

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 Seaton Sluice Community Centre, Albert Road, Seaton Sluice, Whitley Bay, NE26 4QX on Wednesday, 23 November 2022 at 4:00 pm.

PRESENT

M Swinburn (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

L Bowman
W Daley
P Ezhilchelvan
C Taylor

E Chicken
C Dunbar
S Lee
R Wilczek

OFFICERS

Around 3 members of the press and public were present.

54 PROCEDURE AT AT PLANNING MEETINGS

The Chair outlined the procedure which would be followed at the meeting.

55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Daley for lateness, Ferguson, Flux and Robinson.

56 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council, held on 19 October 2022, as circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

57 DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Councillor Wilczek, Vice-Chair Planning introduced the report which requested the Committee 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 planning applications, the procedure for handling

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representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of planning permission or refusal of planning applications.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

58 **22/00797/FUL**

Extension to side of existing scout meeting hall to provide improved and safe storage facilities for scout equipment and materials currently stored within premises.

Scout Hut, Ann Welfare Recreation Ground, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6HR

Adam Ali, Planning Officer informed members that there were no updates to report. No objections had been received to the application and planning permission be approved subject to the conditions and reasons in the report.

Councillor Ezchilchelvan moved the recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Lee.

RESOLVED that permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions and reasons in the report.

59 **APPEALS UPDATE**

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

(Councillor Swinburn in the Chair).

60 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been submitted.

61 **PETITIONS**

This item was to:

- a) Receive any new petitions: No new petitions had been received.
- b) Consider reports on petitions previously received: None received.
- c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered: None received.

62 **LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

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Tony Gribbin, Local Services Area Manager updated members on the following:

Grass Cutting

- Grass cutting had now ended for the year, the teams had moved to winter works tasks
- The season finished on 15/16 cuts in the Seaton Valley area and 11 in the Cramlington area and 11 in the Bedlington area.

Weeds

- Currently in the winter works season so taking the opportunity to review the effectiveness of this years weed control programme.
- Looking at an alternative roll out for 2023, to try and be omnipresent across areas.

Street Sweeping

- Currently working on leaf hotspot areas to prevent localised flooding.
- Any areas in need of sweeping should be brought to the Team's attention.

Winter Works

- The winter works programme had started, members' requests should be submitted as soon as convenient. (In some areas councillor walkabouts and meetings had taken place – lists agreed by Councillors would be worked through with Councillors during recent walkabouts).
- As always, core works would be carried out first then prioritised list of requests.

Waste Services

- Residua, Recycling and Garden waste collection services were all operating well.
- Garden waste collections would end November/December.
- Teams would continue to review existing collection rounds in order to cope with ongoing housing growth as well as controlled growth in take up of the garden waste service.

Other information

- The kerbside glass recycling scheme trial continued, allowing more data to be gathered on volumes collected, servicing efficiency and participation rates etc.
- A food waste trial had started in the same areas as the glass trial which would operate from the Morpeth depot on a weekly kerbside collection

Bereavement Services

- The re-line of cremator 1 had been completed.
- Works still to be finalised to the Muslim burial plot in Bedlington.
- Additional drainage requested at the roundabout at Bedlington cemetery.
- Stone wall mason now identified for the stone wall in St Nicholas churchyard in Cramlington.

In response to members' questions, Mr Gribbin responded as follows:

- Residents would receive a small caddy to store their food waste

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- The glass recycling trial had been extended to gather more data
- The issue with overgrown branches at Glenluce bus stop should be forwarded to Leon Savage
- Advice would be taken with the Countryside Team in relation to the flooding at Trinity Walk
- The Countryside Team was aware of the problem of Ash die back.
- The request for a campaign for garden waste bins to stop plant fly-tipping at Holywell Dene would be a corporate decision but this would be fed back to the Countryside Team
- The issues at Lanercost Park, Maguire Street and play park in Weldon Road would be followed up
- The damaged wood fence near CLV would be chased up
- The Street Works Team would have contacts for utility companies for the media boxes
- An update would be fed back regarding the broken entrance stone into Collingwood Chase.

The Chair conveyed his thanks to Mr Gribbin and his team, this was echoed by Members.

Mick Carle, Neighbourhood Services Manager, provided the following information:

- All Highways Inspectors and maintenance crews continued to work inspecting, fixing carriageway defects, making repairs, and making safe category one defects across the South East area.
- Gully emptier was fully deployed dealing with reported issues and cyclic maintenance.

Larger Tarmac Patching had been carried out in the following locations;

- Cairnsmore Close, Cramlington
- A192 East Hartford, Cramlington
- B1505 Bog Houses, Cramlington
- Stead Lane, Bedlington
- Dudley Lane, Cramlington
- Chesterhill, Cramlington
- Moorland Drive, Bedlington

Drainage Improvements:

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

- Additional Gully Tanker carrying out routine and reactive drain clearing
- Dudley Lane, Cramlington

LTP - Carriageway Resurfacing

LTP Carriageway Resurfacing schemes were being programmed and all affected

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members would be notified in advance.

Other Work

- North Ridge

Winter Maintenance

A winter briefing note (attached with minutes) was circulated to members and Key points highlighted.

In response to members comments, Mr Carle responded as follows:-

- The wording for Council Communications for gritting in key areas would be looked at.
- Gritting leaflets would be brought to the next meeting for members to relay information to relay.

The Chair requested that thanks be conveyed to the team, which was echoed by members.

63 **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING**

Vicki Flint, Homelessness and Housing Options Manager was in attendance and provided an update on the service provisions for residents who were homeless, or at risk of homelessness, in Northumberland.

The Council's Homelessness Strategy detailed 5 key strategic priorities for the delivery of homelessness and housing options support for Northumberland residents. Since that strategy had been published, national policy had impacted upon the services provided.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 – transformed the way homelessness services were delivered and introduced new duties.

The Homelessness Code of Guide 2018 (COG 2018) – had been published in 2018 and considered alongside the legislation when assessing applications for assistance under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Government's **Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018**, set out the 2027 vision to support every person sleeping rough.

The **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** came into force in April 2021. The Act aimed to further improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse.

The Council's new draft Homelessness Strategy, **Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2021-2024**, set out the priorities and future actions for tackling homelessness over the next three years. The priorities were listed in the report.

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Current Council Provision – Housing Services currently managed 4 council owned properties, providing 32 rooms and 73 bed spaces, in addition, there were 3 self-contained flats, one in Alnwick and two in Berwick.

In addition, four additional properties had been acquired from Bernicia, specifically to support households who required temporary accommodation.

In 2020, Government funding was successfully obtained under the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) for three further properties and a Tenancy Support Officer.

Commissioned Provision – with the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, it had been recognised that there was a requirement for increased availability of temporary accommodation for clients with complex needs.

Figures for rough sleeping in the county were reported to Government on an annual basis in the Autumn. The count takes place on one night and partner organisations are asked to report how many people are found rough sleeping on that day. The official annual count in 2020/21 identified 6 rough sleepers and in 2021/22 the number had been 4.

The table on page 39 of the report outlined the reasons for homelessness.

In response to members comments, Ms Flint responded as follows:-

- It had been a very difficult time during Covid with an embargo on evictions. There had been a big push to get rough sleepers into accommodation but they could not be forced to go into accommodation and could only be advised of the options.
- Very often the Service would visit outreach services.
- Sometimes people were frightened and the accommodation did not work out well for them.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act placed a duty and people were encouraged to go into accommodation.
- The Team was under pressure and totally reliant on the Homelessness Grant. People came from different backgrounds and countries.
- The Team worked closely with the Armed Forces Outreach Officer, who provided support to get people into accommodation.
- Male victims were offered support by Harbour who provided support to male domestic abuse victims.
- The Temporary Accommodation Team provided benefit support and also helped with Homefinder. The Homeless Officer helped with applications.
- The bidding system was choice-based lettings. Different ways were being looked at to get people moved through the system quickly.
- No homelessness duty meant that the Local Authority did not have a duty to re-house those applicants.
- Applications were closed if a person had been given advice and then cancelled the application.

The Chair stressed that it was important that people understood they could get in touch and access advice.

The Officer was thanked for her report.

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RESOLVED that the report be noted.

64 **DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY INFRASTRUCTURE ACCELERATION PROJECT**

Members were advised that this item had been withdrawn and would come back to a future meeting.

65 **WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.

66 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 21 December 2022.

67 **URGENT BUSINESS**

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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