



Northumberland County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Rebecca Greally

Email:

Rebecca.Greally@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622616

Date: Friday, 28 April 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **ASHINGTON AND BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL** to be held in **BLYTH TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB, SOUTH NEWSHAM PLAYING FIELDS, SANDRINGHAM DRIVE, BLYTH, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE24 3PS** on **WEDNESDAY, 10 MAY 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
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF
T: 0345 600 6400
www.northumberland.gov.uk



AGENDA

PART I

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(Pages 1
- 10)

Minutes of the meetings of Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday 15th March 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. 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 POLICING UPDATE

Inspectors W Daniels and J Caisley will be in attendance to provide an update on policing issues in the Ashington and Blyth Area.

7. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING UPDATE

An officer will attend to advise members about private sector housing within the area of Ashington and Blyth.

8. 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.

9. LOCAL AREA WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages
11 - 16)

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 date of the next meeting is due to be agreed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council on 17 May 2023 and is likely to take place in June 2023. Details will be circulated when the date has been confirmed.

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.

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)

Agenda Item 2

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held on **Wednesday, 15 March 2023 at 5:00 pm** in **The Welbeck Suite, Newbiggin Sports and Community Centre, Woodhorn Road, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, NE64 6HG**

PRESENT

Councillor L Grimshaw (Chair)

MEMBERS

C Ball	K Parry
E Cartie	W Ploszaj
B Gallacher	M Purvis
C Humprey	J Reid
J Lang	M Richardson
K Nisbet	A Wallace
	A Watson

OFFICERS

G Bucknall	Highways Delivery Area Manager
R Greally	Assistant Democratic Services Officer
S McMillan	Service Director
J Stewart	Strategic Housing Manager
R Wealleans	Neighbourhood Services Area Manager

2 Members of the press and public were in attendance

02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSCENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Daniel Carr and Elizabeth Simpson

03 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council meeting held on Wednesday 13 February 2023, as circulated, be a true record and signed by the Chairman.

04 PETITIONS

- (a) A new petition had been submitted regarding the running and funding of Ashington Hirst Park. The petition had 77 signatures and a report would be brought to a future meeting. It was anticipated that it would be heard at the May meeting.

With the agreement from the Chair the devolution consultation item was brought forward on the agenda.

06 DEVOLUTION CONSULTATION

Sarah McMillan, Service Director and Councilor Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council introduced the presentation to committee. The consultation for the devolution deal commenced on 26 January 2023. During the consultation period, amongst public events, discussions have also taken place at Local Area Councils, Youth Parliament, with business and NALC.

The deal would have seven local authorities working together: Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, County Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. The Leader confirmed that all authorities were working well together creating the deal. It was hoped through the devolution deal the Authorities would be able to create the best conditions for growth in jobs, investment and living standards. Members were assured that the devolution deal would not impact on the existing local authorities in the region, and the authorities would continue to provide the statutory and local services they do currently.

There were several priorities for the County that were highlighted in the deal including clean energy and net zero. The rural economy and sustainability was another highlight of the deal which was a priority to the Council as Northumberland had a high proportion of rural areas. The Health & Public Service reform priority would be tackling inequalities which is one of the main priorities of the Council.

The 7 Councils commissioned a Governance Review to explore whether the combined authority for the region would be beneficial. The Review concluded that the new authority would benefit economic growth and delivery of public services. It was unlikely existing governance arrangements could have been meaningfully strengthened without adopting the Mayoral Combined Authority model of governance. A change was required to enable the North East authorities to pursue their economic and social policy agenda at a greater pace.

The consultation commenced on 23rd January and was due to close on 23rd March. There had been several events across the region and communications had been published to publicise the consultation period. Once the consultation period had concluded the feedback would be reviewed by individual councils to decide whether to proceed. If all councils agreed, a summary of the consultation would be prepared, and once approved by Cabinets, submitted to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities. The Secretary of State would

then decide if the statutory criteria had been met and whether the relevant authorities had given the necessary consents, before making the statutory order to create the new mayoral combined authority. If the region proceeded it was most likely that this would be in May 2024, when the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority would be formed and an election would be held to appoint the new Mayor.

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

- It was acknowledged that the local area council was held at 5:00 pm which may have made it difficult for some members of the public to attend. However, it was confirmed that there had been a lot of engagements organised to engage with the public and that the County Council had gone above and beyond what other Authorities had done.
- There were several non-negotiables in the deal that the Leader had stressed including; rural development needed and maintaining the Council's own fire and rescue service.
- Transport was a priority of the Council and the importance of having sustainable funding for rural transport was recognized. It was acknowledged that tourist spots were being looked at for possible transportation routes, however the priority for transport links would be for residents.
- It was confirmed that the £42 billion was not index linked, however a number of spending reviews would occur throughout the deal term. The combined authority would have borrowing powers.
- The devolution deal was an executive function and therefore Cabinet would make the final decision on it. The Leader confirmed he would be happy to discuss the deal with all members at full council.
- It was confirmed that a new Mayor for an expanded Combined Authority would not take on the role of the Police Crime Commissioner, as the combined authority will not be contiguous with the Police forces in the region.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

08 LOCAL SERVICES

Ray Wealleans, neighbourhood services area manager, gave an update to committee.

Winter works continued at a rate expected.

Since the last LAC (in January), the service had experienced a mild winter period. The exception being w/c 6th March.

- The Grounds staff continued to work a 28-hour week during the winter period until the end of March, progress through scheduled work had been a challenge but ultimately successful.

- They were on target to complete all scheduled winter works tasks with a couple of areas to be completed in Ashington.
- Officers asked to be alerted at the earliest convenience if Councillors believed any requested work had not been completed.

Preparations were finalised for the upcoming grass cutting season. All grass cutting equipment had either been serviced or was scheduled to be serviced.

- Grass cutting would potentially start within the next 2 weeks depending on ground conditions
- Routes within the remit of Stakeford depot remained unchanged from last year
- Grass cutting schedules for the Blyth area had some changes made in line with agreements with Blyth Town council around gateways into the town as part of the partnership agreement.
- The service was now recruiting for seasonal grounds maintenance positions for this year and had a number of returning staff in both areas.

Weed control activities would be undertaken in-house again this year.

- Blue dye would be used again this year.

Street Cleansing

- Business as usual.
- Street sweeping was always affected by ground frost, the service was suspended w/c 6th March with staff assisting in the gritting of all identified routes.
- Reminder to LAC - The brushes lost their effectiveness in freezing conditions as vegetation and detritus sticks to the ground. When this is observed, machines are stood down.
- **The Great British Spring Clean 2023:** We are supporting Ashington Town Council in this event with the area team adding to resources by helping with the clean up and transporting all rubbish to tip from the various sites over the week. We also approached local fast food outlets (McDonalds and KFC) McDonalds have all in hand and did not require any assistance but we have arranged with KFC to assist in the collection of their bags on the day of their clean up. Any other Town or Parish in need of assistance please let me know.
- Planned work for the beginning of April will commence for the A189 Spine Road over 4 weekends with night time closures.

WASTE

Residual and recycling

- It was business as usual for waste collection services.
- Round Review - Work had been completed in readiness for deployment of the two new RCV's. This was done to ensure they are deployed in the most efficient way possible.
- This LAC area would benefit from some areas of Cramlington and Blyth going back to the collection service for that area which released the Stakeford crews to take up the majority of new builds within Ashington, Ellington and surrounding areas.

Garden waste collections have started

- Increased housing/customer numbers had meant additional tweaking of rounds had been required to accommodate the increase.
- Initial take up for the service was high, the scheme remained as popular as ever.

Information Only:

- Glass collection was still going well with 4.7 ton collected given a cumulative total of 181 ton collected since the start of the trial, the front-line collection round had commented on the lower amount of residual waste collected within the trial area.

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

- It was confirmed that signage for the commercial bins was being prepared and should be rolled out in the very near future. The communal bins should be rolled out by the end of April
- Members were assured that if communities wanted to extend the clean up event that it could be accommodated.
- Members requested feedback on the winter services and updates on the road sweepers which the officer confirmed they were happy to provide.

Graham Bucknall, Highways Delivery Area Manager, gave an update to committee:-

On the day-to-day maintenance side, the Highways Inspectors and their response gangs continued to repair carriageway defects, across the Southeast area. It was hoped after winter once there was a new budget allocation, progress would be made with the backlog of potholes.

NCC were nominated last year for a national Excellence award in Highway and street lighting Maintenance by APSE (Association for public service excellence). It may be assumed that the County's roads are poor, but they were among the top performers in the country.

Gully emptier was fully deployed dealing with reported issues and cyclic maintenance.

On the Capital side of the business, since last Area Council, large structural patching had been carried out at the following locations;

- Burnside, Ashington
- Ashford Close, Blyth
- 1st/2nd/4th/12th Avenue, Blyth
- Broadway, Blyth
- Sea Crest Road, Newbiggin
- A193 Plessey R/A, Blyth
- Ravens Hill, Ashington
- Hawthorn Road, Ashington
- Ingram Drive, Blyth

Drainage Improvements:

Drainage Improvements had been carried out in the following areas:

- Kenilworth Road, Ashington

Chair's Initials.....

Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council, 15 March 2023

- Coburg Street, Blyth
- Rotary Way, Blyth
- Carlton Street, Ashington
- Woodlands Road, Ashington
- Rutherford Street, Ashington
- Station Road, Ashington
- Dunlin Drive, Blyth
- Milburn Road, Ashington
- 1068 Ashington
- Furnace Road, Bebside

LTP – Carriageway Resurfacing

It was approaching the end of the LTP resurfacing programme for this year. Schemes had recently been completed at

- Thoroton Street, Blyth – Completed 15th March
- Laverock Hall Road, Blyth – Completed 14th March
- Hirst Roundabout, Ashington. - Starting 15th March for 3 nights. 20:00 – 06:00

Other Completed and Upcoming Schemes

- Remscheid Way, Ashington. - Installation of 15 bollards and new 'Slow' road markings, completed 9th March.
- Woodhorn Crossroads – Traffic safety scheme started on Monday 13th March, new traffic signs and road markings. The signs were now installed, and road markings were expected to be completed by end of March.
- A189 Woodhorn Museum Entrance – Traffic safety scheme, this was installation of new road markings and refreshing of existing markings. This would be a night-time road closure for 5 nights starting 15th May.
- Northern Line upgrades – Working alongside Network Rail there would be improvement works carried out at North Seaton Crossing, Ashington and Newsham Road Crossing, Blyth, there were no fixed dates for this yet but would be looking to start work in early late spring. The work consists of carriageway resurfacing at Newsham and footpath upgrades at North Seaton.

Regeneration Scheme

- Bowes Street, Blyth – Was now almost complete. Installation of Giant planters and seating was programmed for week commencing 27/3/2023. There was also street cleansing and sealing booked in for this week, this was nightshift working between 20:00 and 06:00.

Winter Maintenance

It was hoped they were now coming out of Winter. It had not been a particularly severe Winter although there had been three or four very cold spells but the team had done a fantastic job as always.

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

- Officers asked for any details regarding redundant lighting and sign posts being taped off but yet to be removed.
- Officers confirmed that they would pass on concerns regarding utility companies digging up paths & roads and not restoring them sufficiently.
- Members questioned whether staff could report other faults or issues and work across departments.
- Members thanked the officers for the hard work their staff undertook during the recent cold spells.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

09 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING REPORT

Julie Stewart, Strategic Housing Manager, introduced the report to committee. The updated Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2022-2026 has been approved by Cabinet. There is a statutory duty to carry out a review of homelessness in the Authority's area and create a strategy based on the review. The strategy outlines priorities for the next five years. The service works with Advance and other housing companies depending on location to help provide additional temporary accommodation, increasing the options available to the team. The new strategy defines what a rough sleeper is which is different to homelessness. The report highlights the provisions available to rough sleepers as well as those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In November a rough sleeper count was conducted in November 2022 and 5 people were verified as sleeping rough within the County. The service does not underestimate the number of hidden homeless. The service is under increasing pressure, there are a high number of homelessness reported daily to the Council and funding from the Government had been reduced.

There had been 2,491 homeless applications in Northumberland to date, 1011 (41%) of these were in the Blyth area. There were 434 (17%) applications in Ashington and 66 (3%) in Newbiggin by the Sea. It was thought that there was a high proportion of homelessness in Blyth as that was where many services were.

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

- The service was flexible with its definition of affordable housing. The service would work with those needed on an individual basis to ensure that the individual could suitably afford the property.

- It was confirmed that Changing Lives worked with individuals for a maximum of 6 months to try and move them onto permanent housing depending on the individual.
- There was work ongoing with empty properties and dwellings however Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) are very lengthy and sometimes the costs incurred was very high. Often the reason behind Empty properties were complex and some are often tied up in complex legal situations such as probate.
- The Government are considering bringing forward a decent home standard for private landlords. The Council do have an accreditation scheme however it is voluntary scheme so often it was more the proactive landlords that join up to the scheme.
- The Council commissions one service in the County to support people with complex needs. This is delivered by Changing Lives. The council also commissions the Somewhere Safe to Stay scheme, for people sleeping rough, funded from Government funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI). This scheme is also delivered by Changing Lives. The services were inspected regularly and required to provide quarterly reports to the Council. It was important to note that there were other services available that were not commissioned and there was no obligation for those services to be inspected.
- It was confirmed that the Government set the date of the homelessness Rough Sleeper Count however the Council also complete interim surveys at different times of the year.
- It is hoped that Selective Licensing in a focused area in Blyth will roll out next May depending on the results of a formal consultation which will be taking place this year. . The funding for this is being provided by Public Health.
- It was acknowledged that there is an increasing number of people with complex needs who are homeless and there is a gap within the service provision to assist them.
- It is hoped that with government funding there will be a designated team that would be able to investigate empty homes and be able to use enforcement against private landlords not maintaining standards.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 12th April (planning only).

Chair _____

Chair's Initials.....

Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council, 15 March 2023

Date _____

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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:

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

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13 July 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning and Rights of Way• Local Services Update• Local Policing Update• Private Sector Housing Update

Northumberland County Council
Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council

Monitoring Report 2022-2023

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Updates
1.	11.5.22	Make Hirst Park a no dog area petition	RESOLVED 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	Member's Local Improvement Scheme	RESOLVED that the information be noted	
3.	16.11.22	Petition regarding South Beach Library	RESOLVED members agreed the recommendations in the report.	
4.	16.11.22	Make Hirst Park a no dog area petition (update)	RESOLVED 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	22/02324/FUL	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.	
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