



Northumberland County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Karon Hadfield

Email:

Democraticservices@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 0345 600 6400

Date: Tuesday, 7 February 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **CABINET** to be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL** on **TUESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2023** at **10.00 AM**.

Yours faithfully

Rick O'Farrell
Interim Chief Executive

To Cabinet members as follows:-

G Renner-Thompson, J Riddle, G Sanderson (Chair), J Watson, R Wearmouth (Vice-Chair), C Horncastle, W Pattison and W Ploszaj



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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 - 8)

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 17 January 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 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.

4. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES (Pages 9 - 32)

Budget 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-27 for the Housing Revenue Account

The report seeks Cabinet approval for the updated Budget 2023-24, Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2023-27 and 30-year Business plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (Appendix A).

5. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Pages 33 - 46)

Budget Consultation 2023-24

This report provides a summary of results of the budget consultation undertaken between 6th December 2022 and 17th January 2023. The budget consultation helps to inform the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix B).

6. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES (Pages 47 - 222)

Budget 2023-23 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-27

The purpose of this report is to enable the Cabinet to make formal budget recommendations to the County Council. The report provides the Revenue Budget for 2023-24 and Revenue Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2023-27 and the Capital Budget for 2023-24 and Capital MTFP 2023-27, following the Government's Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022, and the publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on 19 December 2022. It is important to note that there may need to be some revisions to the figures following receipt of the Government's February 2023 Final Local Government Finance Settlement figures. It is proposed that any changes to the figures as a result of this announcement, which impact on the Budget 2023-24 and MTFP 2023-27 are delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services (Appendix C).

Update to the Budget 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-27 Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members with matters relating to the Budget 2023-24 which have arisen following publication of the report which was presented to the all-Member Corporate Services and Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 February

2023 and then Cabinet on 14 February 2023.

7. **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 223 - 238)

Council Tax Discretionary Discount and Council Tax Support Hardship Schemes 2023-24

The purpose of this report is to propose that Members implement:

- a) a one-off discount equivalent to a 1.00% reduction in Band D council tax (Northumberland County Council element of council tax only) for households that do not receive Council Tax Support (subject to a number of exclusions shown at paragraph 4.9). The discount will be equivalent to £17.21 in 2023-24 and will be applied to council tax bills once all other discounts have been applied.
- b) a Council Tax Support Hardship Scheme for 2023-24 where a reduction of up to £175 will be made to council tax bills for all working age Council Tax Support claimants; and those pensionable age Council Tax Support claimants that do not receive 100.00% Council Tax Support, once all other discounts have been applied
- c) These reductions to the council tax bills will be made in order to alleviate financial hardship and cushion the impact of the Government's recommended 2.99% council tax increase.
- d) The discount and hardship payments will be funded from the surplus remaining in the Collection Fund Smoothing Reserve which the Council was required to set aside as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is proposed that a reserve entitled Council Tax Support Hardship and Discretionary Discount Schemes Reserve is created to cover the cost of these schemes (Appendix D).

8. **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 239 - 404)

Revenues and Benefits Policies for 2023-24

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the policies governing the administration of Revenues and Benefits and seek approval for the updates and amendments highlighted (Appendix E).

The report from the CSEG OSC on all Budget and MTFP matters will be circulated when the Committee has met.

9. **REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** (Pages 405 - 410)

Alternative Provision to Support Children Permanently Excluded from School

To seek permission from Cabinet to undertake a tender process to support the provision of Alternative Education for children of statutory school age. The request is necessary due to the approaching expiry of an

existing tender and a likely change in emphasis by the Department for Education in respect of regulation which may have an impact upon levels of expenditure (Appendix F).

- 10. REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** (Pages 411 - 472)

School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

This report informs Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation on School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2024/25 Academic Year as required by the School Admissions Code 2021. Approval (determination) of these admission arrangements is also sought (Appendix G).

The report of the FACS OSC is attached to the back of the report

- 11. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL** (Pages 473 - 492)

Northumberland Stewardship and Rural Growth Investment Programme

To advise Cabinet of the Northumberland Stewardship and Rural Growth Investment Plan facilitated by the North of Tyne Combined Authority, the investment subsequently secured to support the first phase of implementation, and the proposed delivery projects to kickstart that implementation (Appendix H).

- 12. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL** (Pages 493 - 504)

Council Response to the Report of the Independent Future of Farming in Northumberland Inquiry

The purpose of the report is to summarise the key findings and recommendations from the independent Inquiry and to seek approval to the proposed Council response to those recommendations (Appendix I).

- 13. REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HEALTHY LIVES** (Pages 505 - 522)

Council Response to the Independent Review of its Cultural Investment Portfolio

The purpose of the report is to summarise the key findings and recommendations from the independent Review within the context of the proposed initial response by the Council to those findings and recommendations (Appendix J).

- 14. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL** (Pages 523 - 536)

Revised Outline Business Case for Berwick Theatre

The purpose of this report is to provide an update about some important changes to the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Berwick Theatre (New Maltings) project, including changes to the project costs, funding requirement, and value for money assessment. The project remains well placed to proceed as originally planned but it is important to set out the current state of progress and explain the reasons for the additional funding request (Appendix K).

- 15. REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUSINESS** (Pages 537 - 544)
Energy Central Campus Governance Update

This report seeks approval regarding amendments to the representatives from Northumberland County Council on the Energy Central Campus Company Ltd Board of Directors (Appendix L).

- 16. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 545 - 554)
Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group

The report summarises proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group (CSG) via email on 2nd December 2022 and 6th January 2023 (Appendix M).

- 17. URGENT BUSINESS**

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.
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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)