

Your ref: Our ref:

Enquiries to: Lesley Little

Email: Lesley.Little@northumberland.gov.uk

**Tel direct:** 01670 622614 **Date:** 3 January 2024

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE to be held in COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL on MONDAY, 15 JANUARY 2024 at 5.00 PM.

Yours faithfully

Dr Helen Paterson Chief Executive

To Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee members as follows:-

D Bawn, J Beynon, L Darwin, S Dickinson, R Dodd, L Dunn, J Foster, P Jackson, V Jones, M Murphy, G Sanderson, D Towns and R Wearmouth





#### **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)

The minutes of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee held on Monday 20 November 2023, as circulated, to be agreed 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 <a href="monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk">monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk</a>. 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 or asked at 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 Committee 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 Committee.

#### 5. PETITIONS

## (a) Receive any new petitions:

This item is to receive any new petitions. The lead petitioner handing in a petition at the meeting is entitled to briefly introduce their petition, and a response to any petitions received will then be organised for a future meeting.

- **(b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:** No petitions received.
- (c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered: any updates will be verbally reported at the meeting.

#### 6. NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Representatives from Northumbria Police will be in attendance to provide updates on policing within the Castle Morpeth area and to answer questions from Members.

#### 7. BUDGET 2024-25 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

This presentation will outline the Council's strategy to the 2024-25 Budget within the context of the Corporate Plan. The presentation will provide details of the approach to setting the budget for the next financial year and the broad impact this will have on the delivery of services.

# 8. LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 7 - 12)

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

## 9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 12 February 2024 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth immediately following the Castle Morpeth Local Area Planning Committee. This is an additional meeting to discuss the Draft Local Transport Plan.

# 10. 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	r interest relates:			
the Code of Cond	i.e. either disclosable pecuniar luct, Other Registerable Intere e of Conduct) (please give deta	est or Non-Registeral		
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Are you intending	to withdraw from the meeting?	•	Yes - $\square$	No - 🗆

# **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.

# NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

#### CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee** held at Stakeford & Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre on Monday, 20 November 2023 at 6.00 pm.

#### **PRESENT**

J Beynon (Chair) (in the Chair)

#### **MEMBERS**

R Dodd J Foster V Jones M Murphy

### **OFFICERS**

L Little Senior Democratic Services Officer K Westerby Highways Delivery Manager

Around 9 members of the press and public were present.

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bawn, Darwin, Dickinson, Dunn, Sanderson, Towns and Wearmouth.

#### 2 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Questions had been submitted in advance from Longhirst Parish Council including background information and photographs which had been circulated to Members and Officers in advance of the meeting. Councillor Peter Coates was in attendance and provided background to the question.

- 1. That Northumberland County Council (NCC) formally requested Advance Northumberland Ltd to clear and maintain the ditches draining the affected stretch of Ashington Road and to investigate the source of the surface water discharging onto the site from the south east verge.
- 2. That NCC raised the level of the affected section of Ashington Road approximately 100m (there was a request currently made via the Local Transport Plan for 2024/25).

K Westerby, Highways Delivery Manager thanked Longhirst Parish Council for their very detailed report which had been submitted along with the question. The Investigation Team had been on site the previous week and a drainage survey had been undertaken. To date a blocked pipe had been found and it was hoped that work to clear this could be undertaken. Contact was to be made with

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Advance Northumberland to seek their agreement for the Council to undertake the work and recharge Advance Northumberland. It was confirmed that a scheme to raise the road by 100mm was included in the Local Transport Plan for 2024/25, however it was not known at the current time whether this would be undertaken. Following surveys undertaken after Storm Babet this scheme for improvement had also been captured and flagged as part of that process. The Team were still on site and it was hoped that the situation could be resolved. It was highlighted that whilst signs stating that the road was closed were in use drivers were still trying to get through.

Councillor Dodds advised that it was not a good time to try to clear drainage ditches due to the very wet weather and problems with vehicle access. He also highlighted that problems were being encountered with residue from rapeseed oil blocking drains.

#### 3 **PETITIONS**

- (a) Receive New Petitions No new petitions were received.
- (b) Petitions Previously Received None
- (c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered There were no updates.

#### 4 WINTER SERVICES PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE REPORT 2023-2024

The update provided for information gave an overall update of the pre-season preparations ahead of the forthcoming winter services season to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that the highways was maintained in a safe condition in accordance with legal obligations under the Highways Act 1980. In response to questions the following information was provided:-

- There were 12 weather stations across the County with information also provided by other sources, however it was still difficult to predict exactly when and where resources would be needed. There were 28 primary gritting routes which were gritted regularly in accordance with forecasts as a precaution against icing with 26 secondary gritting routes which were treated in more serious conditions after the primary routes had been completed. It was stressed that traffic was required on treated surfaces in order for this to work and allow roads to be cleared.
- There were 112 staff who worked on winter services and whilst there had previously been issues in recruiting HGV drivers, staff had undertaken apprenticeships and were now able to undertake this work.
- Teams work to try to remove excess water from road surfaces before it freezes but if this was not possible then oversalting of that particular area would be undertaken.
- Information would be forwarded to K Westerby from Councillor Jones in relation to problems encountered on the border of Tynedale and Castle Morpeth areas.

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- All information in relation to grit bins was provided on dedicated pages on the Councils website. All yellow grit boxes, which belonged to the Council were currently being replenished. Green grit boxes could be purchased by Town and Parish Councils for a cost of £250 which included three replenishments. There were a number of bins which had been historically placed on which information was not held. Grit bins were provided in order to allow the treatment of roads, however the salt was often taken to treat private driveways.
- Winter services comms was to be undertaken to ensure that messages could be passed on by Councillors to residents.

#### 5 **FIX MY STREET**

A presentation on the Fix My Street (FMS) was provided by K Westerby, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda. FMS was a new web based reporting system replacing previous systems and allowed mapped and asset based reporting including photographic evidence to be provided. It replaced Lagan reporting for Local Services but did not include any waste activities. It provided many benefits for the user allowing easier reporting, updates on reports and a transparent view of all reports made. Reports could only be made on assets which had been adopted or were owned by the Council. The number of reports received by FMS had increased by 143% on those received by Lagan for the same period last year of May to September and to date 24,000 reports had been in six months compared to the average total for the year of 18,559.

Anyone wishing to report a problem could see if the same issue had already been reported. Many people had reported a positive experience in using FMS with an 88% response rate achieved. Any calls received by the call centre were also entered into FMS including the details of the person making the report allowing updates to be provided. Advice was provided that anything that was deemed as an emergency should still be reported by telephone.

In connection with reports about gullies, it was clarified that there was a programme for the cleaning of gullies and any ad hoc reports would be prioritised only if it caused traffic to have to go into a different live lane or pedestrians onto the road network. There were only four gulley tankers to clear 92,000 gullies and these had to work to cyclical routes in order to get the best use of them. During yellow and amber storm warnings then the known hotspots would be prioritised.

In addition to the FMS reporting tool it was clarified that inspections were carried out on the road network with a walked inspection on roads under 40mph and a camera vehicle on roads over 40pmh with all defects picked up. There was a criteria on what was deemed a pothole and any reports which did not meet this standard would not be repaired.

Members thanked K Westerby for his attendance and presentation.

#### 6 CHOPPINGTON DISABILITY GROUP

Graham Huntley and David Nicholson were in attendance to provide a short presentation on the formation and work of the Choppington Disability Group (CDG). They advised that they had been active members of the Group since its formation in 2013 and which was now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The CDG had been established by a community group who felt that there was a gap in that there was no support for disabled people or their carers who felt isolated and had no one to talk to about any of their problems. CDG gave the opportunity for those people to share space, time and their experiences in order to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

All work was done in partnership with other organisations, some of whom were based at the Welfare Centre. The CDG was run by volunteers who had a lot of expertise as a number of them were retired practitioners, however they did not provide a direct service, but could signpost their users to other voluntary organisations and groups for help and support. A great deal of support was provided to the Group from a network of partners such as Choppington Parish Council.

A coffee morning was held on the first Friday of every month and various trips and meals out were organised throughout the year. A Christmas get together was also held every year. Wider support for events was also provided through local community involvement. There were approximately 50 regular members attending the Group all of whom were local people. CDG were associated members of a mental health organisation in the North East with an awareness of what support was available, however they were not part of any care plans.

The Chair and Members thanked Mr Huntley and Mr Nicholson for their attendance and very informative presentation.

#### 7 LIONS CLUB OF MORPETH

Les Sage, the President of the Morpeth Lions Club in its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and a Member of the Lions for 46 years, was in attendance to provide a presentation on the work of the Club within the Morpeth and surrounding areas. Members were advised that the Lions had originally started in 1917 in the USA and it now had 48,000 Clubs worldwide with 1.4 million members. There were 600 Clubs in the UK which made it one of the largest voluntary organisations of its kind. It had the moto "We Serve" and guaranteed that all money raised would go to Charities.

The huge Charity Booksale organised by the Lions in Morpeth provided funds to support many local charities and organisations within the locality with 125 sacks of toys provided to social services for vulnerable children at Christmas. He highlighted the high cost of hiring a stall in the market place in Morpeth or using the Town Hall for events which greatly reduced the amount of funds available for the charitable work which the Club undertook and asked Members for their help with this.

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A big Christmas event was Santa on his Sleigh who visited the special schools in the area and provided selection boxes to the children. The generosity of residents of Northumberland was highlighted with Morpeth Lions having raised £20,000 for victims of the Ukraine War out of a total of £60,000 raised by 61 Clubs in the North of the Country, with a total of approximately £30,000 - £40,000 being raised each year by Morpeth Lions.

The Club was focussing efforts over the next few months so that a book, which had been written by Mr Sage's daughter in law, Laura Coel, a survivor of sexual abuse, could be provided to all primary schools in Northumberland for schools and parents to use as a resource to help them approach the subject of sexual abuse and teach children not to have bad secrets. A Kingham, Executive Director - Children, Young People and Education at NCC had been very supportive and the book was currently being assessed by Educational Psychologists before copies were provided to schools. A copy of the book entitled "Laura's Secret" was given to each of those present.

The Chair in recognising the work undertaken by the Morpeth Lions highlighted the work undertaken in providing help for people who had been affected during flooding in the town. Mr Sage was thanked by the Chair and the Members for his attendance and very interesting presentation.

#### 8 LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair reminded Members that anything they wished to be added to the work programme should be forwarded either to himself or L Little, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

#### 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair took the opportunity to thank those present for their attendance and to Angela Brindley and the Stakeford and Bomarsund Welfare Social Centre for their hospitality.

CHAIR	•
DATE	

Ch.'s Initials.....



# Northumberland County Council Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee Work Programme 2023-2024

Lesley Little: 01670 622614 - Lesley.Little@northumberland.gov.uk

**UPDATED: 2 January 2024** 

#### **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 Committees, or through the Panel of Local Area Committee Chairs for countywide applications.

(I) 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.

# ISSUES TO BE SCHEDULED/CONSIDERED

**Standard items updates:** Public question time, petitions.

To be listed:

Northumberland County Council		
Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee		
Work Programme 2023-24		
15 January 2024		
Northumbria Police		
Presentation on the Budget		
12 February 2024		
Draft Local Transport Plan		
18 March 2024		
Decommissioning of analogue telephone lines		
Update on Funding Programmes		
20 May 2024		

# NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL AREA COUNCIL - CASTLE MORPETH MONITORING REPORT 2023-24

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
1 U	15.05.23	Petitions – Island outside Blossom Park, Pegswood	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the actions proposed to be undertaken as set out in the report be accepted.	
308 10	15.05.23	Updates on Petitions previously received – On-going Planning Issues and Environmental Destruction on land to the South of St Mary's Park, Stannington.	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the proposed actions set out in the report be accepted and it be noted that Planning Officers were proactively monitoring the site.	
3	10.07.23	Petition Report - Address Speeding Between Jameson Estate (Old Police Hq Site) and Grange Lea Care Home on North Road, Ponteland	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the information be noted and that the actions being proposed be supported with the Police being asked to attend a future meeting.	

4	10.07.23	Presentation from Collingwood School	N/A	
5	10.07.23	Northumberland Local Bus Board	RESOLVED that M Murphy be appointed as the representative from this Local Area Committee on the Northumberland Local Bus Board subject to satisfactory discussion regarding the commitment of time required.	
e Page	10.07.23	Appointments to Outside Bodies	RESOLVED that the appointments be confirmed as follows:  Choppington Education Foundation Mary Murphy Druridge Bay Regeneration Partnership Scott Dickinson Friends of Morpeth Museum David Bawn Greater Morpeth Development Trust Richard Wearmouth Linton Village Hall Management Liz Dunn Committee Lynemouth Welfare Management Liz Dunn Committee Stakeford/Bomarsund Social Welfare Julie Foster Centre Mary Murphy	
7	11.09.23	Petition Report – On-going planning issues and unfinished works on the Nursery Gardens Site, Stannington Station	RESOLVED that a Breach of Condition Notice be issued to the developer.	
8	11.09.23	Presentation by the Toby Henderson Trust	N/A	
9	13.11.23	Winter Services Preparations – for information only	N/A	

10	13.11.23	Presentation on "Fix my Street"	N/A	
11	13.11.23	Presentation by Morpeth Lions	N/A	
12	13.11.23	Presentation by Choppington Disability Group	N/A	