



# Northumberland

## County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Rebecca Greally

Email:

Rebecca.Greally@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622616

Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **ASHINGTON AND BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL** to be held in **THE WELBECK SUITE, NEWBIGGIN SPORTS & COMMUNITY CENTRE, WOODHORN ROAD, NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA, NE64 6HG** on **WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH 2023 at 5.00 PM.**

Yours faithfully

Dr Helen Paterson  
Chief Executive

To Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council members as follows:-

J Lang, E Cartie, B Gallacher (Vice-Chair (Planning)), L Grimshaw (Chair), K Nisbet, K Parry, M Purvis, J Reid, E Simpson, C Ball, D Carr (Vice-Chair), C Humphrey, W Ploszaj, M Richardson, A Wallace and A Watson



Dr Helen Paterson, Chief Executive  
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# AGENDA

## PART I

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

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 2. MINUTES

(Pages 1  
- 6)

Minutes of the meetings of Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 3. 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 Registrable Interest or Non Registrable 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](mailto: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.

#### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

To reply to any questions received from members of the public which have been submitted in writing in advance of the meeting. Questions can be asked about issues for which the Council has a responsibility. (Public question times take place on a bimonthly basis at Local Area Council meetings: in January, March, May, July, September and November each year.)

As agreed by the County Council in February 2012, the management of local public question times is at the discretion of the chair of the committee.

Please note however that a question may possibly be rejected if it requires the disclosure of any categories of confidential or exempt information, namely information:

1. relating to any individual;
2. which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual;
3. relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person
4. relating to any labour relations matters/negotiations;
5. restricted to legal proceedings
6. about enforcement/enacting legal orders
7. relating to the prevention, investigation of prosecution of crime.

And/or:

- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- it is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of this or another County Council committee in the past six months;
- the request repeats an identical or very similar question from the same person;
- the cost of providing an answer is disproportionate;
- it is being separately addressed through the Council's complaints process;
- it is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the county;
- it relates to planning, licensing and/or other regulatory applications
- it is a question that town/parish councils would normally be expected to raise through other channels.

If the Chair is of the opinion that a question is one which for whatever reason, cannot properly be asked in an area meeting, he/she will disallow it

and inform the resident of his/her decision.

Copies of any written answers (without individuals' personal contact details) will be provided for members after the meeting and also be publicly available.

Democratic Services will confirm the status of the progress on any previously requested written answers and follow up any related actions requested by the Local Area Council.

## 5. PETITIONS

This item is to:

**(a) Receive any new petitions:** to receive any new petitions. The lead petitioner is entitled to briefly introduce their petition by providing a statement in writing, and a response to any petitions received will then be organised for a future meeting;

**(b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:**

**(c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered:** any updates will be verbally reported at the meeting.

## 6. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

To receive a verbal update from the Area Managers from Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services in attendance about any key recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work for the attention of members of the Local Area Council, who will also then have the opportunity to raise issues with the Area Managers.

The Area Managers have principal responsibility for highway services and environmental services, such as refuse collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance, within the geographic boundaries of the Local Area Council.

## 7. DEVOLUTION CONSULTATION

(Pages 7  
- 20)

To receive a presentation from Councillor G Sanderson, Leader of the Council and Sarah McMillan, Service Director.

A consultation on the proposed Devolution Deal for the North East, which would see significant funds and powers transferred to the region, was launched on 26 January 2023.

The cabinets of the seven local authorities have now agreed the terms and process for the devolution deal and have approved the next stage of the plans, which include a public consultation. This is an important opportunity

for residents, businesses and other stakeholders to give their feedback on the proposed changes. The item will provide a briefing on the Devolution Deal and consultation and provide an opportunity for members to ask questions and provide their views on the proposed plans.

**8. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING REPORT**

(Pages  
21 - 30)

The report provides an update for members of the service provision for residents who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, in Northumberland providing an outline of the key data and the services available for people sleeping rough.

**9. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

(Pages  
31 - 36)

To note the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings (any suggestions for new agenda items will require confirmation by the Business Chair after the meeting).

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12 April 2023 (planning only)

**11. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

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.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b>	
<b>Meeting:</b>			
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>			
<b>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):</b>			
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>		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
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
<b>Sponsorship</b>	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.
<b>Contracts</b>	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.
<b>Land and Property</b>	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.
<b>Licenses</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	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.
<b>Securities</b>	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"> <li>i. the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
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\* '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)

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held on **Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at 4:00 pm** in **Ashington JW Rugby Football Club, Ellington Terrace, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 8TP**

#### PRESENT

Councillor L Grimshaw (Chair)

#### MEMBERS

C Ball  
B Gallacher  
J Lang  
K Parry  
W Ploszaj

M Purvis  
E Simpson  
A Wallace  
A Watson

#### OFFICERS

T Crowe  
R Greally

D Laux  
S Milne  
R Murfin

N Snowdon

Solicitor  
Assistant Democratic Services  
Officer  
Head of Technical Services  
Senior Planning Officer  
Interim Executive Director of  
Planning & Local Services  
Regeneration, Commercial &  
Economy  
Principal Programme Officer  
(Highways Improvement)

6 Members of the press and public were in attendance

*Before the meeting began the Chair asked those in attendance to stand and give a one minutes silence in sympathy for the sad passing of Mick Carle who was a long serving, dedicated area highways officer. Mick would be sorely missed. The attendees were asked to think of Mick's loved ones and may he rest in peace.*

#### 01 PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT A PLANNING COMMITTEE

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## **02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSCENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Daniel Carr, Eileen Cartie, Cliff Humphrey, Kath Nisbet and Margaret Richardson.

## **03 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council meeting held on Wednesday 11 January 2023, as circulated, be a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## **04 DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Vice Chair (Planning) went through the procedure to be followed at the planning committee.

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

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## **06 22/02324/FUL**

S. Milne, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application to committee with a PowerPoint presentation. The planning application was for the redevelopment of Northumberland County Council's Adults Social Services' former Lyndon House Day Care Centre site in Blyth, to enable the erection 13 affordable 2-bedroom homes for dementia sufferers.

J. Ridgeon, agent for the application spoke in support of the application and gave the following information to committee:-

- Northumberland had an increasing ageing population with associated health and social care needs. However getting older and living with a disability or mental health condition should not have been a barrier to living a full, independent life with a choice of appropriately designed, well located accommodation.
- The proposed 13 bungalows would have 2 bedrooms, 1 bedroom was for the dementia client and 1 bedroom for spouse or informal carer. The development had been designed throughout to suit the dementia clients, with features including level access wet rooms within each bungalow and both private and communal gardens.

*Chair's Initials.....*

*Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council, 15 February 2023*

- Bungalows would have been allocated via a complex case panel. An adult social care professional would have assessed suitable clients who had a diagnosis of dementia or Alzheimers.
- The specialist accommodation would enable residents with an early diagnosis to be allocated a bungalow to live independently with their spouse or informal carer. Extra care and respite care for the spouse would have been provided by a care team located within Tynedale House residential care home, located next door to the site.
- The idea was to allow independent living for as long as possible, thereby both dementia clients needs are met, and costs are reduced to Adult social care by reducing the need for residential care home spaces.
- There would be financial contributions, detailed in the report, of £7995 towards Coastal Mitigation and £1684.80 towards parks and gardens via an internal transfer.
- There were 2 conditions that were requested to be amended. Draft condition 16 required the inclusion of berry bearing species. Whilst this usually wouldn't have been a problem the berried species could have posed a potential risk to the client group. It was therefore requested that the condition was amended to just require species native to Northumberland. Draft condition 23 required a demolition method statement. The demolition was already underway and the method statement had been agreed as part of the approved prior notification and the demolition was expected to be completed by the end of February. There it was requested that a compliance condition referencing that approval rather than an additional submission of details.
- The proposal provided much needed affordable housing for dementia clients, in line with the aims of the NPPF and Northumberland Local Plan. Technical information such as landscaping plans, ecology reports, highway assessments and drainage assessments had been submitted and concluded that the proposed developed had limited impact on the surrounding area and its residents.

The planning officers gave the following information in response to members questions:-

- Highways had assured the officers that parking would not be an issue with the new proposal. There was no evidence that there was a likelihood of parking pressures.
- It was confirmed that condition 23 had to be in place but that the wording could be changed through delegated power to the Chief Planning Officer to separate the demolition and compliance conditions.
- It was acknowledged that standard wording could be used on responses from NCC and external authorities where no objections were given.
- It was confirmed that conditions 13 and 14 regarding the delivery times could be amended to avoid potentially busy times around schools starting and finishing. It was agreed that the delivery times would be amended to avoid the times between 8am-9am and 3pm-4pm.
- The construction method statement required under Condition 23 could be amended to require as small a delivery vehicle as possible be used. However, members had to be mindful that certain materials came prefabricated.

Councillor Anna Watson proposed to accept the officer's recommendation, this was seconded by Councillor Caroline Ball.

Members expressed their support for the application and commented on the necessity for this type of housing. They supported the application and felt that the encouragement to live independently was greatly welcomed.

A vote was taken on the proposal to approve the application for the reasons as outlined above and it was unanimous

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** inline with the report with amendments to condition 13, condition 14, condition 16, and for wording in condition 23 regarding the Demolition method statement and construction method statement to be clearly differentiated and amended. The exact wording is to be delegated to chief planning officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

## **06 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

David Laux, Head of Technical Services, introduced the report to committee. There was a £23.5 million programme to be delivered. Last summer Councillors and Town & Parish Councils were asked for priorities. The requests were considered and after reviewing the needs of the highways asset, identified road safety issues and potential improvements to the highway, the draft programme was created. The draft programme had been agreed with the portfolio holder and was now being shared with Local Area Councils to receive comments from members.

The following comments were made in response to members questions:-

- It was confirmed that the Council have conversations with utility companies to ensure concurrent work is taken. However, it was difficult to plan too far into the future and predict what work companies would do.
- Members acknowledged that the council had recently invested in a new pothole machine that was being trialed in the South East area. The Council was constantly looking into new innovations.
- Members expressed their disappointment at the amount of money being spent in the South East area of the county. It was acknowledged that there was only a certain amount of money to be used across the overall County on the programme.
- It was confirmed to members that there was currently no consideration being taken for a wider 20mph speed limit. The implications of such an undertaking would have significant costs to the County.
- It was confirmed that Wood Lea and Burnside were classed as 20 mph zones and officers agreed to look at the possibility of more signage.
- Members acknowledged that all the work would be done in house where possible. Contractors would be used for excavators and plant hire for equipment. Also, contractors would be hired where there was a high demand to add capacity to Council teams

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

**08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March at 4.00 p.m.

**Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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# North East Devolution Consultation

**Northumberland Local Area Councils**



# What we will cover

- What is devolution?
- What is in the deal?
- What is the governance review?
- Why we are consulting?
- The timeline and next steps

# What is devolution?

Devolution is the transfer of power and authority from central government to local decision makers.

The North East has already seen devolution with the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA), formed in 2018 covering Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

The local authorities of County Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland also work closely together through the North East Combined Authority (NECA) to create the best possible conditions for growth in jobs, investment and living standards, though NECA does not have devolved powers.

# Background

The deal put forward, which the government has confirmed it is 'minded to' approve, will see NECA and NTCA cease to operate, with a new combined authority formed to cover the seven local authority areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

The new combined authority would be headed up by a Metro mayor, who we expect to be elected in May 2024. Metro mayors are directly elected by residents of the Combined Authority's geographical area covering multiple local councils, e.g. Andy Burnham – Greater Manchester Combined Authority, or Ben Houchen – Tees Valley.

# What is in the deal for the region?

The deal on the table would bring significantly more power and money to the region than the two existing authorities have at the moment.

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It would not impact on the existing local authorities in the region, and they would continue to provide the services they do currently.

The deal offers a potential £4.2bn of investment into the region over 30 years, made up of a number of different elements.

# What is in the deal for the region?

1. **Transport** –strategic investment in bus, metro, active travel and infrastructure with full powers to oversee integrated transport and better connectivity for our communities and businesses
2. **Investment Fund** – a significant fund supported by an investment plan driving inclusive economic growth, net zero and addressing inequalities
3. **Skills, Education & Inclusion** – Funding towards expanding adult education provision, with focus on inclusion and employability.
4. **Housing, Land & Digital Infrastructure** – devolved housing powers & expansion of brownfield funding, as well as additional regeneration to improve communities, in conjunction with local authorities, and get more sustainable housing and digital infrastructure built

# What is in the deal for the region?

5. **Clean Energy & Net Zero** – measures to unlock potential and increased investment in our major industries, businesses and infrastructure to support clean energy and net zero transition – including a unique ‘Green Superport’ model
6. **Rural Economy & Sustainability** – clear focus on rural growth and stewardship, including a specific rural investment plan and focus on food security, biodiversity and nature gain
7. **Culture, Tourism and Place** – opportunity to collectively utilise and enhance the region’s greatest assets and partnerships eg iconic coastal locations and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, sporting institutions and major events to generate further inward investment.
8. **Health & Public Service Reform** – tackling inequalities by including measures to drive innovation in prevention, healthy housing, and social care collaboration

# Financial breakdown

- Investment fund - £48m per year
- Skills and adult education - £60m per year
- Transport – more than £900m
- Housing and regeneration - £69m
- Mayoral Capacity Fund - £30m
- Other - various
- Total - £4.2bn



# What is the governance review?

The seven local authorities have carried out a review to explore whether a new combined authority for the region would be beneficial to the North East.

It concluded:

- New combined authority would benefit economic growth and delivery of public services.
- The new authority would extend the benefits of devolved funding for investment, skills and housing, previously secured by the North of Tyne, over the full regional geography. It would also unlock new funding and powers, including over transport, across the whole region.
- Unlikely existing governance arrangements could be meaningfully strengthened without adopting the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) model of governance.
- A change is required to enable the North East authorities to pursue their economic and social policy agenda at greater pace.

# The consultation

Public consultation on the devolution deal began on 26 January 2023, and will run until 23 March 2023.

There are a number of ways in which you can have your say and you will find details of these on your local authority's website.

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The views of residents, businesses, charities and other organisations will be essential in ensuring the new MCA delivers the best outcomes for all of its constituents.

# What this means for Northumberland

Northumberland County Council will continue to run the services it does at present, while having membership of the new Mayoral Combined Authority. It will remain responsible for bin collections, libraries, and all other existing local authority services.

Devolution will not impact on the way the council operates, and there will be no direct changes to jobs as a result of the formation of the new MCA.

# Timeline and next steps

**28 December 2022** – Government announced devolution deal it is ‘minded to’ approve.

**19 January 2023** – All seven Cabinets of local authorities approved to move to public consultation.

**23 January** – Public consultation begins and runs until 23 March

**Post consultation** – Consultation feedback is reviewed and individual councils to decide whether or not to proceed. If all agree, a summary of the consultation is prepared and, once approved by Cabinets, submitted to Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities. Secretary of State will then decide if the statutory criteria have been met and whether the relevant authorities have given the necessary consents, before making the statutory order to create the new mayoral combined authority.

**May 2024** – New North East Mayoral Combined Authority formed and election held to appoint Metro mayor.

# Thank you



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## COMMITTEE: ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 11<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023

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### HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING

**Report of:** Elizabeth Morgan, Interim Executive Director of Public Health and Community Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Colin Horncastle, Portfolio Holder for Community Services

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#### Purpose of report

The following report provides an update for members of the service provision for residents who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, in Northumberland providing an outline of the key data and the services available for people sleeping rough.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that members consider and comment on the contents of the report.

#### Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the priorities included in the Northumberland County Council Corporate Plan 2021-2024 which states:

***Enjoying, Connecting*** - We will maintain, protect and enhance the environment, prioritising our commitments on Climate Change

***Living, Learning*** - We will care for our residents, support the most vulnerable in our society and help people to live healthy lives.

#### Key issues

1. The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a duty on local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and formulate and publish a Homelessness Strategy based on the findings from the review. Our current strategy is written in accordance with this legislation and statutory guidance.

2. The Housing Act 1996, Part 7 has most recently been amended by the **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA)**. This new Act represented fundamental amendments to the existing homelessness legislation. It introduced new requirements to prevent and relieve homelessness and, in that context, set out a range of new duties. These amendments came into force in April 2018.
3. The Northumberland Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021 was refreshed in 2019 to include measures set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as well as responding to respond to the Government's vision set out in their **Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018)** *'to support every person who sleeps rough off the streets and into a home'*.
4. In February 2022 consultation was carried out with partners and stakeholders to establish whether our current objectives were still relevant and that they would enable the council to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the County and meet the requirements of the HRA.
5. The new draft **Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2022 – 2024** reflects the consultation input and the needs and demands for homelessness services and housing options advice and support across the county. This is currently being reviewed through the committee process in advance of being adopted.

## **Background**

The Council's Homelessness Strategy for Northumberland 2016- 2021 detailed 5 key strategic priorities for the delivery of homelessness and housing options support for Northumberland residents. Since that strategy was published in 2016 changes in national policy impacted upon the services we needed to provide.

**The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** was the most notable change to legislation relating to homelessness in over 40 years. It transformed the way homelessness services are expected to be delivered and introduced new duties. The Act made changes to the current homelessness legislation contained in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, with a renewed focus on preventing homelessness.

**The Homelessness Code of Guidance 2018 (CoG 2018)** was published in February 2018 in readiness for the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The CoG 2018 is considered alongside the legislation when assessing and dealing with applications for assistance under either the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 or Part 7 of the HA 1996.



The Government's **Rough Sleeping Strategy (August 2018)** set out the 2027 vision to support every person who sleeps rough off the streets and into a home. This was the beginning of Government plans to meet their 2027 ambition, when the ambition is that no one must sleep rough again.

The Northumberland Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021 was refreshed in 2019 to include measures set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as well as responding to the Government's vision set out in their Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018) 'to support every person who sleeps rough off the streets and into a home'. This led to the publication of the council's **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Northumberland 2019 - 2021**

This strategy supported the Council's priorities for the delivery of our statutory obligations to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness whilst also supporting the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities and the delivery of the principle within the Housing Strategy for Northumberland that having a decent home is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Northumberland.

As this strategy ended in 2021 a new strategy has been drafted, reflecting the consultation that took place earlier this year and the needs and demands for homelessness service and housing options advice and support across the county.

In addition to changes to homelessness legislation, the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** was passed into law in April 2021. The Act aims to further improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice and strengthen the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies. The **Northumberland Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024** outlines how Northumberland County Council will implement the recommendations of the refreshed Domestic Abuse needs assessment and the statutory duties associated with the provision of safe accommodation and support.

The Council's new draft Homelessness Strategy, **Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2012–2024**, sets out the priorities and future actions for tackling homelessness over the next three years. A detailed action plan will be produced to further explore how the priorities can be implemented and monitored to ensure delivery of the identified priorities.

The priorities within this strategy have been identified as follows;

- **Priority 1**  
Improve services and accommodation options for rough sleepers and single homeless people
- **Priority 2**  
Provide early intervention, prevention, and relief of homelessness through effective partnership working
- **Priority 3**

Improve access to suitable, affordable, and quality permanent, temporary, and emergency accommodation across all sectors

- **Priority 4**

Link health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected by homelessness

- **Priority 5**

Develop homelessness pathways for specific groups including victims of domestic abuse, young people, prison leavers and armed forces veterans

The updated strategy will shortly be presented to OSC and Cabinet for approval and adoption.

To support the delivery of the priorities within the Homelessness Strategy the Council currently hosts the **Northumberland Homelessness Partnership** which meets on a quarterly basis to discuss issues affecting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and how best to deliver the services required to support them.

### **The Statutory Role of the Council**

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) came into force on 1st April 2018 and has placed a greater emphasis on intervention and acting quickly to provide advice and prevent homelessness. It also extends the duty placed on the council to offer more help to people considered to be 'non priority'.

Previously no duty was owed unless someone was homeless or threatened with homelessness and they had a 'priority need'. The HRA extends this duty to provide that people who are 'non priority' are captured by the "relief duty" and are provided assistance with securing accommodation. The HRA also increases the timeframe where help must be provided.

A person is also entitled to advice and assistance even if they have no local connection to the Local Authority area.

### **Current Council Provision**

Housing Services currently manage 4 council-owned properties, providing 32 rooms and 73 bed-spaces, for temporary and emergency accommodation. These properties are generally shared accommodation, sharing kitchen and bathroom facilities. In addition, there are 3 self-contained flats, one in Alnwick and two in Berwick. The shared units are located across the county; Woodlands Lodge, Hexham, The Hawthorns in Ashington, Lamb House in East Cramlington and Middle Street, Berwick. The properties are staffed during general office hours, with out of hours cover provided for emergency admissions.

Provision at Lamb House was increased by 4 rooms (6 bed spaces) in 2017 with the conversion of the former Warden's House. This enabled the provision of an additional accessible room and bathing facilities for clients with a disability.

Due to the demand on Temporary Accommodation, we have acquired a further 6 dispersed units of Temporary accommodation via agreement with Advance and by

Purchase and Repair using Homes England funding. These are in the Ashington and Bedlington area and consist of both houses and flats, increasing our flexibility to support people for whom shared accommodation would not be appropriate.

In addition, we have also acquired 4 additional properties from Bernicia, specifically to support with the households who require Temporary accommodation following a breakdown of their placement under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, with further options also being explored with other social landlords.

In 2020 we successfully obtained Government funding under the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) for 3 further properties and a Tenancy Support Officer. These 3 properties are specifically used for either rough sleepers or people at risk of rough sleeping. The Tenancy Support Officer provides a more intense level of support to try and break the cycle of rough sleeping and then move individuals onto more permanent accommodation. Since May 2021 we have had 20 referrals into the service and 5 have been successful with a placement.

### **Commissioned Provision**

With the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 it was recognised that there was a requirement for increased availability of temporary accommodation for clients with complex needs, and those requiring more low-level support to ensure that the Council's Homeless Team could meet the statutory requirement of Relief of Homelessness required by the Act.

Following a procurement exercise completed in September 2017 Changing Lives were successfully commissioned to deliver 11 units of Supported Accommodation and an additional 25 units of Dispersed Accommodation to clients with complex needs, expanding their current service provision across the county, and extending their client group from being all-male to including female clients.

In 2020 the Council worked in partnership with Changing Lives to provide additional bedspaces under the Somewhere Safe to Stay provision. This means that if someone is found sleeping rough they can quickly access a bedspace and can then access the support of Changing Lives staff and move on to accommodation that meets their needs.

### **Challenges**

In Northumberland single homeless adults who have an offending history, drug or alcohol issues or mental health problems often struggle to access mainstream housing in the social rented sector or decent private rented accommodation. They often move around, staying with family and friends and cycling in and out of low-quality accommodation. Whilst the procurement of services goes some way to meeting this need the accommodation of this group will remain a challenge.

Figures for rough sleeping in the county are reported to Government on annual basis in the Autumn via a statutory return. The count takes place on one night and partner organisations are asked to report how many people are found rough sleeping on that day. The official annual count in 2020/21 identified six rough sleepers and in 2021/22 the number recorded was reduced to four.

## **Homelessness statistics from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022**

In 2020/21 a total of 767 applications were made to the Homelessness and Housing Options Service of which:

- 249 were prevented<sup>1</sup> from becoming homeless within 56 days
- 242 were relieved<sup>2</sup> from being homeless within 56 days
- 42 went through to main duty homelessness of which 23 were assessed as having no duty owed
- 234 were advice only, cancelled or closed.

In 2021/22 a total of 5408 applications were made to the service of which:

- 398 were prevented from becoming homeless
- 258 were relieved from being homeless within 56 days
- 51 went through to main duty homeless of which 18 were assessed as having no homelessness duty owed
- 60 cases still under investigation
- 4641 were advice only, cancelled or closed

The significant difference in the number of applications to service from 2020/21 to 2021/22 was due to the change in the way cases were recorded on the system. Previously if a case was resolved through advice and information they were not recorded on the system.

The low figure of cases accepted as homeless and in priority need reflects the impact of the Homeless Reduction Act where the expectation is that fewer applicants will progress to a full homeless application with increased preventative and relief work taking place over a longer period before a formal application is made.

	2020/21	2021/22
Successful Prevention cases	249	398
Successful Relief cases	242	258
Main Duty homeless cases	42	51
Advice only, cancelled or closed	234	4641
Total applications made to the service	767	5408

### **Reasons for Homelessness**

The figures below show that the main reason for homelessness in Northumberland remains consistently domestic violence, however there was a 10% decrease from

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<sup>1</sup> The 'prevention duty' places a duty on housing authorities to work with people who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days to help prevent them from becoming homelessness.

<sup>2</sup> If someone is homeless the Council must help to secure suitable accommodation for them and their household. This is known as the relief duty.

2020/21 to 2021/22. The second highest reason for homelessness, exclusion from the family home, accounted for around 33% of all reasons for homelessness.

The largest increase in reason for homelessness was seen in 2021/22 in loss of private rented tenancy which showed a massive increase of 224% from the previous year. This was due to the impact of Covid-19 where many households found themselves in financial difficulty as a result of furlough, reduced working hours or loss of employment.

**Table 2: Reason for homelessness**

Reason for homelessness	2020/2021	2021/2022
Departure from institution: Custody	0	1
Domestic abuse – victim	129	115
Domestic abuse – alleged perpetrator excluded from property	0	3
End of private rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy	55	178
End of private rented tenancy – not assured shorthold tenancy	2	4
End of social rented tenancy	10	86
Eviction from supported housing	6	14
Family no longer willing or able to accommodate	128	123
Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	16	24
Fire or flood / other emergency	0	5
Home no longer suitable due to disability / ill health	0	2
Left HM-Forces	0	1
Left institution with no accommodation available	5	2
Mortgage repossession	0	2
Non-racially motivated / other motivated violence or harassment	21	21
Other	65	30
Property disrepair	2	6
Racially motivated violence or harassment	4	
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)	90	88
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	0	5

Total	533	710
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### **County Areas of Homelessness**

An analysis of postcodes showed that over the period from 2020 to 2022 60% (146) of all cases of domestic abuse were from the southeast of the county. The figures also showed that in the whole of Northumberland a total of 135 household had dependent children which amounted to 252 children who were either threatened with homelessness or made homeless due to domestic abuse.

### **Services to Support People Sleeping Rough**

NCCs Ending Rough Sleeping Plan identified a total of six individuals who were known to be entrenched rough sleepers and very difficult to engage in services. A target of the Plan was to reduce this number to zero. This was achieved by enabling access to housing with support and ensuring that their tenancy was maintained and eventually to moving on to more permanent accommodation.

With the help of RSI funding from the Government we have been able to commission a Rough Sleeping Outreach service. This is provided by Changing Lives. The officers receive referrals from the Homelessness and Housing Options officers, Councillors and from members of the public. The officers will visit the areas that have been reported to them to locate the Rough Sleeper, they will try to engage with the person and offer support and assistance to that person. If applicable they will offer the SSTS/crash pad service to get that person off the streets. If the person declines, they will still offer support with food, warmth etc. They will continue to visit the person to engage with them to see if they change their mind. It can often take a few visits before the person trusts them enough to take up the offer of accommodation.

Once the person is in the crash pad/SSTS placement then they work with Changing Lives to identify any support needs. They will then work with the support worker to link in with support agencies in order to get the person the best support for their identified need.

Once a bed becomes available in the main Changing Lives project then the person can be moved into there which is longer term accommodation. They can then still work with the support worker but have more secure accommodation.

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 there have been 120 individuals referred into the Crash pad/SSTS facility.

The council continues to report monthly figures to the government on the number of people identified as sleeping rough and how they progress through the rough sleeper accommodation pathway.

## **Conclusion**

Services to residents are provided county-wide with specific officers based in the south-east, west and north of the county ensuring that a consistent offer is provided to all requiring support and assistance.

## **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	Supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the priorities within the Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2019-2022 and the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2021-2023
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Sustaining tenancies and reducing homelessness has a positive impact on the budget.
<b>Legal</b>	The Homelessness service is a Statutory Service and is delivered in line with requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
<b>Procurement</b>	none
<b>Human Resources</b>	none
<b>Property</b>	Details the council's ambitions for homelessness & housing options services This is likely to lead to an increase in council-owned stock being used as temporary accommodation.
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	An EIS has been completed for the associated strategies to ensure that fair access to housing for all residents is considered.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	none
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	People who are homeless are both more likely to be the victims of crime; and may be more likely to commit crime for survival, to acquire money or shelter.
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	Enables provision of suitable accommodation for all residents

<b>Carbon reduction</b>	none
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	Sustaining tenancies and reducing homelessness & rough sleeping will have a positive impact upon the health & wellbeing of residents.
<b>Wards</b>	All

### **Background papers:**

Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2022-2024

### **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	Liz Morgan
Chief Executive	Rick O'Farrell
Portfolio Holder(s)	Colin Horncastle

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**Northumberland County Council  
Ashington and Blyth Area Council  
Work Programme 2022-23**

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (a) To enhance good governance in the area and ensure that the Council's policies take account of the needs and aspirations of local communities and do not discriminate unfairly between the different Areas.
- (b) To advise the Cabinet on budget priorities and expenditure within the Area.
- (c) To consider, develop and influence policy and strategy development of the Council, its arms-length organisations, and other relevant bodies, to ensure that they meet local requirements and facilitate efficient and transparent decision making.
- (d) To receive information, consider and comment on matters associated with service delivery including those undertaken in partnership agencies, affecting the local area to ensure that they meet local requirements, including matters relating to community safety, anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.
- (e) To consider and refer to Cabinet any issues from a local community perspective with emerging Neighbourhood Plans within their area, and consider local planning applications as per the planning delegation scheme
- (f) To consider and recommend adjustments to budget priorities in relation to Local Transport Plan issues within their area, and to make decisions in relation to devolved capital highway maintenance allocations.
- (g) To engage, through the appropriate networks, with all key stakeholders from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to facilitate the delivery of area priorities. This will include undertaking regular liaison with parish and town councils.
- (h) To inform, consult and engage local communities in accordance with Council policy and guidance, through the appropriate networks.
- (i) To, as appropriate, respond or refer with recommendations to local petitions and councillor calls for action.
- (j) To make certain appointments to outside bodies as agreed by Council.
- (k) To determine applications for grant aid from the Community Chest, either through Panels for individual Local Area Councils, or through the Panel of Local Area Council Chairs for countywide applications.
- (l) To refer and receive appropriate issues for consideration to or from other Council Committees, and as appropriate invite Portfolio Holders to attend a meeting if an item in their area of responsibility is to be discussed.
- (m) To exercise the following functions within their area:-
  - (i) the Council's functions in relation to the survey, definition, maintenance, diversion, stopping up and creation of public rights of way.
  - (ii) the Council's functions as the Commons Registration Authority for common land and town/village greens in Northumberland.
  - (iii) the Council's functions in relation to the preparation and maintenance of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
  - (iv) the Council's functions in relation to the Northumberland National Park and County Joint Local Access Forum (Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007).

- (v) the Council's role in encouraging wider access for all to the County's network of public rights of way and other recreational routes.

## ISSUES TO BE SCHEDULED/CONSIDERED

**Standard items updates:** Public question time (bimonthly, not at planning only meetings), petitions (bimonthly, not at planning only meetings), members' local improvement schemes (quarterly).

### To be listed:

Northumbria Neighbourhood Police  
DCIA Project

Northumberland County Council  
Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council  
Work Programme 2022-23

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### 11 May 2022

- Planning and Rights of Way
- Local Services Update
- Appointments to Outside Bodies

### 15 June 2022

- Planning and Rights of Way

### 13 July 2022

- Planning and Rights of Way
- Local Services Update

<b>10 August 2022</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> </ul>
<b>14 September 2022</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> <li>• Local Services Update</li> <li>• Highways Progress Report</li> </ul>
<b>12 October 2022</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> </ul>
<b>16 November 2022</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> <li>• Local Services Update</li> <li>• North of Tyne Mayor</li> <li>• Northumberland National Park</li> </ul>
<b>14 December 2022</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> </ul>
<b>11 January 2023</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning And Rights of Way</li> <li>• Local Services Update</li> <li>• Archaeological finds South Newsham</li> <li>• Budget</li> </ul>
<b>15 February 2023</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> <li>• Local Transport Plan</li> </ul>
<b>15 March 2023</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> <li>• Local Services Update</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness Report</li> <li>• Devolution</li> </ul>
<b>12 April 2023</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Rights of Way</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;">Northumberland County Council Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council Monitoring Report 2022-2023</p>				
Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Updates
1.	11.5.22	<b>Make Hirst Park a no dog area petition</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> Members agreed that further investigation was needed to determine the correct course of action. The Officer should work with colleagues and draft a new report to bring to a future LAC meeting.	
2.	13.7.22	<b>Member's Local Improvement Scheme</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the information be noted	
3.	16.11.22	<b>Petition regarding South Beach Library</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> members agreed the recommendations in the report.	

4.	16.11.22	<b>Make Hirst Park a no dog area petition (update)</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> members agreed to the recommendations under the condition that recommendations d) and e) do not take place whilst the six-month evidence gathering survey is taking place.	
5.	15.2.23	<b>22/02324/FUL</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the application be <b>GRANTED</b> inline with the report with amendments to condition 13, condition 14, condition 16, and for wording in condition 23 regarding the Demolition method statement and construction method statement to be clearly differentiated and amended. The exact wording is to be delegated to chief planning officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.	