



# Northumberland County Council

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:**

**Enquiries to:** Jackie Roll

**Email:** jackie.roll@northumberland.gov.uk

**Tel direct:**

**Date:** 14 February 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL** to be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL** on **WEDNESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2023** at **3.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

To County Council members as follows:-

**C Ball, D Bawn, J Beynon, L Bowman, S Bridgett, D Carr, E Cartie, G Castle, T Cessford, T Clark, A Dale, W Daley, L Darwin, S Dickinson, R Dodd, C Dunbar, L Dunn, P Ezhilchelvan, D Ferguson, B Flux (Chair), J Foster, B Gallacher, L Grimshaw, C Hardy, G Hill, C Horncastle, C Humphrey, I Hunter, JI Hutchinson, P Jackson, V Jones, D Kennedy, J Lang, S Lee, M Mather, N Morphet, M Murphy, K Nisbet, N Oliver, K Parry, W Pattison, W Ploszaj, M Purvis, J Reid, G Renner-Thompson, M Richardson, J Riddle, M Robinson, G Sanderson, A Scott, C Seymour, A Sharp, E Simpson, G Stewart, M Swinbank, M Swinburn, C Taylor, T Thorne, D Towns, H Waddell, A Wallace, A Watson, J Watson, R Wearmouth and R Wilczek**



**Dr Helen Paterson, Chief Executive**  
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF  
T: 0345 600 6400  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://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. MINUTES

(Pages 1  
- 10)

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held on Wednesday 18 January 2023, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, signed by the Business Chair and sealed with the Common Seal of the Council (see pages 13-22).

### 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](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. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE BUSINESS CHAIR, LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

**5. CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY) TO DATE OF MEETING**

**6. QUESTIONS**

to be put to the Business Chair, a member of the Cabinet or the Chair of any Committee or Sub Committee, in accordance with the Constitution's Rules of Procedure No.9

**7. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

(Pages  
11 - 22)

**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.

**8. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES**

(Pages  
23 - 44)

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

The report seeks Council 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).

**9. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES**

(Pages  
45 - 218)

**Budget 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-27**

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.

- 10. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 219 - 230)

**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.

- 11. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 231 - 252)

**Council Tax 2023-24**

To provide Council Members with the financial information to enable the Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2023-24 ( see pages 23-44).

- 12. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 253 - 416)

**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.

- 13. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 417 - 430)

**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.

- 14. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 431 - 438)

**Political Proportionality**

To determine the political proportionality of the registered political groups on the council and to allocate seats on committees in accordance with that proportionality in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (see pages 45-52).

- 15. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND INTERIM HEAD OF HR/OD** (Pages 439 - 442)

**Approval of Voluntary Redundancy Requests**

This report asks Council to receive and consider the report and the recommendations of the Staff and Appointments Committee in respect of approving two voluntary redundancies.

The Staff and Appointments Committee are due to meet on 20 February 2023 and due to the timings it is not possible to include their recommendations in advance of deadlines for papers to be submitted. The report outlining their recommendations will be submitted prior to the Council meeting.

The link to the full report to be considered by Staff and Appointments Committee is included in the report. It outlines a number of Voluntary Redundancy requests that are recommended to be progressed as they are linked to the tier 3 & 4 restructure. County Council only needs to approve those where the exit package exceeds £100,000, of which there are two (see pages 53-56).

- 16. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES** (Pages 443 - 458)

**Delegated Decision - Capital investment for Schools Broadband service improvement**

To inform Council of a delegated decision made by the Council's s151 Officer and Executive Director of Finance under the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (see pages 57-72).

- 17. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW**

## **AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Council is requested to appoint a Chair of Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Reid.

- 18. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL** (Pages 459 - 464)
- Appointment of the Preferred Candidate for the Position of Executive Director of Transformation & Resources and S151 Officer**

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, matters relating to the appointment of a Section 151 Officer are reserved to the Full Council. The purpose of this report is to consider the recommendation of the Staff and Appointments Committee held on 30 January 2023 to appoint Jan Willis to the role of Executive Director – Transformation & Resources and Section 151 Officer (S151) (see pages 73-78).

**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.