with increased demand and the capacity had not been as overwhelming as was first thought.

The following comments were made:

- Overflowing bins at Chirnside, Cramlington
- Thanks were conveyed to Mr Gribbin and his team.
- Clearance of the cycle path at Beresford Road and the Social Club.
- Coverage in Cramlington over weekends for clearing broken glass

RESOLVED that the information be noted and issues set out in the bullet points above be followed up.

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

Paul Hedley, Chief Fire Officer provided a power point presentation on the Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) on the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which was currently out for public consultation. A copy of the presentation would be attached to the signed minutes and made available with the papers for this meeting on the Council's website. It was explained that it was a statutory requirement for each Fire and Rescue Authority to have a CRMP which detailed how each authority discharged it's functions, with the most important aspects highlighted as "identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in their area" and "be accountable to communities for the service they provide".

A wide-ranging public consultation exercise was now underway on the draft of the CRMP. Members were advised that each plan must reflect up to date risk analyses; demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities would best be used wholistically to best prevent and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities. Separate

strategies were in place for emergency response, protection and prevent which sat beneath the CRMP which all identified how strands of delivery complement and help risk reduction. The CRMP must also cover a threeyear time span, reflect effective consultation throughout its development and be easily accessible and publicly available and easy to read.

Reassurance was provided that this was not a plan set in stone and would be flexible in order to respond to new and emerging risks but also unforeseen circumstances and impact and therefore an annual update would be provided where achievements and performance was looked at along with what was needed for the forthcoming year and assess if any changes to risk or service delivery models were required. If anything in this update required further public consultation this would be undertaken. Specialist companies were also involved in the production of the CRMP including providing simulation models to predict what the impact of potential changes on community risk and resilience would look like which would provide greater confidence that these were defined and communicated across the area and how resources were matched to these.

The purpose of the CRMP was to provide assurance that the right resources were in the right places to respond effectively to the risks within Northumberland. It was important that communities understood the process undertaken to analyse risk. It was explained that risk was a combination of the likelihood and consequence of a hazardous event and the NFRS had a duty to work with communities and partners to minimise or prevent the likelihood of these happening. In the last ten years there had been a 21% reduction in incidents attended, with 10 incident types identified as responsible for 90% of the events. It was explained that there was a corelation between outdoor fires and crime deprivation and good work was underway with Northumbria Police to work collaboratively with partners to reduce risks.

Data was provided on incidents of dwelling fires and information was provided on what was currently done to reduce this risk and what was planned to further reduce incidents of this nature. The plan also identified emerging and future risks that were infrequent but had the potential for high impact, eg, climate change, weather, the pandemic, ageing population and increased vulnerability, British Volt and the new Northumberland Line.

The Aims and Priorities 2022/23 were captured within the plan with a review of current service delivery models and the outcome of recommendations and areas of the second inspectorate assessment against key areas.

Any further reviews would go through a full public consultation.

The following comments were made in response to member' questions:-

• Due to the demographics of the urbanised and rural areas of the county, there was no typical response time for house fires, however, the aspiration was to get there within 10 minutes. There was the same response time for the whole of Northumberland. The set time for life risk incidents was 80% and contained within the plan but

would be subject to further review and brought back for consultation.

- There were links in the plan to the Strategic Plan which contained Prevention information.
- Communications tried to make information conversational and not too serious. Compliments would be conveyed to the Comms Officer.
- To have the correct infrastructure to deliver, a specific people strategy had already seen some traction within personnel within the service. Everyone was included and involved with a voice to influence the future direction of the service.

Graeme Binning, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the Staff Engagement Forum, informed members of work that had been delivered. His role was to work on collaboration and improvement and culture which was key not just externally but also internally with a one team approach.

The Northumberland Line was referenced in the plan as an emerging risk and the East Coast main line was not mentioned as a risk as there had been no major incidents in the last 5 years.

The level crossings did not feature as much as a risk, as there had not been any historic incidents. Once the planning stages had been completed, members would be appraised. Any new business along the line, would have a statutory duty to comply with fire law.

Specialist training for officers on the risks of lithium-ion batteries had already started with training being provided by an expert from Newcastle University. Fire safety teams had been working very closely with British Volt as the site was being developed. There were also section 13 and 16 agreements with neighbouring fire services in the case of a large incident.

Pegswood and West Hartford sites were part of a regional PFI and were 14 years into a 25-year PFI. In terms of incidents, there were around 3500 call outs per year which equated to 8 incidents a day.

Members were informed that the consultation was open until 16 January and featured on all of the County Council and Fire Services platforms.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their attendance and presentation, advising that their work was much appreciated.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

58 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.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

59 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday February 2022.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....