



Northumberland

County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Nichola Turnbull

Email: nichola.turnbull@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622617

Date: 17 April 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OSC** to be held in **CONFERENCE ROOM 2 - COUNTY HALL** on **WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2023** at **2.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Dr Helen Paterson
Chief Executive

To Communities and Place OSC members as follows:-

N Oliver (Chair), M Mather (Vice-Chair), D Carr, E Cartie, G Castle, A Dale, B Gallacher, N Morphet, J Lang and J Reid



Dr Helen Paterson, 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. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required where a matter arises at a meeting;

- a) Which **directly relates to** Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ('DPI') as set out in Appendix B, Table 1 of the Code of Conduct, to disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote and not to remain in room. Where members have a DPI or if the matter concerns an executive function and is being considered by a Cabinet Member with a DPI they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with the matter.
- b) Which **directly relates to** the financial interest or well being of a Other Registrable Interest as set out in Appendix B, Table 2 of the Code of Conduct to disclose the interest and only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain the room.
- c) Which **directly relates to** their financial interest or well-being (and is not DPI) or the financial well being of a relative or close associate, to declare the interest and members may only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak. Otherwise, the member must not take part in discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.
- d) Which **affects** the financial well-being of the member, a relative or close associate or a body included under the Other Registrable Interests column in Table 2, to disclose the interest and apply the test set out at paragraph 9 of Appendix B before deciding whether they may remain in the meeting.
- e) Where Members have or a Cabinet Member has an Other Registerable Interest or Non Registerable Interest in a matter being considered in exercise of their executive function, they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with it.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk. Members are referred to the Code of Conduct which contains the matters above in full. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

3. FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS (Pages 1 - 2)

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

The Cabinet Member requested to attend for the following item is Councillor Colin Horncastle, Portfolio Holder for Community Services.

4. REVIEW OF THE USE, OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF OPEN LAND HELD WITHIN THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (Pages 3 - 6)

The report seeks agreement to establish a Task and Finish Group to examine current issues associated with “open land” which is held in the Housing Revenue Account, and contribute to the development of policy, to guide future decision making on the use, ownership disposal of such land and enforcement, when development is undertaken without consent.

SCRUTINY

The following report will be considered by the Cabinet on 9 May 2023. 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 Members requested to attend for the following item are Councillor Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council and Councillor John Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Local Services.

5. NORTH EAST BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (Pages 7 - 20)

The purpose of the report is to outline the implications of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for Northumberland bus services and infrastructure.

OVERVIEW

The Cabinet Member requested to attend for the following item is Councillor Jeff Watson, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Lives.

6. UPDATE ON LIBRARY SERVICE REDESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT (Pages 21 - 38)

To provide Members of the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the status of the agreed Library Service redesign programme and the continued development of the Service.

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

7. COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MONITORING REPORT (Pages 39 - 44)

The Committee is asked to review its work programme for the 2022/23 council year and determine whether any issues should be revisited as part of the 2023/24 work programme.

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 discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

Name:		Date of meeting:	
Meeting:			
Item to which your interest relates:			
Nature of Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Table 1 of Appendix B to the Code of Conduct, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest (as defined by Appendix B to Code of Conduct) (please give details):			
Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?		Yes - <input type="checkbox"/>	No - <input type="checkbox"/>

Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
 - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied
9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well- being:
- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. ‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body

	<p>where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or ii. if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
--	--

* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - i. exercising functions of a public nature
 - ii. any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 3

FORWARD PLAN OF FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS MAY TO AUGUST 2023

DECISION	PROPOSED SCRUTINY DATE	CABINET DATE
<p>Corporate Plan</p> <p>This Report will present the Council's Corporate Plan for 2023-2026. The Plan builds on the progress from the previous Corporate Plan and presents a refreshed vision, and three Council priorities. Moving forward, the three Priorities in the Plan will set the context for the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial planning process. Service planning, the performance framework, and staff appraisal process will all contribute to achieving the priorities.</p> <p>(Leader/P. Hunter- 07814 298050)</p>		<p>9 May 2023 Council 17 May 2023</p>
<p>Energising Blyth – Culture Hub and Market Place Outline Business Case</p> <p>The report will provide details on:</p> <p>The proposed facilities, design and cost of the Culture Hub building in Blyth, including the landscaping improvements on the market place.</p> <p>The procurement process for the main operator, the operating model, the approach for Creative Play and ongoing revenue contribution.</p> <p>The two stage approach to the construction contractor including the programme and key milestones.</p> <p>(W. Ploszaj/F. Ford - 07816 110340)</p>		<p>9 May 2023</p>
<p>Financial Performance 2022-23 – Position at the end of February 2023 (Provisional Outturn 2022-23).</p> <p>The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital forecast provisional outturn against budget for 2022-23. Due to the timing of the statutory accounts deadline the forecast provisional outturn will be based on the position at the end of February..</p> <p>(R. Wearmouth/K. Harvey - 01670 624783)</p>	<p>Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 5 June 2023</p>	<p>9 May 2023</p>

<p>Future of the Berwick Museums and Art Collections The purpose of the report is to confirm the future of the Berwick museum and art collections within the context of the repurposing of its current home at the Berwick Barracks as part of the emerging Living Barracks Initiative. (J. Watson/J. Rose 07500 097588)</p>		9 May 2023
<p>North East Bus Service Improvement Plan To provide Cabinet with an outline of the implications of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for Northumberland bus services and infrastructure (G. Sanderson/ N. Easton - 07979 233477)</p>	Communities and Place OSC 26 April 2023	9 May 2023
<p>Outcomes of Phase 2 Consultation about Education in Berwick Partnership This report sets out the feedback received from stakeholders arising from Phase 2 of informal consultation with stakeholders in the Berwick Partnership area and other relevant parties on the possible models of school organisation within both the current 3-tier system and within a 2-tier (primary/secondary) system. (G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston - (01670) 622281)</p>	TBC	9 May 2023
<p>Public Report from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) To consider a report from the LGSCO following a complaint made by a Northumberland resident in relation to the Post 16 School Transport Policy. Case reference Number 21 004 235. (G. Renner Thompson/K. Willis - 07966 331713)</p>		9 May 2023
<p>Leisure Programme Update To update Cabinet with progress on the Leisure programme (J. Watson/M. Donnelly 07517 553463)</p>	N/A	12 December 2023
<p>Leisure Programme Update To update Cabinet with progress on the Leisure programme (J. Watson/M. Donnelly 07517 553463)</p>	N/A	9 April 2024



Northumberland County Council

COMMITTEE: COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 APRIL 2023

Review of the use, ownership and management of open land held within the Housing Revenue Account.

Report of Cabinet Member: Colin Horncastle, Community Services

Lead Officer: Philip Soderquest, Director of Housing and Public Protection

Purpose of report

To seek agreement to establish a Task and Finish Group to examine current issues associated with “open land” which is held in the Housing Revenue Account, and contribute to the development of policy, to guide future decision making on the use, ownership disposal of such land and enforcement, when development is undertaken without consent.

Recommendations

To consider the report and agree the following:

- To the establishment of a Task and Finish Group
- Nominations from the Committee to participate in the Task and Finish Group

Link to Corporate Plan

Ensure the Council makes the best use of its land and buildings by refreshing our Plan for estates and assets

This report is relevant to the “How” priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2021-2024

Key issues and Background

The Council currently owns and manages 8326 homes which are predominantly located in the former district Council areas of Alnwick and Blyth.

Under the Housing Act 1980, the Government introduced the Right to Buy scheme, which affords tenants of existing and former Council housing stock to buy their home at a discounted price.

Traditionally, a tenant has been able to buy, along with the house, the outside space/gardens that formed part of the tenancy, but not outside space/land, which did not form part of the tenancy.

In practical terms, this means that on many estates that the “open land” to the front of the property, which was not part of the tenancy, was not sold with the house, and that land remains in the Council’s ownership.

Over time, this has led to the situation on many estates, including where the Council is the minority homeowner, where:

- The Council continues to maintain land at a cost to the Housing Revenue Account.
- An increasing number of instances where land has been “developed” without appropriate consent of the council.

Where consent is sought, an agreed process is in place whereby the homeowner can apply to the Council for a licence to use the land. As housing land, the initial request would be subject to consideration by the Housing Service and if agreed, the licence would be progressed by Strategic Estates and Legal Services, the cost of which would be borne by the homeowner.

Without a clear policy, it potentially creates a position whereby action taken in respect of unlawful development, is not consistent and exposes the Council to risk of legal challenge.

Further, there is no current mechanism to consider requests to acquire such land or consider disposal as part of the right to buy process.

The Task and Finish Group will be led by an appropriate senior Officer from the Housing and Public Protection Service, or Place Directorate, with Officer representation from:

- Housing Services
- Strategic Estates
- Legal Services
- Neighbourhood Services

Proposed Task and Finish Group

The role of the Task and Finish Group is to review the current approach of retaining “open land” at the time a tenant exercises their Right to Buy, and what if any action, needs to be taken in respect of the current approach to retain that land in the council’s ownership and grant use of it by the homeowner by means of licence.

The review will include

- Reviewing existing policies and procedures associated with the use, disposal, development and authorisation of such activities
- Gathering evidence from Karbon Homes and Bernicia Homes, in respect of the approach adopted in respect of housing stock now in their ownership but previously owned by one or more of the former six district councils
- Gathering information from ward councillors who represent electoral wards containing housing stock owned and managed by the council
- Gathering evidence from County Council Officers, including those responsible for:
 - Under the terms of existing Service Level Agreements, the maintenance of the land in question
 - Preparation and granting of licences authorising use and development of land

- To develop a high-level policy proposal to inform the development of future policy for the use, ownership and disposal of open land.

The findings, and high-level policy proposal will be used to inform the development by Officers of future policy which will be subject to consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

Implications

Policy	None at present, but the findings of the Task and Finish Group will be used to inform future policy
Finance and value for money	None at present, but future policy will seek to ensure that the council makes the best use of open land, including the potential to generate a capital receipt which will be ringfenced to support the delivery of HRA activities.
Legal	All aspects of the proposal will be subject to consideration by Legal Services who will be invited to participate within the Task and Finish Group The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	N/A
Property	The purpose of the Task and Finish Group is to ensure that the council makes the best use of its assets, and in doing so future decisions are guided by policy to ensure consistency of approach.
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Customer Consideration	The purpose of the Task and Finish Group and future policy is to ensure that homeowners have the ability to have any request to use or own open space which is owned by the council within the

	Housing Revenue Account, which abuts their home, considered in a fair and consistent manner.
Carbon reduction	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	The outcome is intended to ensure, where appropriate to do so and at the request of the homeowner, that they may have access to outdoor space which may be enjoyed with the occupation of their home.
Wards	All wards within which the council own and manage housing stock as part of the Housing Revenue Account

Background papers:

Report sign off.

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

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Janice Rose
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson
Portfolio Holder(s)	Colin Horncastle

Author and Contact Details

Philip Soderquest
 Director of Housing and Public Protection
philip.soderquest@northumberland.gov.uk
 Mob. 07824 457376



Northumberland County Council

CABINET

TUESDAY, 9 MAY 2023

NORTH EAST BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Report of: Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council

Lead Officer: Janice Rose, Interim Director of Regeneration

Purpose of report

To outline the implications of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for Northumberland bus services and infrastructure.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Note the decision of the North East Combined Authority and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, acting together through the North East Joint Transport Committee to make an Enhanced Bus Partnership for the region;**
- 2) Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance (Section 151 officer), to accept the funding for bus service improvements, once confirmed, from Transport North East; and**
- 3) Authorise the creation of a Northumberland Local Bus Board as set out in Appendix 2.**

Key issues

The North East Joint Transport Committee on Tuesday 21st March 2023 agreed to formally make an Enhanced Bus Partnership. This is a key step in unlocking Bus Service Improvement Plan funding of £163.5million for the region. This funding is for financial years 2023/24 to 2024/25 with £73.5m for capital investment and £90.0m for revenue investment.

Revenue funding will be used, in part, to implement a range of new ticketing products, which will enable cheaper, simpler, multi modal and multi-operator fares, with the aim of attracting more passengers to the network. Proposed fare products specific to Northumberland residents include:

Product	Price
Under 22 singles	£1
Under 22 regionwide day ticket (multi modal)	£3
Northumberland adult day ticket (multi-operator)	£5

Further revenue funding will be used to procure new services and improved services, delivering new routes to connect communities, and improving frequencies and operating hours for existing services. Funding for service improvements in Northumberland (subject to confirmation) is expected to total £7.8m.

Overview of the Enhanced Partnership and associated Bus Service Improvement Plan funded initiatives will be facilitated by the creation of a regional Bus Board together with a requirement to establish a Local Bus Board at a Northumberland level. The Local Bus Board would not be a decision-making body but would seek to improve working arrangements for the discussion of bus service reliability, service improvements, highways infrastructure measures, fares initiatives and information to the public.

BACKGROUND

1. The National Bus Strategy was published by the Department for Transport (DfT) on 15 March 2021 and set out central government's vision and the opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.
2. The North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) bid responded to the National Bus Strategy and was published in October 2021. The BSIP committed the region to the establishment of an Enhanced Partnership (EP) plan and scheme. An EP is a statutory partnership between Local Transport Authorities (LTA's) and their local bus operators and sets out how they will work together to deliver BSIP outcomes, An EP consists of two parts:
 - An EP plan – a high-level vision and objectives for bus services in the local area and closely follows or replicates relevant sections of the BSIP, setting out a clear vision of the improvements to bus services that the EP is aiming to deliver; and
 - One or more EP schemes – an accompanying document which sets out the requirements that need to be met by local services that stop in the EP area and precise detail of how the BSIP vision and objectives will be achieved, including any commitments made by the local authority or standards to be met by bus operators.
3. Making an EP is an essential step in unlocking the regions BSIP funding, failing to do so would limit the region's ability to fund and deliver improvements to bus services needed in the region. This investment is hugely important to the region and a failure to deliver an EP, and therefore BSIP, will be a missed opportunity in terms of the economic, health, social and environmental benefits they will bring.
4. An EP plan and an EP scheme have been developed by Transport North East (TNE) in partnership with LTA's and bus operators and the content of these documents have been agreed with the DfT. The partnership involves continuous engagement with all parties working together to deliver the ambitions set out in the BSIP and EP Plan, and the EP Scheme sets out obligations on local authorities and local bus operators. To that end, a North East Regional Bus Partnership Board (Partnership Board) has been established to oversee the North East EP. This Partnership Board includes representation from Northumberland County Council (NCC) Stuart McNaughton, Acting Head of Economy and Regeneration.
5. On 2 March 2023 the Leader of the Council took the delegated decision as agreed by Cabinet on 10 May 2022 and authorised Northumberland County

Councils participation in the making of an Enhanced Bus Partnership Plan and Scheme.

6. Following approval by the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) on Tuesday 21 March 2023 it was agreed to make the EP. This is a key step in unlocking confirmed regional BSIP funding of £163.5million. This funding is for financial years 2023/24 to 2024/25 with £73.5m for capital investment and £90.0m for revenue investment. Once funding is received, we will begin to deliver schemes which work towards the BSIP Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to improve bus patronage, modal share, performance, and customer satisfaction. The package of regional and local schemes include:

- New ticketing products, set out in the table, which will enable cheaper, simpler, multi modal and multi-operator fares, with the aim of attracting more passengers to the network;

Product	Price	Proposed Implementation
Under 22 singles	£1	May 2023
Under 22 regionwide day ticket (multi modal)	£3	May 2023
Northumberland day ticket (multi-operator)	£5	July 2023
County Durham day ticket (multi-operator)	£4	July 2023
Tyne & Wear day ticket (multi-modal)	£6	July 2023
Two-Zone day ticket (multi-modal)	£6.50	July 2023
Regionwide day ticket (multi-modal)	£6.80	July 2023

- New services and improved services, delivering new routes to connect communities and improving frequencies and operating hours for existing services. A key requirement of the funding identified sustainability as a key factor when planning interventions. To that end officers have worked extensively with operators to identify a package of interventions that have the highest likelihood of being commercially viable after the funding has ended. These interventions will form the initial phase of work. Notwithstanding these interventions, additional funding will be available to implement a package of bus service enhancements identified locally following engagement with Elected Members and Town and parish Councils. Funding for service improvements in Northumberland subject to confirmation is expected to total £7.8m to be spent between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2025. Details of the current bus network is set out in Appendix 1;

- Improved reliability and speed of buses through Bus Priority Infrastructure and Intelligent Transport Systems Investments, allowing users to rely on buses and attracting more people to use their local services. Many of these schemes are targeted in Tyne & Wear, but Northumberland bus users will benefit because of improved journey times to Newcastle and further afield;

Northumberland Highway Schemes	Description
Blyth A189 Southbound to A193 Eastbound bus lane.	Widen carriageway to provide additional bus lane to facilitate bus movement through A189 roundabout.
Cramlington Low Main Place to B1326 right turn bus lane.	Widen Road and signalise junction to facilitate right turn bus movement and provide new left turn entrance to supermarket car park in advance of junction to ease volume of traffic moving through junction.
Cramlington Dudley lane southbound bus lane at A1171 roundabout.	Widen Southbound carriageway to provide addition bus lane to facilitate bus movement through A1171 roundabout.

- Investment focused on connectivity in rural areas such as ‘on demand’ ‘demand responsive transport’ and small ‘pocket park and ride’ sites;
 - Funding to update outdated bus stops in the county to correct safety or accessibility issues that may be barriers to travel; and
 - Ensuring services run as a cohesive network, including branding and enhanced passenger information. This will be in the form of a new website and app as well as additional staffing and online information. A Code of Conduct and Bus Passenger Charter have also been agreed, ensuring that bus users and bus operators work together ahead of network changes and passengers can come to expect consistent standards throughout the network.
7. The making of the EP Plan and EP Scheme, set out an intention to formalise a governance structure to oversee the operation of the EP. A Partnership Board has been established and has been meeting in shadow form. LTAs are being asked to establish Local Bus Boards. Cabinet is requested to give approval for the creation of a member led Local Bus Board for Northumberland as set out in Appendix 2.
 8. The aim of the Local Bus Board is to allow representatives from across Northumberland to meet with bus operators to increase understanding between the parties involves, specifically but not limited to, reporting and

discussion of forthcoming bus service changes in Northumberland. The Local Bus Board would seek to improve working arrangements for the discussion of bus service reliability, service improvements, highways infrastructure measures, fares initiatives and information to the public.

9. All relevant actions within the EP Scheme and EP Plan will be funded through the BSIP award, or are costs already met by Northumberland County Council. It should be noted that the EP Scheme contains a measure requiring Northumberland County Council to maintain their supported services and concessionary travel budget at the actual spend of financial year 2022/23 for the duration of the EP.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy	This approach will provide ongoing support to transport providers and support the economic recovery of the region, as well as supporting the Council's strategic objective of connecting people by provided access to education, employment, and social activities.
Finance and value for money	The North East's BSIP set out an ambitious request for Government funding for the delivery of measures relevant to bus services. Entering an EP is a requirement to receive ongoing Government funding for bus services. Future reports will be brought to Cabinet for decision making if the EP requires any financial support from the Council for specific schemes.
Legal	<p>The overarching principle of the EP is that there are no decision-making powers aligned to the any of bodies which will make up the governance structure of the EP; and that these bodies should be focused on building consensus as to the best way to proceed on issues. Once consensus is reached on a matter, if a decision is required by, for an example, a Local Authority, the matter must be passed forward to that the Local Authority for a decision to be reached through that Local Authority's established governance.</p> <p>The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.</p>
Procurement	New/enhanced services will be contracted in accordance with existing procurement arrangements
Human Resources	None

Property	None
Equalities	(Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation of the EP will assist in reducing social exclusion by improving access for the young, elderly, unemployed/low waged and people with disabilities.
Risk Assessment	The main risk associated with the programme is that any significant underspend or failure to deliver schemes that have external funding linked to them may lead to a loss of that funding and jeopardise the potential to secure additional funding in future years.
Crime & Disorder	Proposals within the BSIP, to be developed through the EP, will assist in improving safety and security for the travelling public
Customer Consideration	None
Carbon reduction	The EP will be a crucial element in providing a sustainable transport system capable of supporting Northumberland's environmental, social, and economic objectives. It seeks to reduce car dependence and increase sustainable travel, thereby contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions.
Health and Wellbeing	Improving opportunities for sustainable travel through improved bus services will encourage more activity and benefit health by improving air quality.
Wards	All wards

Background papers:

- [National Bus Strategy](#)
- [National bus strategy: bus service improvement plans – guidance to local authorities and bus operators](#)
- [Bus Partnership & Scheme – Report to Cabinet – May22](#)

Report sign off

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

	Full Name of Officer
Interim Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer	Suki Binjal
Executive Director of Resources and Transformation (S151 Officer)	Jan Willis
Interim Executive Director for Regeneration	Janice Rose
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson
Council Leader	Glen Sanderson

Report Author

Neil Easton, Public Transport Manager
Economy and Regeneration Service
Neil.easton@northumberland.gov.uk
07979 233477

Appendix 1: Current Bus Network Update

Current commercial network

The table below shows the approximate number of boardings in Northumberland on the public bus network during the 2019/20 financial year, as illustrated there has been over 8.54m bus journeys, with English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) usage accounting for just over 40% of all journeys and fare paying passengers accounting for 60% of all journeys. During 2022/23 there has been approximately 7.26m a reduction of 1.28m journeys (15% fewer journeys) when compared to pre pandemic levels.

	Fare paying Journeys	ENCTS Journeys	Total Boardings in N/Land
2019/2020	5,100,163	3,438,968	8,539,131
2022/2023	4,643,171	2,613,616	7,256,787

In terms of service delivery Arriva North East is by far the largest public transport provider operating in Northumberland and are responsible for about 74% of all journeys undertaken on the public bus network. Go North East are the second biggest provider and account for about 12% of all journeys, the rest of the network is primarily delivered by small to medium sized operators mostly based in the North and West of the County.

The table below shows indicative revenue for operators now compared with the equivalent period during 2019/20. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent change in travel habits, has resulted in the bus industry requiring significant local authority and government support, because farebox revenue that allows commercial bus services to make a return on costs has been significantly reduced.

Funding Stream	2019/20 Revenue	2022/23 Revenue
From Fares	61%	42%
Concessionary Travel (Local Authority)	23%	25%
Secured Services (Local Authority)	10%	12%
Bus Services Operator Grant (DfT)	6%	7%
Bus Service Support/ Recovery Grant (DfT)	0%	14%

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the bus industry has been reliant on government funding to maintain core networks, funding streams have gone through several iterations with the latest being Bus Recovery Grant this Department for Transport (DfT) funding allows bus operators to claim the difference between pre-Covid revenue and current revenue, this funding was recently extended until 30th June 2023 with funding currently planning to cease after this date. This funding has allowed operators to maintain services that would have otherwise been cancelled had the funding not been in place.

The potential loss of this funding coupled with significant operating cost increases as a result of inflation, presents risks to the commercial network, which will lead to the loss of some services and frequency reductions in other routes. The supported services funding that Northumberland County Council has secured as part of the regional Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) settlement will in the first instance be used to offset these losses.

Current supported bus network

Historically most bus routes operated in Northumberland have operated commercially without any input, subsidy, or support from Northumberland County Council. This commercial network covered approximately 70% of all registered services, providing services along those routes that were considered profitable. The remaining 30% of services are either fully or partially subsidised by Northumberland County Council and their partners, these services would not operate without the ongoing support of the council.

The supported services network currently comprise 47 routes, or parts of routes, that cover mainly rural areas of Northumberland. These supported services include instances of services running commercially at popular/peak times, but where support is given to maintain journeys at other times (early morning and late evening for example). They also include support the County Council gives to key tourist services that help boost the local economy and safeguard the environment by ensuring that people can visit notable locations without needing a car.

During 2022/23 Northumberland County Council is forecast to have a gross spend of £2.4m on the supported bus network, this expenditure will be offset by income from funding partners such as the NHS (National Health Service) and town/parish councils with net expenditure of £1.9m. This spend represents an increase on previous years due to inflationary cost pressures as part of the re-tendering of services and contraction of the commercial network leading to additional demands on the budget.

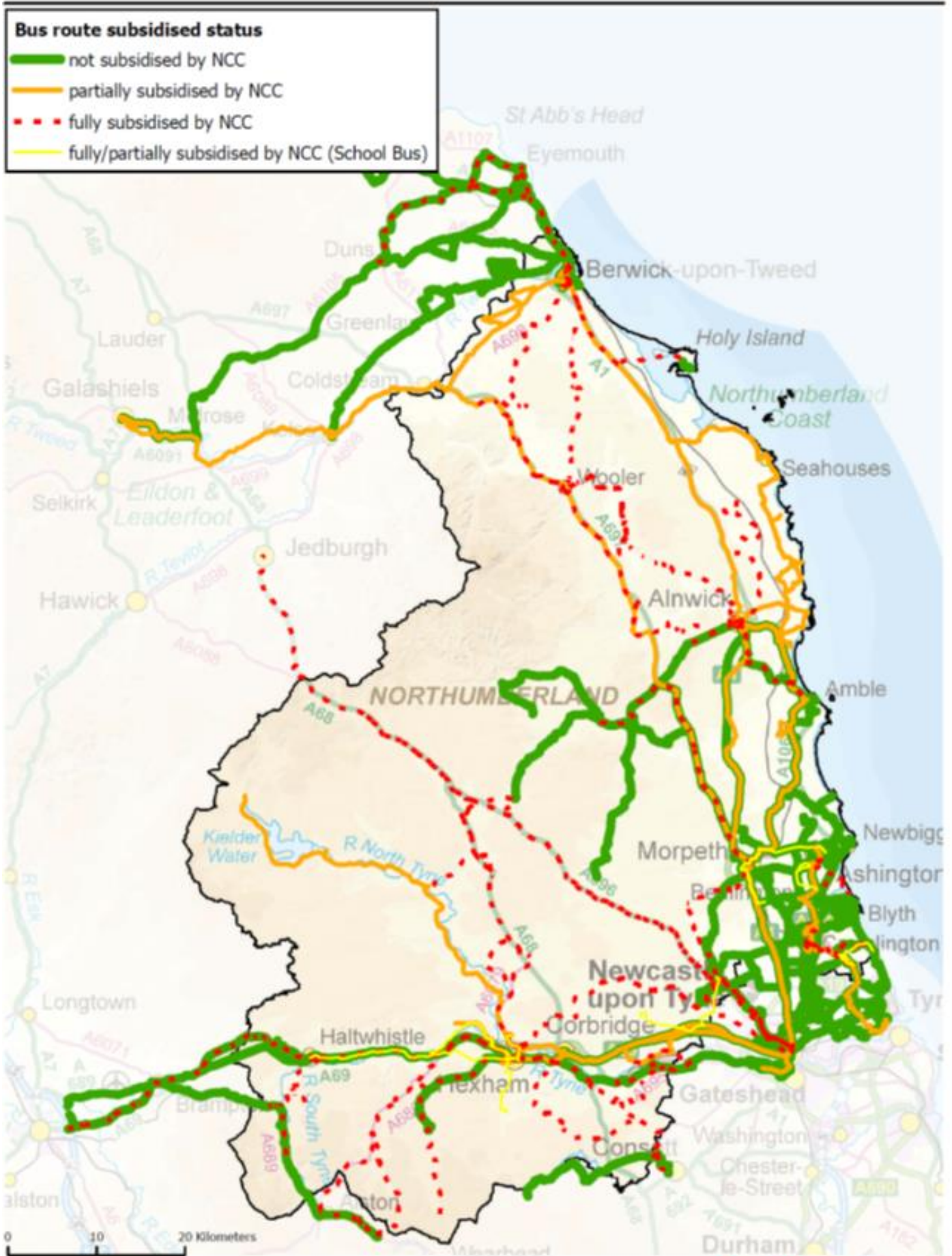
The table below lists those services that are currently supported:

Service No	Operator	Contract Description	Operation Days
773	Durham County Council	X Border contribution - Townfield - Consett	Annual Charge
815	Bellingham & Humshaugh Taxis	West and East Woodburn, Otterburn, Byrness and Rochester into Bellingham	Fri
691	N.E.E.D	Upper Coquetdale & Morpeth	Mon
680	Go North East	Hexham to Bellingham	Mon - Sat
808	Phoenix Coaches	Otterburn - Newcastle	Mon - Sat
131	Peter Hogg	Jedburgh - Newcastle via Otterburn	Mon - Sat
689	Go North East	Hexham - Slaley - Whittonstall - Ebchester - Shotley Bridge - Consett	Mon - Sat
688	Go North East	Hexham - Allenheads via Allendale	Mon - Sat
418	Travelsure	Alnwick & Belford via Coast	Mon - Sun
15	Phoenix Coaches	Thropton and Alnwick	Mon - Sat
267	Border Buses	Wooler and Berwick via Milfield	Mon - Sat
464	Border Buses	Wooler and Berwick via Lowick	Mon - Sat
Hoppa	Woods of Berwick Ltd	Berwick Town service	Mon - Sat
19	Nexus	Ashington and North Shields	Mon - Sat
AD122	Go North East	Hexham to Haltwhistle	Mon-Sun
67, 67PT	Scottish Borders Council	Berwick to Galashiels	Monthly charge
710	Glen Valley Tours	Kelso - Newcastle via Coldstream, Wooler	Sat
460	N.E.E.D	Eglingham - Alnwick	Thur
694	A.D.A.P.T	Redesmouth to Hexham	Tue + Fri
692	WAT BUS	Newbiggin Nipper	Tue + Fri
16	U.C.C.T	Rothbury and Coquetdale Circular	Tue + Thur
889	Wrights Bros	Carrshield - Hexham Tuesdays	Tues
695	A.D.A.P.T	Blanchland to Hexham	Tues
696	A.D.A.P.T	Carrshield to Hexham	Wed
266	Glen Valley Tours	Wooler & Kirknewton	Wed
406	N.E.E.D	DAB Longframlington and Alnwick	Wed

477	Border Buses	Berwick - Holy Island	Wed Sch & Mon - Sat (Non-Sch)
74	Go North East	Hexham - Newcastle Via Stamfordham, Ponteland	Mon - Fri
PC0010	N.E.E.D	DAR 1 Wooler, Whittingham and Lesbury pilot Alnwick DAR's	Tue, Thur, Fri
58 (Minimum Cost)	Phoenix Coaches	Cramlington Retail Park, East Hartford, Hartley Square, Northumbria Hospital	Mon - Sat
684	Go North East	Hexham via Wylam to Newcastle	Mon-Sat
686/X85	Go North East	Hexham to Newcastle via Corbridge, Ovingham, Prudhoe	Mon-Sat
416/417/436 (Minimum Cost)	Green Mountain Travel	Morpeth Town Service	Mon-Sat
472/473	Glen Valley Tours	Alnwick - Shilbottle - Amble Alnwick – Wooler	Mon-Sat
434 (Minimum Cost)	Phoenix Coaches	Linton - Bedlington Station (Bedlington Station - Guide Post)	Mon - Sat
X14	Arriva NE	Thropton and Morpeth	Mon - Sat
687	Go North East	Hexham to Newbrough	Mon-Sun
57A	Arriva NE	Holywell to Cramlington	Mon - Fri
681	Go North East	Alston - Haltwhistle	Mon - Sat
57A	Arriva NE	Holywell to Cramlington	Sat, Sun, and P/Hol
X15 (North)	Arriva NE	Alnwick and Berwick via Warenford	Mon - Sat
X18 (North)	Arriva NE	Alnwick and Berwick via coast	Mon - Sun
682	Go North East	Hexham - West Woodburn	Sat

The map below illustrates both the commercial and supported bus network in Northumberland:

Northumberland Public Bus Service Route Lines



Appendix 2: Northumberland Local Bus Board – Draft Terms of Reference (to be agreed at first meeting of the Bus Board)

1. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Northumberland Local Bus Board is to allow representatives from across the county to meet with officers and bus operators (where necessary) to discuss and understand forthcoming alterations to the bus network and consider any planning work that is being carried out at both local and regional levels. Discussions may include changes to routes and timetables, punctuality, reliability, highway infrastructure, fares initiatives and public information.

2. Frequency and Conduct of Meetings

The Northumberland Local Bus Board will not be a public meeting. Attendance at Board meetings will be by invitation only and is expected to include:

- the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services
- a representative from each of the four Local Area Committees
- the Head of Economy and Regeneration
- an officer from the Local Services Transport team responsible for contract management and compliance
- a representative from the Northumberland Disability Partnership
- a representative from the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- a representative from Transport Focus/Confederation of Passenger Transport
- representatives of one or more local bus operators where this is deemed necessary to address specific discussion points

The Board is not a decision-making body.

Meetings will be chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services unless otherwise directed by the Cabinet Member.

The agenda for each meeting will be prepared by an officer from the Strategic Transport team in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services. A meeting note will be prepared and circulated to all attendees.

The ordinary frequency of meetings will be four times per year. It is recognised, however, that it may be necessary to arrange meetings at short notice (for example, to respond to Government announcements and associated funding opportunities). Any requests for additional meetings should be approved by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services.

Task and finish groups may be set up. These will act within the remit specified by the Board and a written report of their activity will be provided to the next meeting of the Board.

3. Procedure for reporting Bus Service Changes

The standard procedure for reporting forthcoming commercial bus service changes will be:

- An officer from the Strategic Transport team will provide a written report to the Board containing, as a minimum, commentary of any proposed changes including revisions to routes, frequencies, hours of operation and the types of vehicles used as well as their date of introduction (in accordance with the required registration process).
- These changes will be circulated to board members by e-mail and if they wish to comment they should do so by reply within seven days. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services will arrange for a written response to be sent to bus operators' representatives (where necessary), setting out the Board's comments and requesting a response within seven days.
- Bus operators' representatives will then provide a written response to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services, which will be circulated by e-mail to the Board for further discussion.

4. Procedure for reporting matters by the Cabinet Member and attendees

The procedure for the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services to raise other matters will be:

- The Authority will provide a written report to bus operators' representatives on the matter unless the urgency of it means it must be raised verbally at the meeting.
- The bus operators' representatives will provide a written or verbal response as appropriate to be discussed by the Board. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services will then agree a written response to be sent to the bus operators' representatives setting out the Board's comments and requesting a response to be provided by the next meeting of the Board.
- The bus operators' representatives will then provide a written response to the Board to be discussed at the next available Board meeting.

Should other Board attendees wish to raise a specific matter for discussion, they should make a request to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services, asking the Cabinet Member to consider raising the matter via the procedure above.

5. Review of Terms of Reference and Membership

The Terms of Reference and membership of the Board will be reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services.



Northumberland County Council

COMMITTEE: COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 26 APRIL 2023

UPDATE ON LIBRARY SERVICE REDESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Report of Cabinet Member: Cllr Jeff Watson, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Lives

Report Author and Lead Officer: Nigel Walsh, Interim Service Director

Purpose of report

To provide Members of the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the status of the agreed Library Service redesign programme and the continued development of the Service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members of the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Consider the contents of the report.
- Note progress and achievements supporting the three phases of service redesign.
- Note the service priorities for 2023/24 including the development of a new Library Strategy in the context of new government guidance.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- **Living** - Libraries offer a wide range of information and activities which support health and wellbeing as well as providing a safe welcoming space for individuals and interest groups.
- **Enjoying** - Libraries offer social networks and information and support for residents of Northumberland to seek advice/support within their communities.
- **Thriving** - Libraries provide a first point of contact for individuals seeking support with gaining new skills; for those seeking employment and business support, all of which directly contributes to economic growth and the regeneration of communities and their development.
- **Learning** - Libraries provide a significant role in the development of literacy, social and digital skills across Northumberland.

Key Issues

National Context

Library Authorities have a statutory duty under the [Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964](#) 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7). In providing this service, councils must, among other things:

- encourage both adults and children to make full use of the Library Service
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) report 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021' (section 2.2) states 'Libraries are vital community hubs - bringing people together and giving them access to the services and support they need to help them live better. Our ambition is for everyone to; choose to use Libraries, because they see clear benefits and positive outcomes from doing so, understand what Library Services offer and how they can make the most of what's available to them, be introduced to new ideas and opportunities, then given confidence and quick and easy access to tools, skills and information they need to improve their quality of life, and receive trusted guidance through the evolving information landscape and build the skills needed to thrive in a changing world'.

The DCMS also highlight that Library Services contribute to seven outcomes critical to the individuals and communities in their areas:

- cultural and creative enrichment
- increased reading and literacy
- improved digital access and literacy
- helping everyone achieve their full potential
- healthier and happier lives
- greater prosperity
- stronger, more resilient communities

The Northumberland Library Service

The Library Service within Northumberland has been the subject of significant structural and leadership changes which saw the transfer of the complete service to a charitable leisure trust in 2015 and a phased return to Northumberland County Council (NCC) from 2016. Following the return to County Council management, an internal review was carried out in late 2017. The review identified some examples of innovative engagement, but also opportunities to reinvigorate and improve the service whilst considering the financial impact and ongoing issues of continuing the current model of provision.

Whilst the significant structural and operational changes introduced since the 2017 review stabilised and improved the service, it was acknowledged that detailed insight was required to design a Library Service to effectively meet current and future needs of our residents and communities. In September 2019 Cabinet agreed the proposed methodology and timeline for an extensive consultation exercise, the findings from which were used to inform future Library Service provision for Northumberland based on evident and agreed need. Cabinet also agreed the allocation of up to £100,000 non recurrently from the Strategic Management Reserve to support the accelerated transformation of the service.

The Library Service Consultation

The results from the consultation demonstrated and confirmed the important role the Library Service plays in the lives of Northumberland residents, particularly amongst the county's population of older people and those who use the service regularly. In addition to the provision of books, computers and resources, the value of the Library Service was recognised as a safe, inclusive, social space for community members. The full Libraries Consultation Report can be accessed through the following link [NCC Library Consultation Full Report June 2020](#)

Tackling Inequalities

Public Libraries are uniquely placed to assist in tackling inequalities within society. Libraries offer a wide range of health information, both online and through quality-assured reading material dealing with the more common health conditions. In their role as hubs in our communities, Libraries can offer non-clinical spaces in localities where health and wellbeing groups can work with the community in a trusted and non-threatening venue. They're also places where people can come to meet others - reducing social isolation and improving 'connectedness' are important factors in addressing inequalities. Libraries can also serve as a neutral refuge where people, especially those who are homeless or live in difficult housing conditions can find shelter, company, a place to rest, or find quiet study space.

The Northumberland Libraries Consultation (2020) clearly demonstrated the value of the County's Library Service to residents, specifically:

- For a third of respondents (34%), visiting the Library is part of their daily/weekly routine
- Three in ten visit the Library because it is a quiet place
- A quarter visit the Library as it is a safe place to go

- 18% go to the Library as it is somewhere to pass time
- A fifth of respondents find visiting the Library helps them to feel less lonely or isolated
- 15% of respondents feel it is important as a place to socialise.

Amongst users of the Mobile Library Service, almost all (98%) look forward to the visit and 77% agree that the visit helps them to feel less lonely or isolated.

The Library Service plays an important role in the lives of those accessing technology in the County. For one in ten customers the Library is the main way that they access computers or the internet, and this rises to 46% of those who are out of work and looking for work.

Service Redesign and Performance

In March 2021, following detailed consideration of the consultation results, NCC Cabinet agreed a three-phase approach for redesign of the Library Service based on:

- (A) Strengthening the core service
- (B) Establishment of Library Hubs within each Locality area
- (C) Extending reach and partnerships

In March 2022 the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an update on the status of each phase of service redesign. It was reported that Hub Libraries had been successfully established in Berwick, Blyth, Cramlington, Hexham and Morpeth. The Report also highlighted the improvements made to the digital offer, staffing structure, capacity, resources and the marketing / awareness programme. The table below compares the key performance indicators for Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 2021), included in the previous Report, with the key performance indicators for Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 22).

	Q3 2021	Q3 2022	% increase
Library service membership (running total @ Q3)	52,033	64,262	23.50%
New members	2,231	2,467	10.58%
Physical book issues	96,311	109,522	13.72%
Mylibrary.co.uk sessions	26,135	28,607	9.46%
<i>Pressreader</i> sessions	32,952	44,833	36.05%
Hours of public PC usage	4,238	5,565	31.31%
eBook downloads	11,051	11,231	1.63%
eAudio downloads	11,867	15,167	27.81%

Volume of in-person and virtual events	230	585	154.35%
Volume of attendees at events	2,468	8,319	237.07%

Table 1. KPI comparison Q3 2021 to Q3 2022

This demonstrates the strong continued growth of overall membership, the extension of engagement, and the increasing utilisation of the improved key resources.

We have also seen stabilisation of staffing resources over the past three years as shown in the table below. Levels remain significantly below those of 2013/14 however the Service has demonstrated strong adaptability and resilience in ensuring that all branches have remained open to the public.

	13/14	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total Service Staffing (including qualified Librarians)	96.67 FTE	82.74 FTE	54.45 FTE	55.75 FTE	59.67 FTE	61.67 FTE	61.91 FTE	62.02 FTE

Table 2. Staffing FTE comparison 2013/14 to 2023/24

The number of qualified Librarians remains lower than the high of 16.58 FTE in 2013/14, at 7.88 FTE, however this is a significant increase from 2017/18 level of 4.08 FTE. These figures include the qualified Librarians working within the Schools Library Service, HMP Northumberland and the Public Library Service – currently 0.65 FTE, 1,00 FTE and 6.23 FTE respectively.

The background section of this Report will describe the key service developments during the past 12 months, and the rationale for the identification of the service priorities for 2023-2024.

Summary of Library Service Priorities 2023-2024

The following summary outlines Library Service priorities for 2023-2024 aligned to the three service development phases:

Strengthening the Core Service

- **Digital Offer**
 - Improve the digital support and inclusion offer to customers.
 - Increase the range of digital services e.g. introduction of wifi printing.
 - Wider use of digital across all the Universal Offers.
- **Performance Management** – Review of current Service KPI's and reporting processes to ensure alignment with national standards, Council priorities and the new corporate structure.
- **Service Strategy** – Development of a new strategy for the Library Service informed by the new national framework which will be released during 2023.

- **Customer Service** - Continue to develop and implement self service facilities which increase the range of self service options available to customers.
- **Workforce Development**
 - Conclude the Library Service Succession Strategy to increase resilience.
 - Continue to engage, attract and sponsor volunteers to support the Service.
 - Continue to inform service development through the staff led cross service workstreams.
- **Health and Wellbeing Offer** - Enable the long-term delivery of the Reading for Wellbeing programme through securing funding to retain of the Community Reading Workers.
- **Profile** – Development of an annual Marketing and Communications Strategy for the Service.

Developing the Role of the Established Hubs

- **Area Specific Service Delivery** - Development and implementation of an 'Area Prospectus' to be coordinated from each Hub Library covering each of the Universal Offers and informed by local need.
- **Events** - Delivery of a compelling events and activity programme to reflect the national Universal Offers calendar in line with NCC corporate priorities.
- **Morpeth Library** - Maximising the potential of the new Morpeth Library to increase engagement with a wider range of residents.
- **Accessibility** - Assessing, and improving where necessary, directional signage within each of the towns hosting Hub Libraries.

Outreach and Partnership working

- **The Mobile Service** - Introduction of new more agile vehicles, maximising opportunities for partnerships working to improve the range of service offers to rural and isolated communities including collaboration with the NCT, Family Hub and Public Health teams
- **The Archive Service**
 - Develop closer working links with the Archive Service, collaborating on projects to explore funding streams and opportunities. Archive Service to provide peer support and knowledge transfer opportunities in terms of bid writing skills across the Library Service.
 - Collaborate with the Archive Service to consider themes for an annual programme of events and talks utilising the new County Hall Archive Service area.
- **New Corporate Structure** - Identifying opportunities for increased collaboration and impact through the new Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities Directorate.
- **The Registration Service** - Work with the Registration Service to further explore family outreach opportunities using the statutory requirement to register births as the catalyst for engagement.
- **Delivering in Partnership**
 - Undertake a site by site assessment of the most effective model of service delivery in partnership with local community stakeholders to increase reach, engagement and build local value.
 - Explore new models of delivery at South Beach and Wylam.

- **The Schools Library Service** – Undertake a review of the Schools Library Service (SLS) to ensure the operating model is viable and meets the current and future needs of education professionals across the county.
- **Community Hubs** - Work with NCT to develop a countywide network of needs led, locally facilitated opportunities and initiatives building upon the work already delivered in Cramlington, Haltwhistle and Newbiggin.

Development of a Library Strategy

A Library Strategy for the County is yet to be fully developed although it should be noted that the key actions resulting from the consultation have, or are in the process of being, implemented. The agreed three phase approach to service redesign followed over the past two years has crucially stabilised the core Service whilst providing a strong platform for growth.

Since 2016, 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021' (DCMS) has been the basis of national guidance and informed the framework for strategic Library Service development. In 2022, Baroness Elizabeth Sanderson of Welton was appointed by the government to lead the development of a new framework to ensure public libraries continue to provide the best possible service tailored to meeting the needs of their community. Contributors to the ongoing review include Arts Council England, Libraries Connected, the LGA, as well as the British Library, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, local authority library services and community managed libraries.

The new Public Library Framework will be released by government in 2023, following which the Library Service will work to produce a strategy for Northumberland based on evident and agreed need. This will allow the Service Strategy to be developed in the context of the new Corporate Plan and structure, with a particular focus on how Libraries can be at the forefront of tackling inequalities.

Background

The following section provides a further detail to Members on the status of the three phase approach to service redesign.

(A) Strengthening the Core Service

The Digital Offer

Borrowbox, the single provider for eBooks and eAudio remains popular with the collection including audiobooks to support users to learn a range of foreign languages. Full advantage is taken of titles that are offered with unlimited access for a specific time period. The loan period remains reduced to maximise availability (renewing a loan creates a ghost copy for the existing reader and releases that title for a new loan). As with physical books, waiting lists are monitored but because of cost, duplicate licences are bought sparingly to maintain a wide range of reading options.

Pressreader is now well established within the service and offers access to over 6,000 magazines and newspapers from over 100 countries in 60+ languages. During 2022/23 to date, over 5,000 individual readers have accessed Pressreader content. Even if members

only read one magazine each, this represents a saving of £22,703 to those service users who via Pressreader can access the content they require at no cost.

During lockdown, service delivery of the Universal Library Offers moved online where possible. Due to the success of this, the following initiatives now continue to be available online whilst also being available in a face-to-face format, recognising the importance of customer choice and further strengthening the core service:

- Creative writing groups
- Family history chat group
- the Summer Reading Challenge for primary age children
- Live streamed events to support national, regional and local initiatives e.g. The Big Green Draw

In addition, the Library Service programme of virtual and hybrid author events is now an established favourite and has developed a loyal following, not all of whom are Northumberland based. This demonstrates the power and reach of virtual and online elements of service delivery. *See feedback in Appendix.*

The nationally agreed extension to home use of *Ancestry* and *Find My Past* concluded in December 2021. Whilst home access was always a known temporary offer, the public can now book to access these useful and compelling local and family history research tools on a PC, or hublet, in their local library.

During lockdown, the service established a Digital Helpline to provide support by phone to residents experiencing problems with computers, websites, tablets and phones. A popular and much needed service, this continues and is being promoted via partners in to raise awareness of this free local, as well as the established face-to-face support in libraries.

Within the Library Service, in-person digital support is available to residents who have little or no IT skills, or lack digital confidence but would like to learn and understand more. It is recognised that post pandemic, residents typically seek this support for when using their own device, rather than by using hardware available within their local library. Our Digital Champion volunteers across the service provide one to one sessions offering bespoke support to those in need, helping to raise standards of digital competency across the county and proactively supporting residents to be part of the digital community.

A series of 'Techy Teaparties' delivered across the county library network, often aligned to national initiatives such as 'Get Online Week', ensure that digital support is promoted in a friendly and inclusive manner. This in-person digital resource is greatly appreciated by those who have engaged with the programme.. *See customer feedback in Appendix.*

Covid Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) has been used to provide a full time Digital Resources Assistant and the impact of this additional capacity has enabled the service to not only deliver the Techy Teaparties referenced above but also 12 sessions to 116 children and 77 adults as part of the STEAM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts and Math) themed Summer Reading Challenge 2022. The service has also set introduced hublets at Cramlington and Newbiggin, improved the usability of Library Service website and newsletter and managed online presence on the Frontline website. This targeted funding, channelled to specifically enhance the digital offer libraries can provide has enabled the Digital Resource Officer within the service to focus on more strategic digital work whilst also supporting the operational element of service delivery.

During 2022, a small pilot was instigated to explore the best way the Library Service could support individuals who were loaned or gifted devices by Northumberland Communities Together (NCT), or partners. As a result of this support given one individual gained successful employment. Funding options are being explored to continue this service which provides digital support, devices and free data provision,

Staffing Structure

The staffing structure to support the establishment of Library Hubs, designed to address the established priorities and needs of each Locality Area, includes a supervisory role in each area to provide a renewed focus on providing more identifiable and accessible contacts for colleagues and partner organisations across the county. This approach enables the Librarian team to lead on strategic service development relating to the Universal Library Offers through working in a dynamic outreach role to promote and support use of the service in collaboration with the front-line staff. Recruitment to the Supervisor roles is now complete, concluding October 2021, and the subsequent vacancies are now also backfilled.

A new Librarian post has been filled to add capacity to the county wide team and facilitate the increased focus on our digital offer. The temporary appointment of a Digital Resources Assistant has furthered this work and alongside the recruitment to Supervisor and Librarian posts has provided progression opportunities for existing staff, also supporting the principle of 'recruit and retain'. Current recruitment to Library and Information Assistant vacancies will conclude this phased approach to recruitment.

Mindful of the workforce profile, and to encourage the next generation of Library Service professionals, four apprenticeship posts were created across the County. At Berwick, the apprentice has graduated and secured a permanent position within the service whilst the remaining three continue their placements (Morpeth, Cramlington, Schools Library Service).

To develop resilience the Library Service Senior Team are leading the production of a Service Succession Plan which will capture vital knowledge that can be catalogued for reference and cascaded through peer support, mentoring and learning. A skills audit has underpinned this work, enabling knowledge gaps to be identified and providing a framework for priority actions. The succession plan will focus on growing talent, ensuring staff are able to thrive, strive and achieve. This project will continue through 2022/23.

Opportunities to bring additional capacity and skills to the service through project work are continually sought and pursued. The Reading for Wellbeing project, originally focused on Newbiggin, has provided the service with two part time Community Reading Workers. The Reading for Wellbeing project brings life changing outcomes to individuals and is coordinated through social prescribing. A key objective of the service during 2023/24 will be to establish these part time fixed term posts on a permanent basis, enabling the benefits of social prescribing to continue to support not only the community but also the local authority and the NHS.

Resources

In September 2019, in addition to the county wide consultation, Members agreed one off funding up to £100,000 from the Strategic Management Reserve to support the accelerated transformation of the service over the following 12 months. This timeframe was impacted by the pandemic but the allocation enabled the service to enhance available

stock in Alnwick, Cramlington, Morpeth and Ponteland, and to enhance the digital offer (Wi-Fi printing to be introduced later this year). Other improvements through this allocation are in progress including improved signage to make the location of libraries more easily identifiable.

A further injection of new reading resources has been possible at all libraries through an additional allocation of COMF. This particularly supported those who remained socially cautious following the pandemic by allowing the continuation of the Home Library, or Select and Collect Service. It has also encouraged a return to in person visits to branches by enhancing the selection of titles on offer.

Self-service kiosks enable customers to issue and return their books independently, which means they can use library resources outside staffed hours. This is particularly valuable where libraries are co-located with partners who can offer extended access to premises such as Bedlington Station, Newbiggin, Ponteland and the new Morpeth Leisure Centre. The kiosks allow staff to focus on higher value interactions with customers such as digital support or general customer service signposting and delivery.

Installation of kiosks is now complete in Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Bedlington Station, Berwick, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Newbiggin, Ponteland and Prudhoe. There is confidence that an enhanced range of self-service options will be launched during 2023 which will enable:

- Wi-Fi printing (whereby a user can print from their own devices, paying for and releasing them from the printer without any staff intervention)
- Self-service PC booking – a user can review PC availability and reserve a PC for immediate or future use
- Self-service guest sign up – a visitor can sign up as a guest to use the PCs. A receipt can be printed with their username and password
- The ability to top up their Netloan account – users can top up their account via the kiosk to use the credit later when required to pay for their prints

Capacity

The capacity of the service can be enhanced with the support of volunteers, Volunteers themselves benefit in many ways such as improved social cohesion, skill development and a sense of fulfilment and purpose. Many Library Service volunteers were in the 'age vulnerable' category during pandemic and have not returned. Some new volunteers have come forward as a result of local engagement, for example Allendale Library is now open two Saturdays per month thanks to volunteers from the Allen Valleys Local History Society.

To strengthen this critical resource an NCC marketing campaign will be undertaken during 2023 as an element of the corporate volunteer initiative to encourage volunteers to share their skills and knowledge to add value to and supplement the service offer. The volunteer theme is also a key message of the King's Coronation celebrations over the period 6-8 May 2023.

A bid to the Arts Council England (ACE) Volunteering Futures Fund to enable the service to work with partners across the county on a two-year delivery programme was regrettably unsuccessful. The service will continue to seek funding opportunities to support volunteering, particularly for young people in Northumberland Libraries and the wider cultural sector.

Service Improvement / New Ways of Working

New ways of working were adopted during the pandemic to maintain access to the range of resources and support the service provides. Where appropriate, these services have been adapted or embedded to retain good practice, provide choice and offer an improved service.

The Select and Collect service gave staff the opportunity to provide customers with books by new authors and to also foster discussions over the phone and online about reading likes and dislikes. Despite the recovery of the face-to-face service, some customers are still benefitting from this support, indeed it appears that for some a 'channel shift' has occurred. The return of in-person activity has allowed the adoption of Reading Friends, an initiative supported by The Reading Agency that aims to use reading to bring people together and get them talking, to tackle isolation and loneliness using reading as the shared interest. This service has recently been filmed at Blyth Library in preparation for a feature on Tyne Tees local news.

The lucky dip selections of books and craft activities at key points in the year e.g., Halloween and Christmas for young readers have been replaced by the resumption of our planned programme of holiday activities, class visits, Storytimes and Rhymetimes. This has included participation in the Book Trust Storytime initiative that provides additional resources to complement the six selected stories that form a six-week programme of events, sharing stories with young children.

The embedding of an enhanced supply of digital resources, a hybrid author events programme, a programme of digital inclusion work, the return of our key Digital Champion volunteers combined with the service's Digital Helpline, now offer a holistic approach to encouraging and supporting people to get online and improving digital skills.

The Librarian team have adapted their work to focus on outreach. Partnerships with Family Hubs, Leading Link, Locality workers and the Thriving Communities network for example have helped raise awareness of the service in the wider community. Where capacity has allowed, they have also fostered good working relationships at a more local level for example with Hexham Town Council where a warm welcome and support plan was devised and delivered when a contingent of Ukrainian families relocated to the town during 2022.

The opportunity to realise a new Mobile Library fleet consisting of three vehicles has been taken and the multi-purpose, more agile, digitally enabled vehicles were delivered mid-March 2023. They will be used by the Library Service, NCT, Public Health and Family Hub colleagues and other partners to deliver a range of services to communities across the county, offering new collaboration opportunities and increasing impact and reach.

Early implementation plans will see one of the new vehicles deployed to deliver the mobile library service to the west of the county during April 2023. This operational experience will shape future discussions regarding optimum utilisation of the vehicles with partner services across the council. It is envisaged that in the future, multi service outreach work enabled by the new vehicles will support the delivery of many key Council objectives with residents experiencing a mobile 'plus' service.

Marketing and Awareness

The need for more general information and awareness about the Service was identified by the consultation which prompted the production of 'Rediscover your Northumberland Library' materials. This requirement to increase awareness was accentuated following the

interruption of the face-to-face aspect of the service during the pandemic and the phased return.

£15,000 of COMF was allocated to improve awareness of the Service and its locations. Professionally designed publicity material has been distributed with the emphasis being distribution via partners and in community venues rather than within libraries themselves. A programme of improved local signage will increase visibility of the branches during 2023.

The Service has established a regular monthly newsletter that is distributed by email to over 4,281 library members. Please see the following link for access to the latest Newsletter <https://nland.uk/FebNewsletter>

The Service's presence on social media has been reinvigorated, including the introduction of Family History Chat on Facebook (over 200 members) and the Northumberland Libraries Facebook page currently has 3700 followers.

(B) The Establishment of Library Hubs Within Each Locality Area

As England's largest and most sparsely populated County, providing an effective and sustainable Library Service for Northumberland cannot be achieved through a standardised model of operation. Building on the findings of the consultation, and considering the learning from operating during the pandemic, a series of Hub Libraries has been established serving each of the diverse Locality Areas.

The designated Hub Libraries provide coordination of the wider network of smaller 'Satellite Libraries' and other forms of provision available throughout the Locality. The Universal Library Offers will remain central to the overall provision however their delivery in each Locality will be programmed according to known local needs and ambition. This approach enables the service to prioritise different aspects of the Service at a local level with a strong central digital core.

All members of Library staff will be involved in the creation of their new local prospectuses with the concept being introduced at the Staff Conference on 19 April 2023. With the support of NCT Locality Coordinators and Family Hub managers, the evidence of need will be drawn together and addressed in the context of NCC priorities within the framework of the Universal Library Offers. This conversation will be broadened across colleagues within the new Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities directorate. These plans will be presented to Local Area Committees for consideration and comment and be reviewed on an annual basis, therefore providing an assurance of relevance and purpose.

Each of the County's Library Hubs offers:

- Flexible and welcoming community spaces for group and individual activities such as storytimes, family learning, group and individual study, reading and writing groups, wider community activity determined in collaboration with residents and joint activities with partners to meet common objectives e.g., health, education, tackling inequalities and improving skills.
- Well identified town centre positioning with convenient access from a local transport hub.
- Access to IT offering support to use different devices, including their own, to residents who have little or no IT skills and either no or limited access to IT at home for their own purposes including job searching, personal business and keeping in touch. Where feasible this will extend to a wider range of services, such as 3D printing, to support building digital confidence, education, economic recovery and the delivery of the Universal Library Offers.

- An events and activities programme that supports the delivery of the Universal Library Offers in line with local priorities and national initiatives.
- Local studies resources for loan and reference with a focus on the specific local area.
- A wide and changing range of books and resources for loan.

Berwick, Blyth, Cramlington, Hexham and Morpeth are the County's designated Hub Libraries.

(C) Extending Reach and Partnerships

It must be emphasised that the designation of the five 'Hub Libraries' is not intended to in any way reduce the significance of the services provided through the smaller stand alone, or co-located libraries. To plan for a sustainable and flexible service it is necessary to seek new ways of working, develop new partnerships and increase collaboration with strong central support and coordination. This is an ongoing mission in the spirit of progressive service delivery.

The Library Leadership Team continues to establish links with colleagues across Council departments, and other organisations, who have shared objectives with the service. This, combined with the County's integrated response to Covid 19, has resulted in heightened awareness of the Library Service and has significantly increased partnership working. Examples include the Ageing Well Partnership, Family Hubs, Health Trainers, and Thriving Communities.

Opportunities to work more closely with communities to enhance the service offered by satellite libraries will be explored during 2023/24. In each case, satellite locations will be supported by the Hub libraries reaffirming the principle that our Hub locations form the core of the service. Models of delivery will be explored which aim to effectively and sustainably meet the needs and aspirations of communities.

One partnership model already in operation is the Community Access Libraries that operate at Haydon Bridge and Heddon on the Wall. Discussions are now underway regarding community involvement in the future service provision at South Beach and Wylam Libraries.

Bedlington Station Library has now been relocated through a new partnership with the nearby Community Centre which is providing benefits to both parties.

Throughout 2023-2024 the Service will particularly focus on exploring further partnerships with the health sector. Reading for Wellbeing, conceived and part funded by Ann Cleeves, is an exemplar project which has brought new expertise and additional capacity to the service to provide focused reading support with outstanding results. The Thriving Communities concept is a people focused way of working which delivered the 'In our Footsteps' project aimed at supporting people in the early stages of dementia. The project, piloted in Ashington and Haltwhistle, delivered a series of workshops which encouraged people to create a heritage trail by working together with a family member or friend to share stories and memories, creating a treasure chest of lived experiences.

To contribute to the Council's ambitions for economic growth, the service continues to work with Advance Northumberland to complement their business support offer through the development of local Business and Intellectual Property Centres (BIPC) at Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth supported by the regional centre in Newcastle and funded by the British Library.

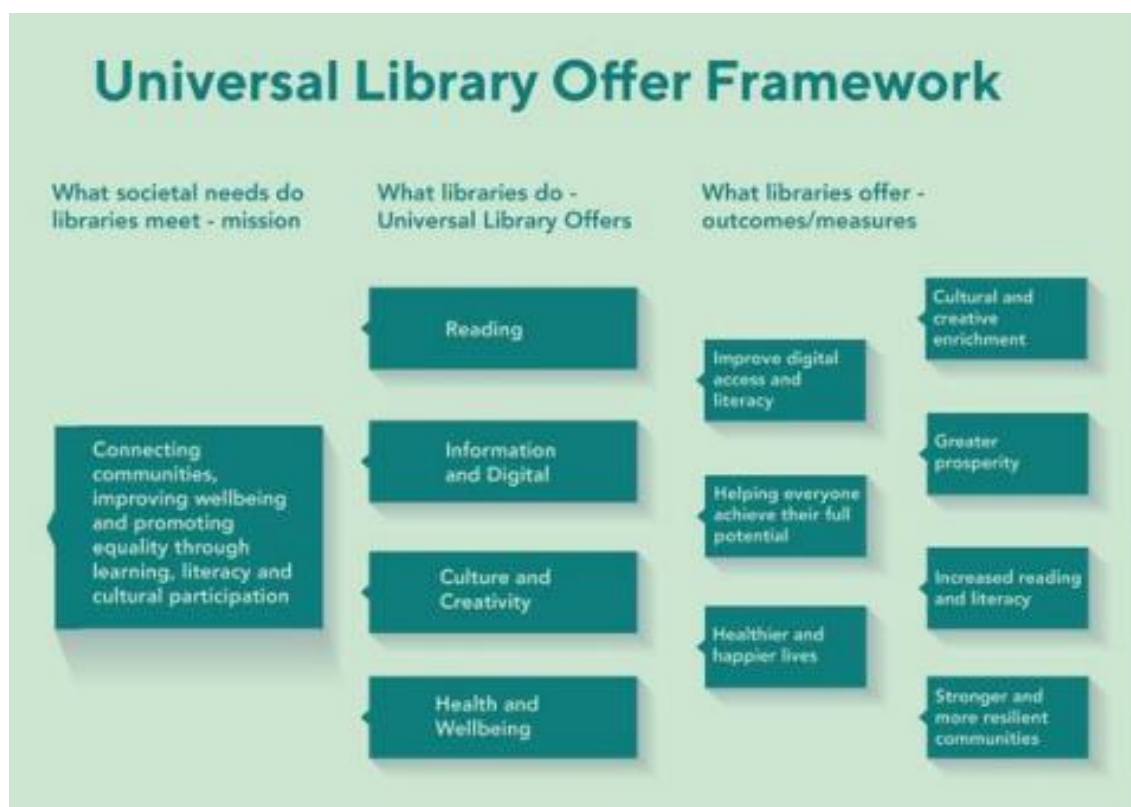
Partnership work continues to be developed by the Librarian team, both at Locality level e.g., Alnwick Storyfest, Berwick Literary and Morpeth Book festivals and as part of countywide initiatives, such as the Illuminated Sheep Arts Trail and a programme of touring productions.

'Photographing the Roman Wall, Then and Now' saw the Library and Archive Services collaborate to produce a touring exhibition and supporting programme of events which contributed Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival. This joint project involved conception of the idea, obtaining ACE funding, creating the exhibition through to delivering in person and digital talks and workshops.

The Universal Offers

Libraries Connected, the Arts Council Sector Support Organisation for Libraries, has developed a framework of four Universal Library Offers that support the core public library offer and drive library innovation and development. These Universal Library Offers are

- Reading
- Information and Digital
- Culture and Creativity
- Health and Wellbeing



Implications

Policy	Libraries are uniquely placed to help the Council and its partners deliver their strategic objectives, whether linked to community
---------------	--

	cohesion, health and wellbeing, economic growth, promoting independent living or increasing life chances.
Finance and value for money	No implications beyond existing budget allocations
Legal	<p>Library Authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7). In providing this service, councils must, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage both adults and children to make full use of the Library Service • lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area. <p>The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.</p>
Procurement	None at this stage
Human Resources	None at this Stage
Property	Property Services are engaged in any potential asset considerations
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The self-completion survey asked for demographic information from consultation respondents related to the protected characteristics to comply with the Equality Act.</p> <p>Libraries provide safe spaces in the heart of their communities, and provide many services targeting people who are living on a low income, people who are lonely, unemployed, or elderly, and people with long term medical conditions or disabilities.</p>
Risk Assessment	None at this stage. Assessments will be undertaken on an individual project basis if required
Crime & Disorder	Libraries provide opportunities which foster community engagement and cohesion whilst offering diversionary activity.
Customer Consideration	<p>Libraries are trusted spaces, free to enter and open to all. In them, people explore and share reading, information, knowledge and culture.</p> <p>The consultation was widely publicised in Libraries, via council channels, media and social media and youth council etc. A total</p>

	of 5,068 respondents completed the self-completion survey; of these over 1,400 responses were received as paper copies, with the rest online. Information drop-in sessions were held at all 30 Libraries across the County for people to find out more about the consultation. Telephone interviews conducted with residents to provide more in-depth views on factors driving some of the key findings from the self-completion survey.
Carbon reduction	Increasing digital access reduces the need for journeys by car or public transport to collect books and material. The Library Hubs will be situated within close proximity to public transport links. Libraries play an important and unique role in wider community communications about resiliency, climate change and a sustainable future.
Health and Wellbeing	Libraries offer a wide range of health information, both online and through quality-assured reading lists dealing with the more common health conditions. In their role as community hubs, libraries also offer non-clinical spaces in localities where health and wellbeing groups can work with the community in a trusted and non-threatening venue.
Wards	All

Background papers:

Report sign off.

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

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Deputy Section 151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Gill O'Neill
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson
Portfolio Holder(s)	Jeff Watson
Legal Clearance	Lynsey Denyer

Author and Contact Details

Nigel Walsh – Interim Service Director
Nigel.walsh@northumberland.gov.uk
07789654473

This page is intentionally left blank

Northumberland County Council

Communities and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2022-2023

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

Northumberland County Council
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report 2022-2023

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
1.	1 June 2022	Development of the Potland Burn Biodiversity Net Gain Site	RESOLVED that the Committee: 1. Supported the recommendations in the report. 2. The report and presentation be recommended for inclusion within the work programme for the Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council with an invitation to Ashington Town Council and Pegswood Parish Council to involve them in the discussion.	No further action required as this time.
Page 41	29 June 2022	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2022/25	RESOLVED that the Committee: 1. Supported the recommendations in the report. 2. The protocol for the setting of EVCP tariff be considered by Communities & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting. 3. Encourage members to undertake the climate change training.	The Committee be consulted prior to the setting of the EVCP Tariff.
3.	29 June 2022	Northumberland Waste Management Strategy – Proposed Food Waste Recycling Pilot Schemes	RESOLVED that the Committee: 1. Supported the recommendations in the report. 2. Consider involvement by local schools in the home compost bin trial. 3. Receive an interim report on the home compost trial in Autumn 2022 with a final report on the kerbside collection in the summer of 2023.	The Committee to receive an update on the trial before the end of the year.
4.	31 August 2022	Fleet Replacement Update	RESOLVED that the work undertaken to deliver a challenging fleet replacement programme during 2021/22, be noted.	The Committee will continue to receive this as an annual update.

5.	31 August 2022	Food and Feed, Safety and Standards Service Plan 2022/23	RESOLVED that: a. Cabinet be advised that the Communities & Place OSC endorses the recommendation in the report. b. The Cabinet be recommended to request that the Government makes the displaying of food hygiene ratings at food business premises mandatory.	Cabinet considered the OSC's comments when it determined the report on 21 September 2022.
6.	5 October 2022	Endorsement of the Northumberland Destination Management Plan 2022-2032	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that the Communities & Place OSC supported the recommendation contained in the report.	Cabinet considered the OSC's comments when it determined the report on 11 October 2022.
7.	5 October 2022	Storm Arwen, Community Resilience Update	RESOLVED that (a) The report be received. (b) The Communities and Place OSC continues to support the concept of community resilience within Northumberland.	The Committee will consider the Storm Arwen recommendations in respect of Adult Care at the January meeting.
8.	26 October 2022	Active Northumberland Annual Outcome Report 2021-22 including Service Plan Successes 2021-22	RESOLVED that that Active Northumberland's Annual Outcomes Report 2021-22, be received.	The Committee will continue to receive annual reports of the performance of Active Northumberland.
9.	7 December 2022	Electric Vehicle Charging Tariff Setting Methodology	RESOLVED that that the report be received.	No further action is required at this stage.
10.	7 December 2022	Corporate Feedback Performance 2021/2022	RESOLVED that the report be received.	The Committee will continue to receive annual reports on Corporate Feedback.
11.	11 January 2023	Storm Arwen Review – Adult Care	RESOLVED that the update be received.	Further monitoring of the Adult Care recommendation will be overseen by the Health and Wellbeing OSC.
12.	11 January 2023	Tree and Woodland Strategy	RESOLVED that the information be noted and consideration be given to inclusion of the issues raised in the Tree Management Policy.	The final draft of the Strategy be presented to the Committee in Summer 2023.

13.	8 March 2023	Utility Companies on the Highway	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.	No further action is required at this stage.
14.	8 March 2023	Update on Recruitment and retention of On-Call Firefighters	RESOLVED that: a) The contents of the report be noted. b) The committee supported the efforts being made by the Fire and Rescue Service to improve recruitment. c) A report on issues to be implemented to address contamination be added to the work programme.	A further report on the issues raised, particularly around contamination be presented to the Committee.
15.	5 April 2023	Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2022 - 2026	RESOLVED that: (a) the contents of the report be noted, and (b) the Committee receive an update on progress against the action plan in six months.	A further report be presented to the Committee in six months.
16.	5 April 2023	Social Housing Regulations Bill	RESOLVED that: (a) the contents of the report be noted, and (b) the Committee receive an update on the implications of the Bill on the provision of the services.	A further report be presented to the Committee in six months.
17.	5 April 2023	S106 Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021-2022	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.	The Committee will continue to receive this as an annual report.

This page is intentionally left blank