



Northumberland County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Lesley Little

Email: Lesley.Little@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622614

Date: Wednesday, 29 November 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held in **CONFERENCE ROOM 2 - COUNTY HALL** on **THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2023** at **10.00 AM**.

Yours faithfully

Dr Helen Paterson
Chief Executive

To Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee members as follows:-

C Ball, E Chicken (Vice-Chair), W Daley (Chair), S Fairless-Aitken, A Scott, C Seymour, M Swinburn, T Thorne, H Waddell 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
- 6)

The minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on Thursday 2 November 2023, as circulated, to be agreed as a true record and be 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. EDUCATION, SEND AND SKILLS ANNUAL REPORT 22-23 (Pages 7 - 28)

The Annual Report 2022-23 highlights actions and progress against the key priorities for Education, SEND and Skills 22-24.

5. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER (Pages 29 - 44)

(a) Forward Plan

To note the latest Forward Plan of key decisions. Any further changes to the Forward Plan will be reported at the meeting.

(b) Family and Children's Services OSC Work Programme

To consider the work programme/monitoring report for the Family and Children's Services OSC for 2023/24.

6. 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.
--	--

* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - i. exercising functions of a public nature
 - ii. any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held at Council Chamber - County Hall on Thursday, 2 November 2023 at 10.00 am

PRESENT

W Daley (Chair) (in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

C Ball
C Seymour
A Watson

E Chicken
M Swinburn

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

D Lennox

P Rickeard

OFFICERS

C Angus
D Chambers
A Kingham

L Little
G Reiter

Scrutiny Officer
Head of Quality Assurance
Executive Director - Children, Young People
and Education
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Director of Children, Young People and
Families

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors Scott, Thorne, Waddell and Renner-Thompson along with Mr A Hodgson and Mrs L Houghton.

19 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 7 September 2023, as circulated, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE: QUALITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

The report provided information on the framework that was used to provide reassurance about how the practice in Northumberland's Social Care was evaluated. The framework outlined the numerous mechanisms that were used to explore the quality of practice and identify learning and continuous improvement. The document highlighted the quantitative and qualitative methods that were adopted in Northumberland, striving for better outcomes for children and young people through early help and statutory functions. A comprehensive introduction to the report was provided by D. Chambers, Head of Quality Assurance with the aid of a power point presentation. In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- Minor changes had been made during the first review of the document, which was about the wider practice rather than just looking at key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs were looked at alongside the quality of work to understand the impact of decisions on a child or family and understand trends and what, as a learning organisation, we could do better. The model operated within Northumberland was held in high regard and had been developed over time.
- Whilst the Head of Quality Assurance was part of the organisation, the role was unique, sitting away from teams and therefore allowing an objective view to be undertaken.
- Information regarding the numbers of compliments or complaints would be provided as part of the report expected at the next meeting, however there was regular work undertaken with client relations to gain feedback and work was ongoing on ways to increase feedback from families to increase the quality of learning.
- Signs of Safety had been chosen as the practice model to be adopted as this was a recognised framework which had been used for a number of years. Northumberland was committed to ensuring an effective framework was in place across all services with key elements embedded and this process would continue to evolve. The consistency of practice across the service as a whole was key.

RESOLVED that the way in which the Council assured itself that they were improving the lives and safeguarding children and young people was recognised by the Committee.

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

The report shared the content and findings of the children's social care annual self-assessment. The self-assessment supported an evaluation of the progress and current practice in children's social care and identified future actions to support the continuous improvement that was required in order to strive to achieve the vision of being a service where meeting the needs of children, young people and families was the focus so that they were able to get the best out of life.

A comprehensive introduction was provided to the report by G Reiter, Director of Children, Young People and Families, with the aid of a power point presentation.

A copy of the presentation would be filed with the signed minutes and uploaded to Council's website. Members were informed that the report was something required by Ofsted and it would be a key document for their next visit, which was due at any time, however it was also used as a tool to look at what range of actions were needed to be carried out to continue to support and look after children and young people within Northumberland.

During discussions and in response to questions from Members of the Committee, the following information was noted:-

- Attendance at schools was still not back to pre-pandemic levels and conversations around this were ongoing with the DfE. Officers were aware of the schools where the challenges were to bring attendance back up, however there were none with specific spikes. In relation to school avoidance work would be undertaken with the wider social worker team, family hubs and school inclusion team. There had been some good successes in certain areas and it was hoped that this could be replicated in the rest of the County, however it was taking time to get to pre-pandemic levels.
- In regard to the attendance drop and the main factors for this and how the local authority could assist, it was suggested that a further report be brought to the Committee. There were various reasons for non-attendance including health/anxiety issues, children and young people not wanting to come into busy school classrooms and difficulties parents were having in persuading their child to attend. Members highlighted that poverty might also be a factor in non-attendance and stressed that the reasons needed to be understood. There was pilot work being undertaken in Northumberland in relation to Mental Health Trailblazer, however there were many very individual circumstances.
- It was clarified that this report was for last year and things had moved on since then. There was no attendance hub identified within Northumberland, but there were some areas of good practice and officers were working with some Head Teachers to identify what they were doing right and how this could be replicated, however it was highlighted that the demographics were very different across the County and this also needed to be taken into consideration. A great deal of work had been undertaken with Social Workers so that they understood the importance of attendance and relationship and inclusion summits between social care and education officers had taken place.
- The percentages of children with less than 50% or 60% attendance were known so officers would ensure that this data was also provided in the report and look at the wider services and how these were used.
- It had been stated that DfE did not fund attendance hubs and funding for these were provided by schools, and in response to a question if this was something that the Council could do, the Chair advised that he would look into this.
- It was confirmed that A Kingham and G Reiter had been to the Conservative Group meeting the previous day and would be attending other political Group meetings shortly with questionnaires for Members in relation to their skills and how these could be used for the benefit of young people and for Members to understand their corporate parenting responsibilities. A suggestion was made that there should be a standing

item on this Committee's agenda on the risk register so that Members were updated regularly on any potential issues whether it be around poverty, staff shortages etc.

- There were a number of different routes for young people aged 16-18 into health and social care such as apprenticeships along with the very good offer from Northumberland Skills and also Northumberland College. The funding and the training opportunities were there, it was how young people could be encouraged into that sector. The need to understand and appreciate how it was a sustainable, worthwhile career and the difference they could make to the lives of children or family long term was huge. G Reiter was leading with this regionally, however he was also involved nationally on this. Locally we needed to help students from year 7 onwards to realise that it was a career route for them, and officers would welcome ideas on how this could be achieved.
- The Chair advised that prior to the meeting a discussion had been held on the format of reports which came to this Committee which as statutory reports contained historical data, however live data was available and the potential for data dashboards to be presented would be explored. In relation to attendance he would discuss with the A Kingham the possibility of convening a special meeting for this topic specifically.
- The agreement for ICB funding had been in place for four years with no change to the level of funding across that time and there was a good relationship with the local place contact person around that. However officers were aware that there would need to be a regional view from the ICB in relation to consistent funding across the region.
- Officers had lobbied for funding for apprenticeships and for the first time there were five new starters to the Academy who had come through this route. However more national support was required in order to continue to increase these numbers. There had been very good attendance at a recent open day for the recruitment of residential staff with a wide demographic of people who were interested in a variety of roles. Ways of engaging people were always being looked at. In relation to funding streams there were many different streams however some of these were time limited and funding needed to be managed well. Innovative ways of maximising opportunities from funding were always being looked at.
- In relation to changing the perception of health and social work as only being for those girls not going down the academic route, A Kingham advised that she was very passionate about changing these type of outdated influences which were not only in relation to health and social care. Innovation work and connections had been made between industry and education and more work would continue on this. National occupational standards for health and social care balanced the opportunity agenda at GSCE, BTEch and A level and careers guidance provided within Schools. North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) advisers were also used well.
- With the creation of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) this would provide funding opportunities above and beyond what was already being provided through NTCA. In education in particular there had been a great deal of opportunities taken around such issues poverty, leadership, inclusion and some good work being undertaken. Work was now ongoing on shaping what NEMCA would become and build upon what already existed within the constituent local authorities. The additional

funding would be used to enhance and build better opportunities and narrow gaps and a joined up approach to help children grow up well. The Chair advised that he currently sat on the NTCA Inclusive Growth Board and he would arrange for the reports on inequalities and supporting at an early stage to be shared with Members of the Committee.

- It was highlighted that the reduction in the use of agency staff and the comparison with the national levels should be celebrated with the result that funding remained within the local authority.
- In response to comments made on the importance of the Council having their own youth workers who worked in partnership with others and the need to find funding for youth services and youth clubs, Officers advised that the model developed would work well going forward and the importance of youth provision and clubs was recognised. However, it was thought that the best way of supporting these, both financially and otherwise was not through the Council but with partnership working. There had been a mapping of provision across the County through the Family Hubs with young people support workers now based in the Hubs so that the context of how young people could be supported was understood with the support workers able to make connections with both partner organisations and the young people and families themselves. There were more funding opportunities though partnership working and the vast majority of provision had been maintained. It was important that a joined up strategic approach was used and Family Hubs allowed this.
- In response to queries regarding the youth service provision and lack of consultation with organisations in the Blyth area, it was noted that this would be discussed outside of the meeting. The Chair advised that there was a lot of support organisations that were doing amazing jobs and advised that he had requested that an All Member Briefing be held on this in order that Members were able to see the bigger picture. Work was ongoing across the whole sector to further develop networks and see what mutual support could be offered.
- It was commented that Local Area Councils should be used to disseminate information on topics which it was felt that both Members and the public would have an interest. In relation to the significant changes which had been brought about by Covid, it was stated that this authority had been well placed to be able to react quickly and this should be recognised. The Authority had benefitted significantly from the creation of the Academy and other areas where this type of provision could be replicated were being explored.
- More use of satellite units linked to existing children's homes would be explored as this type of provision was able to be provided in a timelier manner than the provision of a completely new home allowing increased capacity for the care of children within the County.

RESOLVED that

1. The areas of good practice in safeguarding and supporting children young people and their families be recognised; and
2. Areas for additional scrutiny and challenge had been identified and clarification provided.

22 **REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER**

The Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions that had already been taken and future items was circulated for information along with the work programme for this Committee. Members were advised that an additional meeting would be held on 7 December 2023 and that there was to be a joint meeting with Health and Wellbeing OSC on Tuesday 9th January.

Reports on attendance and the risk register would be added to the work programme.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....



Northumberland County Council

Family & Children's Overview & Scrutiny Committee

7 December 2023

Education, SEND & Skills Annual Report 2022-23

Report of Councillor(s) Guy Renner Thomson, Cabinet Member for Inspiring Young People

Responsible Officer(s): Audrey Kingham, Executive Director for Children, Young People & Education

1. Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan

1.1 Tackling inequalities-

Help improve the quality of early years' settings, schools and other providers, so that all children and young people, no matter their circumstances or educational need, have access to education as close to their home communities as possible and achieve the best educational outcomes.

1.2 Economic growth-

- a) Develop the vocational education offer to provide clear pathways into apprenticeships, further education, higher education, and employment for all our young people and adults. We will do this by producing clear guidance for schools and settings on what good careers advice looks like, developing a curriculum and facilities which both support the ambition of learners and link to the workforce requirements for Northumberland. This will ensure all young people are supported to achieve their aspirations.
- b) Deliver skills and training for residents that meets their ambitions and supports the economy through greater links between learning pathways and opportunities in the economy, building on key relationships between education & industry
- c) Through providing accessible programmes to engage residents and support them to move closer to training or work to tackle inequalities, improve individuals' life chances and support the economy.

2. Purpose of report

The Annual Report 2022-23 highlights actions and progress against the key priorities for Education, SEND and Skills 22-24

3. Recommendations

FACS is recommended to:

1) Agree that Members provide scrutiny and challenge to the service responses and developments detailed in the Education, SEND and Skills Annual Report for 22-23 as appropriate.

2) Agree that Members receive and review the annual report and recognise the performance given the continued challenges in bouncing back from the impact of the pandemic.

3) Consider the education achievements of our children, young people and residents across Northumberland in 2022/23.

4) Consider the valuable support provided to all learners within:

- Early Years Settings and Schools
- Special Education Needs support and service
- Virtual School
- Learning and Skills Service
- School Organisation and Resources

4. Forward plan date and reason for urgency if applicable

27.7.23

5. Background

5.1 The Annual Report 2022/2023 shares the successes and significant levels of resilience that our children and young people as well as our workforce have shown throughout the year. Our schools, skills and college have adapted learning environments to be able to support many of our children and young people's needs as we live and work within increasing levels of need and challenging budgets.

5.2 The impact of the pandemic on children and their families has proved to be more significant in the North East than other areas of the country and this is reflected in Northumberland. Adaptations have been necessary not just because many pupils have missed out on learning, but also because many have missed out socially, got out of the routine of coming to school or are struggling with their mental health, very simply, more of our young people are struggling in education.

5.3 We know that many children find a school environment challenging and the work in schools supported by Northumberland Education and Skills team is significant to support continuing the education journey. Whilst many children are enjoying their journey and progress very well, the extent of the work to close gaps is still a challenge, especially for disadvantaged pupils who continue to attain below their peers.

5.4 The growth in Special Educational Needs has been and continues to be significant. Schools and settings are meeting higher needs with higher frequency.

5.5 Working with our schools and partners to support the ambition, transition and development of all of our children, young people and residents to their next stage of education, employment and life with all of the challenges that cross their paths is a privileged role that is embraced and celebrated by the whole workforce.

6. Options open to the Council and reasons for the recommendations

Members may take the opportunity to direct Education, SEND and Skills key priorities for 23-25

7. Implications

Policy	The actions set out in this report support the vision and values of the Council's Corporate Plan. All Department for Education (DFE) / Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) policies and guidance are reviewed, interpreted and shared.
Finance and value for money	All budgets and decisions conform to expected DFE / ESFA funding requirements
Legal	Northumberland County Council has statutory responsibilities with schools and academies as well as colleges and post 16 providers. The statutory responsibilities are clearly defined

	within policy and priorities for Education and Skills; within specific officer roles and also within the Board structures that engage with schools and academies and wider stakeholders to engage and to assure that all statutory duties are met. Formal reporting routines are embedded across the corporate calendar to ensure oversight and decision making is clear. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.
Procurement	None
Human resources	None
Property	Schools have delegated responsibility for buildings
The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	NA
Risk assessment	All schools and staff have individual risk assessments. All sites are risk assessed. All Schools and Skills sites are HS risk assessed. Skills sites undertake reviews routinely as well as spot checks on premises to ensure routines and expectations are being followed.
Crime and disorder	The report has considered Section 1 (CDA) and the duty it imposes and there are no implications arising from it
Customer considerations	Service plans and systems are approached from the pupil/family/customer perspective. All learner facing approaches include the learner/ customer journey to improve satisfaction
Carbon reduction	The increase use of digital meeting spaces has reduced the travel and carbon footprint in 2022/23
Health and wellbeing	Staff well-being is of high importance. Systems such as Kooth and Qwell are in place to support pupils and staff as well as bespoke arrangements to meet the needs of particular circumstances.
Wards	(All Wards);

8. Background papers

Education, SEND and Skills Annual Report 2022-23

9. Links to other key reports already published

NA

10. Author and Contact Details

David Street, Director of Education, SEND and Skills
Email: David.street@northumberland.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Northumberland County Council

Education, SEND & Skills
Annual Report for Northumberland
Academic Year 2022-23



Education, SEND and Skills Priorities

Northumberland Education has spent the academic year 2022-23 working productively towards the key priorities highlighted below.

1

Know the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and other educational providers and report their performance to the council and the community.

2

Challenge and support improvement in the performance of our schools and settings so that all children and young people, including disadvantaged and SEND learners, achieve the best educational outcomes:

We will support across the Early Years sector to ensure all children are school ready and that the schools are ready for every child.

We will support all first, primary and middle schools to ensure their pupils have the skills and knowledge required to access the secondary curriculum.

We will support improved transition, progress and performance for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 to promote access for all learners to their first choice destination.

3

Improve the lived experience and outcomes for learners with SEND:

We will work in partnership with all stakeholders, including championing the voice of children, young people and their families, jointly working with Health and Social Care, to fully implement the Local Area 0-25 SEND Strategy.

We will lead on the development of a fully inclusive education system.

4

Develop the vocational education offer to provide clear pathways into apprenticeships, further education, higher education, and employment for all our young people and adults:

We will develop a curriculum and facilities which both supports the ambition of learners and links to the workforce requirements for Northumberland.

We will build on key relationships between education and industry.

We will produce clear guidance for schools and settings on what good careers advice looks like to ensure all young people are supported to achieve their aspirations.

5

Develop appropriate high quality educational provision that meets the needs of all children and young people as close to their home communities as possible:

We will strive to deliver the right number of places to meet all learner needs in the right place, at the right time.

6

Ensure the Education, SEND and Skills Service fulfils its statutory duties within the legislative framework (including the School Admissions Code, Exclusions, Attendance, Virtual School, School Organisational Regulations, Early Years Sufficiency and those relating to SEND):

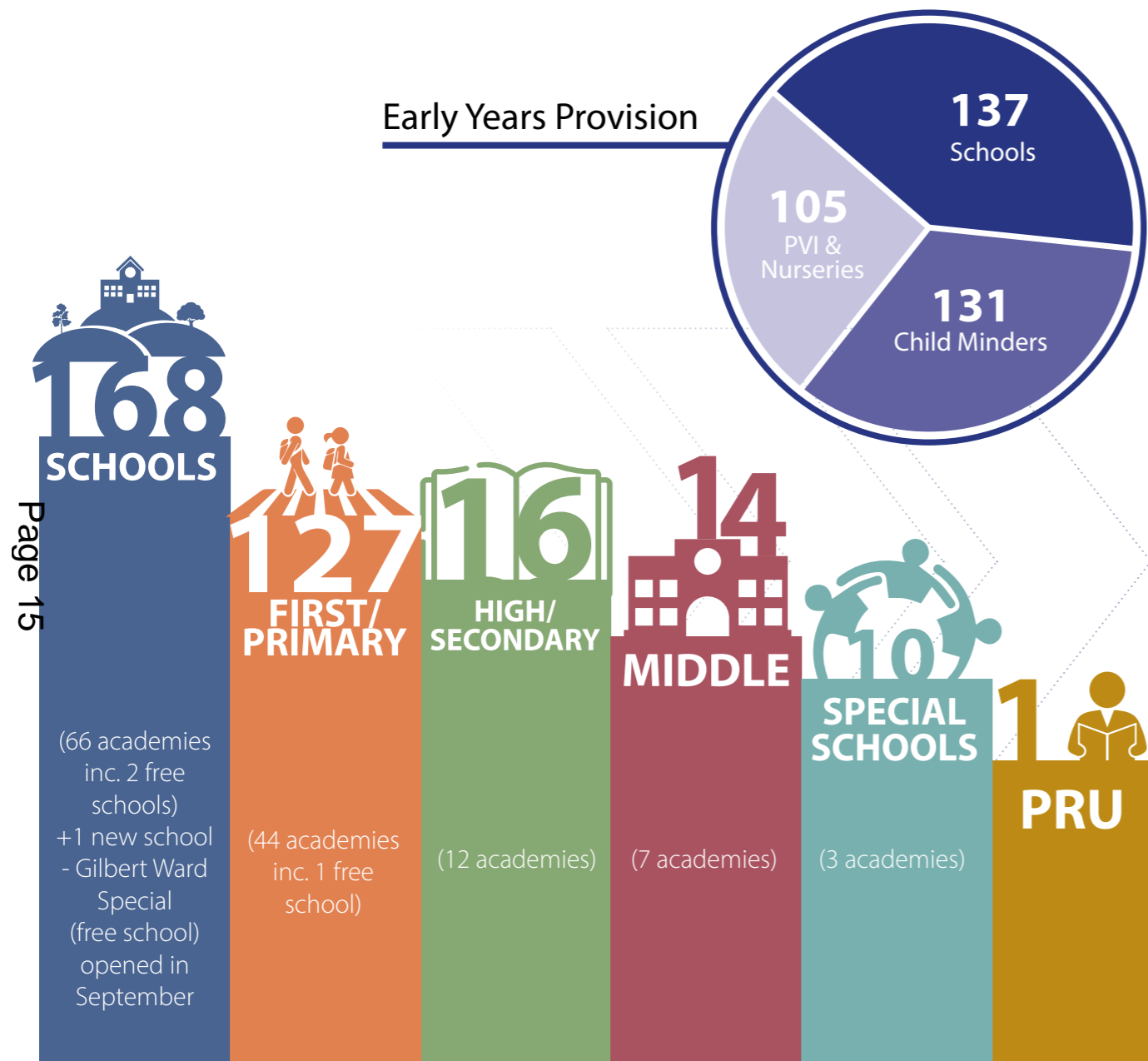
We will meet our own statutory duties.

We will further develop relationships with the Regional Director and Academy Trusts to ensure they adhere to their statutory duties whilst ensuring equality of access to education.

The Local Authority will work closely with children, young people, their families, schools, settings and all other partners to deliver on these priorities. They will be monitored and evaluated by the sector-led Education Strategy Partnership Board and the SEND Board.

➤ This report focuses on each priority, the actions taken, the impact to date and identifies appropriate next steps for further development.

Overview of Northumberland School Landscape



Page 15

“Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success”

Henry Ford

Welcome

Key Priority 1

Know the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and other educational providers and report their performance to the Council and the community.

Our Early Years settings, schools, alternative educators and post 16 providers have been focussed on the task of continual improvement to the benefit of all learners.

Collectively the academic outcomes continue to bounce back to our 2019 levels (the last year comparative exams took place) and **the number of schools judged good or better by Ofsted is now at an all-time high of 94% (August 23).**

Attendance outcomes are also strengthening, but they are yet to regain the levels from before the pandemic. School admissions remain strong with the vast majority of applicants gaining their first choice.

Challenges remain with meeting the needs of all learners with Special Educational Needs. Growth in this area includes both higher levels of need and greater numbers being presented across the sector. Schools and providers have responded magnificently, with needs being well met, parental satisfaction remaining high and Ofsted reports exclusively stating that SEND provision is at least good.

The ability to deliver specialist provision continues to grow in line with our Strategic SEND Capacity Plan.

Special School capacity has been extended across the county and supplemented by the development of Specialist Support Bases at a range of primary schools. Our Skills Service has doubled the size of their post 16 SEND courses. Further development in this area will continue to meet the needs of young people with SEND as close to their homes as possible.

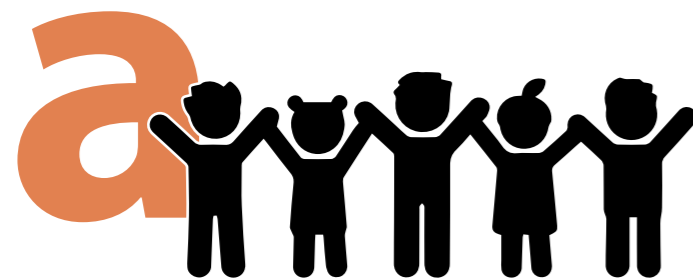
Disadvantaged learner outcomes remain an area for development. Although many disadvantaged pupils do reach their full potential there remains a gap in outcomes between them and their peers which, collectively, we must diminish.

The partnership between early years settings, maintained schools and academies continues to extend from an already strong base. The sector led Education Strategy Board continues to review all the key priorities and direct further developments.

All of these actions and those listed over the following pages demonstrate that Northumberland know the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and other educational providers and clearly report their performance to the Council and the community.

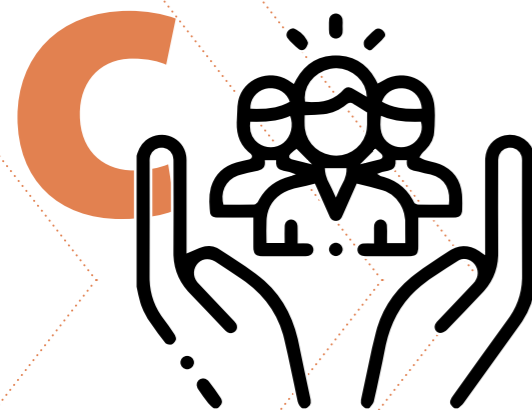
Key Priority > 2 <

Challenge and support improvement in the performance of our schools and settings so that all children and young people, including disadvantaged and SEND learners, achieve the best educational outcomes:



We will support across the early years sector to ensure all children are school ready and that the schools are ready for every child

We will support all first, primary and middle schools to ensure their pupils have the skills and knowledge required to access the secondary curriculum



We will support improved transition, progress and performance for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 to promote access for all learners to their first-choice destination

Early Years Provision >

The quality of early years provision in Northumberland is excellent. **97% of early years providers were rated Good or Outstanding at Summer 2023.**

The take up of 2-year-old provision continues to be good. **82% of all eligible 2 year olds took up their statutory entitlement to early education** in the summer term 2023. There was a drop in take up compared with the autumn and spring terms (96% & 91% retrospectively) but still consistently better than the National Average of 74%.

The take up of funded entitlements for 3 and 4 year olds is exceptional with **104% of 3 and 4 year old's taking up their early education entitlements** compared with 94% nationally in the year 2022-2023. The over 100% take up reflects some families choosing to take up their early education entitlements in Northumberland who live in other local authorities.

Early Years settings value the support of the Early Years Team to maintain high quality early years provision with 81% of the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings subscribing to Local Authority services to access training and consultancy support.



The percentage of children with SEND in Northumberland achieving a Good Level of Development in Summer 2023 was **22.6%** compared to 19.9% nationally.



There were a number of closures of PVI provisions across Northumberland in 2022-23, which reflects the well reported challenges around sustainability, recruitment and retention following the COVID pandemic. However, **we were successfully able to find alternative provision for children affected by closures and support the opening of new provision. As such, we continue to have no gaps in sufficiency.**

Academic Outcomes

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Outcomes for children at the end of their EYFS are positive, with **68.8% achieving a Good Level of Development**, compared with 67.3% nationally in Summer 2023.

Key Stage 2:

57% of Northumberland pupils achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, an increase on 2022 but 2% below the national average. Reading was 0.1% above the national average at 72.7%, writing was 0.3% above the national average at 71.3% (9.2% decrease nationally) and Maths was 2.2% below the national average at 70.7%.

Key Stage 4:

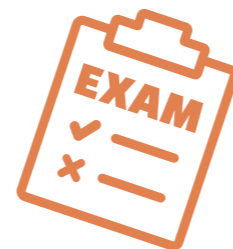
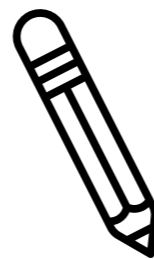
External examinations returned for the second time since 2019. Nationally, it was determined that grades would, overall, fall back to 2019 levels, so a fall in the percentages in comparison to 2022 was expected. Data is provisional at this stage.

Progress 8:

The average Progress 8 score was -0.2, poorer than the national average of -0.03 but better than the North East average of -0.27.

Attainment 8:

Northumberland achieved 44.4, slightly below the national average of 46.2 but matching the North East average.



English and Maths:

4+ is deemed to be a standard pass and 5+ a strong pass

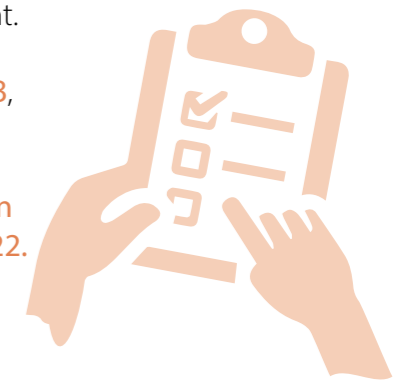
	Northumberland	North East	National
English & Maths 4+	63.1%	62.2%	65%
English & Maths 5+	42.8%	41.7%	45%

Key Stage 5:

External examinations returned for the second time since 2019. Nationally, it was determined that grades would, overall, fall back to 2019 levels, so a fall in the percentages in comparison to 2022 was expected. No national comparisons are available at present.

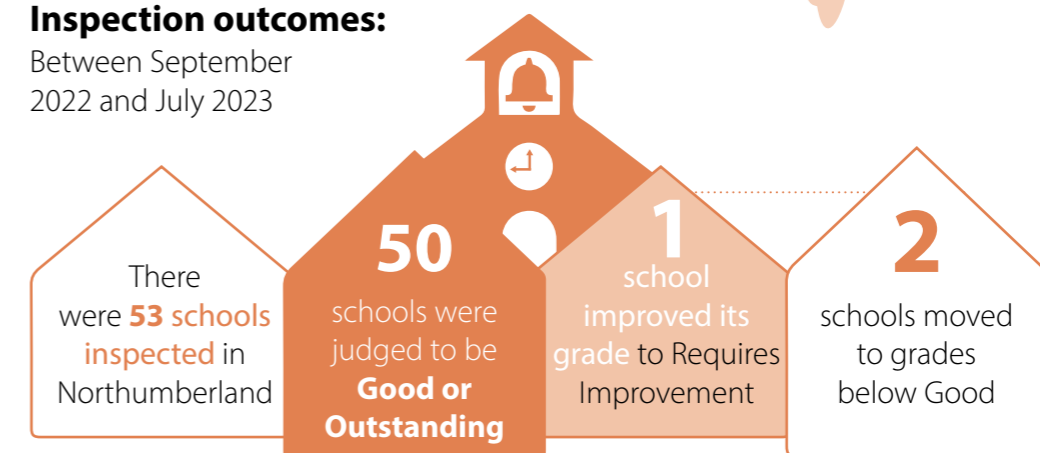
1152 pupils sat A levels, achieving an average grade of B, matching the performance of 2022.

494 pupils sat Applied General Qualifications, **achieving an average grade of a Distinction minus, slightly below 2022.**



Inspection outcomes:

Between September 2022 and July 2023



The hard work of school leaders, supported by the Local Authority School Improvement Team, means that inspection outcomes were at the highest they had ever been in August 2023.

Key Figures >



Page 18



93.9%

of Northumberland schools are **Good or Outstanding**, 4.9% above the national average.

96.7%

of primary schools in Northumberland were **judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding or Good** by July, better than the national average of 90%.

86.7%

of secondary schools in Northumberland were judged by Ofsted to be **Outstanding or Good in summer 2023**, an improvement of 10% compared to summer 2022 and above the national average of 80%.

95%

of primary pupils were in **Good or Outstanding schools in summer 2023**, 7% more than the previous year

84%

of secondary pupils were in **Good or Outstanding schools in summer 2023**, 4% better than the previous year

82%

of our cared-for children and young people attend schools judged by Ofsted to be **Good or Outstanding**, significantly more than the 64% in the previous year, and more than the national average of 78%.



Key Priority > 3 <

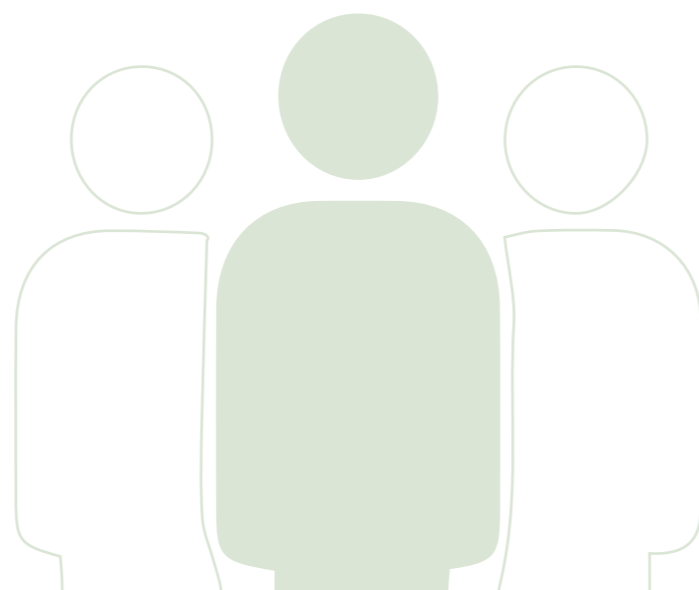
Improve the lived experience and outcomes for learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND):

A) We will work in partnership with all stakeholders, including championing the voice of children, young people and their families, jointly working with Health and Social Care, to fully implement the Local Area 0-25 SEND Strategy

The Local Area SEND Partnership consists of Northumberland County Council senior leads for education and health and social care alongside NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. Work on the delivery of strategic actions described within the Northumberland Local Area SEND Strategy 2021-2024 has been ongoing and the education work is described in this report.

Key delivery highlights from the partnership include:

- > The co-production and launch of the Children's Occupational Therapy Sensory Processing Service for children and young people living in Northumberland.
- > A new team has been developed to support education providers to initiate Early Help Assessments and facilitate Team Around the Family meetings. This is a significant investment of 6 Education EHA workers. The aim was to reach 200 children with EHAs initiated by school in the 2022-23 academic year. At the end of the summer term there have been 420 children with education initiated EHAs demonstrating the impact this has had on children and young people accessing early support.



B) We will lead on the development of a fully inclusive education system

There has been, and continues to be, an increase in the number of learners presenting with SEND in Northumberland. Correspondingly, the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being applied for and agreed has increased. **Over the last 4 years, the number of EHCPs in Northumberland has increased by 75.6% including 23% in 2022-23.**

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of EHCPs: January 1st	1849	2180	2638	3247

Many schools and settings believe the reasons for this growth include-

- > Improved identification of SEND
- > Increasingly complex young people with SEND (in part, linked to COVID measures)
- > A lack of confidence for some parents that mainstream schools can meet their child's needs
- > The actions in a minority of schools which are less inclusive

Special schools continue to operate at capacity, with learners with the most complex needs being supported into such provision whilst mainstream settings are required to make effective provision for a greater number of pupils with EHCPs.

There are many very inclusive schools and settings in Northumberland. The staff and governors of those schools hold similar principles and a desire to ensure all learners are successful alongside their peers and as close to home as possible.

It is a key responsibility of the local authority to support schools with developing and sustaining their inclusive ethos and provision.



Actions and Impact

Following a successful pilot of new SEND self-evaluation projects, working with Whole Education and David Bartram (OBE), Northumberland has 150 schools and other educational settings engaged in standardised SEND self-evaluation. This will be supported in 2023/24 with the development of new SEND Reviews for schools, which ensures that the LA have quality assured and moderated oversight of SEND.

Over 150 delegates attended each of our triad of inclusive conferences including the Relationships Matters Conference (March 23), the SENCo Conference (July 23) and the Inclusion Conference (Sept 23).



Joint working with parents, carers and colleagues in all settings has supported the development and launch of the Northumberland Ordinarily Available Provision Guidance document in September 2022. The document promotes Northumberland's vision that learners with SEND have the best start in life and are supported, through highly effective and inclusive educational provision, to attend settings as close to home as possible.

Across the High Incidence Needs Team (HINT), there has been a 14.3% increase in requests for support for individual children and young people (CYP), a 208% increase in whole school activity and a 30% increase in the number of training courses delivered from 2021-22 to 2022-23.



HINT have developed new ways of working to meet increased demand within existing budgets. All teams remained open to referral throughout the year and have developed further improvements to ensure the same in 2023-24.

HINT's 2022-23 training offer comprised of 123 school-based courses being delivered to 2,304 delegates from 103 school settings plus a further 47 Learning Together Courses, 12 Cygnet Courses and 15 Safety Intervention Training courses. 95.4% of respondents stated that their subject knowledge had increased as a result of training attended.



There has been a 19% increase in the number of referrals received by the Low Incidence Needs Team (LINT) team between 2021-22 and 2022-23. There were 15,945 individual support activities carried out 2022-23, including home visits, individual assessments and whole school development visits.



The LINT service has delivered 148 training sessions during 2022-23, ensuring continually improving access to effective education for learners with English as Additional Language and with Vision, Hearing or Multi-Sensory Impairment.



The LINT service has supported an increased number of children and young people, witnessing a rise of 19% in referrals received in 2022-23 compared with 2021-22.

The Educational Psychology service continues to face challenges aligned to national pictures. There are, currently, 3 vacant posts and one psychologist on 12-month sabbatical.

699 educational advices were requested from Educational Psychologists during 2022-23 for Education and Health Care assessment (following request for EHCP).



In 2022, timeliness of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks was 15.9% higher in Northumberland than England as a whole. Northumberland issued 8.8% more of its EHCPs in timescale than the North East as a whole. The proportion of EHCPs issued in timescale has continued to decrease as a result of increased demand and reduced capacity.

The statutory EHCP assessment and Review Team currently have the 2nd highest caseload in the North East. Development work to improve practice and capacity is planned for 2023-24 within existing budgets.

Our teams have remained well connected with colleagues on a regional and national basis over the past year, further developing links with Whole School SEND, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and Whole Education.



Key Priority > 4 <

Develop the vocational education offer to provide clear pathways into apprenticeships, further education, higher education, and employment for all our young people and adults:

- A) We will develop a curriculum and facilities which both supports the ambition of learners and links to the workforce requirements for Northumberland
- B) We will build on key relationships between education & industry
- C) We will produce clear guidance for schools and settings on what good careers advice looks like to ensure all young people are supported to achieve their aspirations

Northumberland Skills

- > There were **1,659 enrolments** onto programmes across eight campuses in 2022-23 for adult learners and **212 enrolments** for young people aged 16-18 with the largest majority (87.3%) of enrolments being adult learning.
- > Overall achievement rates across the whole Service (all ages) for **2022-23 were 88.7%** (excluding Apprenticeships).
- > Achievement rate for 16-18 (excluding Apprenticeships) is **81.1%**, demonstrating significant distance travelled and with a larger cohort compared to 2021-22 where the achievement rate was 69%.

> Apprenticeship recruitment continues to remain a challenge in 2022-23, **headline achievement was 67.1%, 7.1% points above the current national rate and increased by 9.0% from 2021-22**, with availability in many advertised apprenticeships not being filled from the local & regional labour markets.

Northumberland Skills continues to provide training models through apprenticeships in various vocational sectors and have availability in various roles across the county to work directly with internal and external employers.



- > Northumberland Skills' self-assessment grades the service as **GOOD**, in terms of OfSTED gradings for 2022-23.
- > **The achievement rate for GCSE English and mathematics is 84.4%** which is an increase of 5.2% from 2021-22 and is above the National Rate of 82.8%.
- > Pass rates for learners with an EHCP is **outstanding at 100%**.
- > Adult Learning for those aged over 19 years forms the largest majority of the service and remains as a **GOOD performance with an achievement rate overall of 93.6%**.
- > Pass Rate at Entry/**Level 1 (all ages) is 90.5%** and remains the largest cross section of the participation at 1,080 enrolments, Pass Rate at Level 2 (all ages) is 92.7% with 319 enrolments, both demonstrating an increase by 3.0% and 4.7%, respectfully, against 2021-22.
- > Given the legacy Covid-19 challenges to ensure **learners remain on programme, engaged and making good progress**, the achievement rates are reassuring.
- > Attendance in 2022-23 for 16-18 learners was 87.4%, Adults (19+) was 88.9%.
- > Apprenticeship End Point Assessment achievement remains positive with a high number of apprenticeships achieving **Distinction grades** at the end of their programme of training.
- > **Learner Voice surveys** (Student feedback) demonstrate positive examples of good practice and **positive outcome data with an overall Course Satisfaction score of 4.66 out of 5**.
- > **Learner's attitudes to their education are positive and have been shown to have improved over time.** Behaviour and attitudes of learners is good, with learners demonstrating effective behaviours for learning supporting what we know to be the expectations of employers, an **overall score of 4.65 out of 5 reflected 'How enjoyable is your learning?'**
- > In 2023 The Employability Service successfully completed 2 programmes - The DWP JETS programme (Job entry targeted support) and The Refugee Employability Support Programme.
- > The Employability Service continues to be well positioned to respond particularly to North of Tyne Inclusive Growth projects where the prime aims are to support residents into gaps, reduce inequality and disadvantage gaps and to support progression into employment as well as in work progression through training.



An independent destination survey carried out by J2 research in August 2023 focused on all learners from the 2022-23 cohort and returned the following:

<p>93.8%</p> <p>of former learners stated that it helped them achieve their principal reason or motivation for attending the course</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>of former learners achieved their motivations of:</p> <p>▼ Becoming more active in the community</p> <p>▼ Progressing onto another course afterwards</p>	<p>92.0%</p> <p>of former learners achieved their motivation of hobby and interest</p>	<p>95.9%</p> <p>of former learners achieved their motivation of upskilling for their current or future career</p>	<p>87.8%</p> <p>of former learners achieved their motivation to help them to get a job</p>
--	---	---	--	---

Collaborative Projects Strengthening Pathways to Employment

Northumberland Skills Welding & Fabrication training facility, Port of Blyth

The capital investment of £1.4m to deliver Northumberland Skills Welding & Fabrication training facility within the clean energy cluster at Port of Blyth reached completion and was handed over to the Skills team April 2023. The facility welcomed its first small pilot cohort of 9 young people for the remainder of the 2022-23 academic year, 2 of which have moved into apprenticeship and employment, while the remainder have returned for training to the next level on their journey to entering the engineering sector.



The facility also welcomed a cohort of 19 adult trainees on a six-week intensive programme designed to prepare them to enter welding roles within local employer Universal Wolf. Four of the candidates were successful in taking the roles while all 15 others have returned for further training to continue on their journey into the sector. Looking ahead to the 2023-24 academic year interest is strong with circa 20 apprentices, circa 30 young people and a growing cohort of adult and commercial trainees planning to study at the centre. Much more will emerge in-year.

Energy Central Campus

Work officially began during the spring of 2023 on the £13.6m Energy Central Learning Hub situated in the clean energy cluster at Port of Blyth, an official ground-breaking ceremony took place during July. The campus will create a high-quality talent pool, supporting the clean energy sector in meeting its ambitious growth aspirations, whilst inspiring, training and providing pathways to employment for the local community and wider region.

The strategic partnership formed between Northumberland County Council, Port of Blyth and the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult to lead the development has focussed upon the construction phase of the project. However, during summer 2023, with construction underway, the focus has shifted and now officers from Education SEND & Skills are front and centre of developments to refine the vision and business model as well as engaging education delivery and industrial partners.



Fuse Campus Developments

During the summer of 2023 plans have been drawn up and costings developed to explore the expansion of learning space within the FUSE campus for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It is concluded that in the region of 60 additional places can be created providing an additional vocational education option for more young people with SEND and providing greater reach of provision into the south and the Tyne Valley. Next steps will be to secure funding to allow works to be taken forward based upon the plans.

Key Priority > 5 <

Develop appropriate high quality educational provision that meets the needs of all children and young people as close to their home communities as possible:

A) We will strive to deliver the right number of places to meet all learner needs in the right place at the right time

Planning permission was granted by the Secretary of State following approval at the Strategic Planning Committee on 6th December 2022 for the rebuild of Astley and Whytrig Schools. RIBA Stage 4 designs are now complete and signed off by the school. **A main contractor has been brought on board to deliver the scheme with the new facilities scheduled to be ready for September 2025.**

The Outline Business Case (OBC) for James Calvert Spence College was approved by Cabinet and a large amount of work was undertaken to develop the designs in readiness of a Planning application with detailed design and construction to follow soon after. In conjunction, designs were completed for the repurposing of the vacated former JCSC middle school building to become a new SEND facility (operated by Barndale SEND School) and a new primary school for Amble First School. In addition, a contractor has been appointed to deliver the additional capacity to enable four feeder first schools to become primaries in September 2024.

During the summer holidays (July 2023 - September 2023), the capital team undertook a range of projects to replace existing dilapidated mobile classrooms which were identified during condition surveys. A further 2 projects were identified to create much needed additional accommodation for James Calvert Spence College and Cramlington Learning Village. These projects include: >

- > **James Calvert Spence College** - Relocation of 3 existing double mobile classrooms and the installation of 1 newly refurbished double mobile classroom to accommodate the reorganisation from a 3-tier to 2-tier education system.
- > **Cramlington Learning Village** - Installation of 1 new double mobile classroom to create additional school places for 60 pupils.
- > **Felton Primary School** - Replacement of 1 existing double mobile classroom unit with a new bespoke double mobile classroom, featuring a kitchenette and toilet facilities.
- > **Seaton Sluice Middle School** - Replacement of 1 existing single mobile classroom unit with a new mobile classroom, including toilet facilities.

The replacement of two dilapidated modular buildings with one state of the art Early Years facility is now complete at Bedlington Station Primary School. The £1.75m project has provided a range of spaces including a Reception classroom, Nursery and a community classroom incorporating dedicated entrances and associated ancillary facilities including kitchens, age-appropriate toilets and enhanced, dedicated outdoor play areas.

The School Capital Improvement Programme has continued through the year and between September 2022 and September 2023 has seen 11 projects completed on site, with a combined value of approximately £1.3 million. Geographically, these projects have ranged from Belford in the North to Seghill in the South and have undertaken a range of works including replacing and upgrading roofs, replacing windows, upgrading heating and sewage treatment systems and improving facilities for pupils with SEND needs.

In addition to the projects completed over this period, many other projects are moving through the design stage or have started work on site. As well as maintaining the school estate, these projects seek to reduce operating costs for the schools and help the Council in achieving its climate change objectives. **The latter has been helped by additional funding being made available from the DfE specifically to help schools improve their energy efficiency.**

Works have been undertaken throughout the county to create a number of Primary Support Bases (PSBs) and Specialist Support Bases (SSBs) that will provide additional support for pupils at a host school. The first 5 PSB's began operations in September 2022 at a range of school sites. The first 6 SSB's will come on stream in September 23.

Redevelopment of a building formerly known as the Sycamore Centre, for use as specialist teaching for students with additional needs has created an additional 30 places for pupils attending Cleaswell Hill Special School. The works were completed in the summer of 2023, with the new facilities opening in September. Works included: the repurposing of existing space into 4 separate teaching rooms (catering, STEM, performing arts, social skills), a hygiene room, and improvements to the outdoor space.



Key Priority 5



Page 24



A project to create an additional 40 places for pupils with ASD and SEMH has also been completed on the site of the former PRU and this is now known as The Woodlands, an offsite provision for Collingwood based at Hepscott Park. This project was also completed for the start of the new academic year and offers a bespoke facilities to support the teaching of vocational subjects, and therapies spaces.

The relocation and refurbishment of Northumberland PRU to the former Atkinson House Special School site in Seghill was undertaken. The relocation and capital investment has also enabled the expansion and change in age range which now means that the needs of KS4 pupils can also be met.

Gilbert Ward School in Blyth opened to students in September and will provide up to 80 places for students with SEMH and ASD over time.

Following more than 2 years of consultation, approval for the reorganisation of Berwick Partnership to a 2-tier (primary/secondary) structure together with £41m funding for buildings was secured in July 2023. Implementation has begun, with approval of a draft Staffing Protocol and technical advisors to support the delivery of the capital investment plans.

Approval of Berwick Reorganisation also included approval and funding for the establishment of SEND Units at St Mary's CE Primary School (as it will be) from September 2025 and at Berwick Academy from September 2026. This will create an additional 70 places across the primary and secondary phases in Berwick for students with SEMH/ASD/MLD/SLCN. Together with approval of the satellite site in Amble of Barndale Special School (to be named Barndale by the Sea), this means that 120 specialist provision places will be created in the North of the county over 3 years from September 2024.

4 Schools have academised successfully in 2023, with £25k costs to the Council successfully recovered.

Key Priority > 6 <

Ensure the Education, SEND and Skills Service fulfils its statutory duties within the legislative framework (including the School Admissions Code, Exclusions, Attendance, Virtual School, School Organisational Regulations, Early Years Sufficiency and those relating to SEND):

- A) We will meet our own statutory duties
- B) We will further develop relationships with the Regional Director and Academy Trusts to ensure they adhere to their statutory duties whilst ensuring equality of access to education

> Admissions > SEND Commissioning

Primary
98.2% of children were allocated their first choice Primary school, **6% above** the national average

Secondary
95.5% of children were allocated their first choice Secondary school, **13% above** the national average

2,138 'in year' applications were processed within 2022-23

Between Sept 2022 and Aug 2023 the team have **processed 171 applications for Ukrainian children**, all of which were allocated within 15 school days

The School Organisation and Resources Team (SORT) have taken responsibility for the commissioning and allocation of SEND placements.

Revised Terms of Reference for the SEND Placement Review and Transition Panel were put in place and a new commissioning process was developed, implemented and rolled out to colleagues in the SEND team and specialist provisions.

From November 333 students have been considered at panel, with 207 students placed, 55 students considered not to require specialist provision, 16 students where a placement is still to be found, and 55 students in consultation with provisions.

Relationships with Special Schools improved through new processes and communication.

A brochure for Northumberland Special Schools was developed to assist parents in making appropriate school preferences.

Inclusion

In 2022-23 the Inclusion team supported **234 learners in alternative provision** (AP). Out of those, 9 learners reintegrated into Special School and 14 back into mainstream successfully.

In 2022-23 the Inclusion Team supported **63 managed moves, 33 were successful** and 25 were unsuccessful, with 5 pending; the success rate is 52%. Historically, the success rate was 20%.

The Inclusion Panel launched in Sept 2022-this panel considers all referrals into the PRU, Alternative Provision (AP) and Primary Support Bases. In 2022-23 we received **131 referrals, with only 3 going on to be permanently excluded (PEX)**.

72% of the 2022-23 Year 11 PEX cohort achieved a qualification in English, 61% of the 2022/23 Year 11 PEX cohort achieved a qualification in Maths. These results are lower than the 2021-22 cohort, but it mirrors the national trend due to the re-introduction of formal assessments.

The number of PEX learners in AP in **September 2023 was 144**. This is double the number in AP in 2021 and reflects the increase in the number of children and young people being PEX from Northumberland schools.

74% PEX learners were in full time suitable provision by day 6 in 2022-23. This is a reduction of 7% on the previous year, however there are several contributing factors which include the availability of AP placements as well as the delay in the LA receiving notifications of PEX from schools.

There have been **no permanent exclusions of cared-for children since 2008**.

The first Northumberland Strategic Inclusion Strategy was finalised and approved by Cabinet in November 2022. A copy can be found [here](#). Work will continue in 2023-24 on refining and redrafting the strategy with our schools and partners.

Nationally, the highest rate suspension and permanent exclusions rates are in the North East and of the 12 authorities across the North East Northumberland is ranked 4th highest for permanent exclusions and 6th for suspensions.

In 2022-23 Northumberland reported **105 permanent exclusions** and 5,870 suspensions, an increase of 11% and 37%, respectively compared to the previous year. The data also indicates that pupils with SEND and Cared-for children are more likely to be excluded / suspended.

Free School Meals

We are continuing to support families across the county through the **HUGGG voucher scheme** for meals during the school holidays and uniform provision. From December 2020 to May 2022, **97,143 vouchers were issued valuing £4.3m+ and with a redemption rate of 95%**.



School Finance



School Funding and the National Funding Formula



Northumberland moved successfully towards the implementation of the National Funding Formula for 2023-24 schools. The Council classified as a local authority which “mirrors the NFF”. An overall balanced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) position was reported to Schools Forum in July 2023, but this also highlighted significant pressures arising within the High Needs Block. This is caused principally by the increase in the number of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in the year to January 2023, together with higher inflationary pressures over the last 24 months.

School Balances

A report to Schools Forum in July 2023, illustrated that, after 2 years of increasing school balances, the financial year to March 2023, saw an overall marginal fall in the balances held by Northumberland’s maintained schools.

This fall in balances was most notable across First and Primary Schools, who together with Special Schools would have felt the impact of the general NJC pay award, which was not supported by additional funding in the way the teachers’ pay award was.



The Education Welfare Service

School attendance in Northumberland is gradually improving with overall absence better than regional and national averages in the Secondary and Special phases, and persistent absence better than regional and national averages in the Primary and Secondary phases. The legacy of the pandemic on school attendance is still present, but new initiatives are clearly starting to have a positive impact.

Legal intervention is back to pre-pandemic levels. Whilst it is a last resort, the increase shows that schools are aware that it is an option when all other interventions have been exhausted.

Safeguarding arrangements for identifying children at risk of missing education (CME) are a strength and hundreds of pupils were tracked through the process and re-engaged in education. Validated DfE data available from 2021-22 shows that Northumberland is one of the local authorities with the lowest number of children missing education. Monthly multi-agency CME Tracking Panels continued and were developed to introduce focussed panels on Transition and for cared for children. From Sept 22 to July 23, 286 students were discussed at panel, of which 173 are no longer CME.

The proportion of children in Northumberland that are electively home educated is lower than the national average. The number of children being electively home educated in Northumberland is 385, which is a reduction since earlier in the academic year. 209 children became EHE from September 2022 to July 2023, and 69 returned to school places.

Pupils with health and medical needs who attend Northumberland’s EOTAS provision enjoyed a better teaching and learning experience this year.

- Family Hubs were used as teaching venues.
- A hybrid model of teaching was successfully embedded containing both virtual and face to face delivery.

Safeguarding

School engagement with the Northumberland Children’s and Adult’s Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) is **good**:



In all but one school inspected by Ofsted this year, safeguarding was judged to be at least **Good**.



Recommendations from learning reviews were implemented by education settings with direction from the Schools’ Engagement sub-group.



Over 95% of Ofsted whistleblowing complaints about safeguarding in schools had a response within the required timeframe and no complaints required further action from the local authority or NCASP.



The Schools’ Engagement sub-group successfully developed into the broader, more strategic **Safer in Education Group**.



Virtual School >

Our whole council approach is strengthening corporate parenting to support improvement of educational outcomes for our **cared-for children and young people.**



More pupils are working in their age-related curriculum since last year and a high number of care leavers have been engaged in Education, Training and Employment through the multi-agency ETE Clinics.



More care leavers achieved **Level 3 qualifications** this year compared to last year.

A high proportion of school leavers are choosing to stay in education at 16, and successful liaison with Northumberland College means that our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children have access to and an English language speaking course.



For further details about the education of looked after children **see the forthcoming Virtual School Headteacher's Annual Report 2023.**

Next Steps >

Alongside the many successes highlighted within this report a number of development areas have been rightfully identified.

Moving through 2023-24 and beyond the Local Authority will work closely with children, young people, their families, schools, settings and all other partners to refine and extend the current priorities to meet those development areas.

Key foci for 2024-25 will include:

- > Sufficiency of Early Years provision as entitlements are extended.
- > Ensuring the growth in SEND is well managed and needs are met.
- > Revisiting disadvantaged provision, including that of cared for children, in a drive to ensure inequality gaps are diminished.
- > Developing alternative curriculum pathways for some KS4 learners which enables them to gain stronger outcomes.
- > Strengthening Preparation for Adulthood for all learners.
- > Ensuring the post 16 offer is varied, comprehensive and well communicated to meet the aspirations of learners and the needs of employers.
- > Recruitment and retention across the whole education sector.

DISCLAIMER

The information provided in this publication is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate at the time of production. Data sources are available upon request.

OTHER FORMATS

If you need this information in large print, Braille, Audio, or in another format or language please contact us: **0345 600 6400**. If you are Deaf or can't speak on the phone, contact us using Relay UK. Download the Relay UK app or using your existing text phone prefix our dedicated text Relay number: **018001 01670 623 515**. British Sign Language users can contact us using an online sign language interpreting service: **northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net**

Northumberland County Council,
County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF.
Telephone: 0345 600 6400.

Version 1: November 2023



Agenda Item 5

DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET SINCE LAST OSC MEETING AND FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS - DECEMBER 2023 – MARCH 2024

DECISION	CABINET DATE/DECISION
<p>Cabinet Papers - 7 November 2023</p>	<p>https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&MId=2258</p>
<p>North East Devolution</p> <p>The report asked members to consider and determine if consent should be given to the making of an Order that would abolish the North East and North of Tyne Combined Authorities, whilst at the same time establishing a new North East Mayoral Combined Authority.</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the content of the report be noted; (b) Cabinet agree in principle that the Council should consent to the making of the order; (c) the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to issue the Council's formal consent to the Secretary of State when requested; (d) the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the terms of the side agreement regarding the support arrangements associated with these proposals; and (e) the Chief Executive be authorised to take all other steps necessary to implement these proposals
<p>Setting the Scope and Targets for the Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26</p> <p>Cabinet was asked to agree the scope and targets to be addressed in detail in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26 and to ensure alignment with the Council's Environment Policy Statement</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Cabinet agree that the Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26 is a key element of the Council's wider Environmental Policy Statement, which commits the Council to strengthen the work being undertaken to maintain, protect and enhance the environment through a broad range of policies and activities, including active travel, nature recovery, planning, procurement, public health/disease control and general environmental services provision; (b) Cabinet agree that the Climate Change Action Plan will include a focus on greenhouse gas reduction and climate change resilience through nature in collaboration with the Council's strategies for wider ecology and biodiversity issues; (c) Cabinet agree to restate the Carbon Neutral target for the county by 2030 and clarify that it refers to carbon dioxide only;

	<p>(d) Cabinet agree a new target to work with Government and other key stakeholders to achieve net-zero for all greenhouse gases for the county of Northumberland by 2040, a strategy for which will be developed as part of the new Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26;</p> <p>(e) Cabinet agree that the local and regional adaptation response to the risks and impacts of a changing climate be included in the Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26;</p> <p>(f) Cabinet agree a new target to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, a strategy for which will be developed as part of the new Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26;</p> <p>(g) Cabinet agree that the scope of the Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26 continues to only include direct, territorial emissions (i.e. those produced in Northumberland) as its focus for projects but that it should do more to raise awareness amongst stakeholders of scope 3 (indirect) emissions (i.e. those produced outside of Northumberland) and how they can be reduced; and</p> <p>(h) Cabinet agree the core structure of the Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26 including a commitment to set out a strategy for planning in relation to the climate change targets.</p>
<p>Strengthened Biodiversity Duty and Reporting Obligations</p> <p>The report set out the Council's new obligations to take action to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to report on such actions, and proposed a 'first consideration' of such actions as required under S.40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 as amended.</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet accept the document attached to the report as a record of the Council's first consideration of actions the Council can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with S.40 (1C) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 as amended, which will then be used by Officers to develop an implementation plan.</p>
<p>Approval of the Council Tax Scheme</p> <p>The report sought approval for the local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024-25 to continue to provide support at</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that County Council be recommended to approve the Council Tax Support Scheme attached as Appendix 1 to be adopted as the Council's local scheme for 2024-25.</p>

<p>a maximum level of 92% of council tax liability.</p>	
<p>Corporate Feedback Performance 2022/2023</p> <p>The Annual Report reviewed the operation of the complaints process over twelve months (01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023), including statistical data, and provided the local authority with how it keeps itself informed about the effectiveness of its current arrangements for handling customer complaints.</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that the findings of the report on complaint handling within the authority be noted.</p> <p>This report will be considered by the Communities and Place OSC on 29 November 2023.</p>
<p>Corporate Performance Quarter 1 2023-24</p> <p>The report provided a summary of the progress against the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities using the Council's performance at the end of Quarter 1, 2023/24 (Q1).</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that progress against the three Corporate Priorities as summarised in the report be noted.</p>
<p>Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group</p> <p>The report summarised proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group.</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>46.1 Kyloe House CCTV Upgrade RESOLVED that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the receipt of the capital grant of £0.221 million from the Department for Education (DfE); and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet approve the amendment to the Capital Programme to include the funding and spend.</p> <p>46.2 Replacement of Boating Pontoon in Wansbeck Riverside Park</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the proposed spend on the Boating Pontoon and amend the Capital Programme in 2023-24. Note that the project will be wholly grant funded under an agreement with Cambois Rowing Club.</p> <p>46.3 Highways Laboratory Expansion</p> <p>RESOLVED that:-</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the expenditure of the £0.615 million which is already included in the MTFP under Highways Laboratory Expansion project; and</p>

(b) Cabinet note that a portion of the allocation will be slipped into financial year 2024-25. This is currently anticipated to be 50% but will be dependent on the date of approval.

46.4 North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

RESOLVED that:-

(a) Cabinet note the agreement for the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) to release BSIP capital funding to assist scheme promoters with development of the programme;

(b) Cabinet approve the BSIP capital funding to develop the “Bus Priority Infrastructure – Tranche 1” programme; and

(c) Cabinet approve the amendment to the Capital Programme to include £0.121 million funding from Transport North East (TNE) to enable development of the BSIP Tranche 1 programme.

46.5 Parks Enhancement Capital Programme

1. Cleasewell Hill Park

RESOLVED that:-

(a) Approve capital expenditure of up to £0.240 million for the refurbishment scheme at Cleasewell Hill Park;

(b) Approve the reallocation in the Capital Programme of £0.200 million from the existing Parks Enhancement Programme and £0.040 million contribution from Choppington Parish Council which has been agreed in principle subject to formal approval; and

(c) Note that if funding of £0.040 million from Choppington Parish Council is not received works will be scaled back and expenditure will be limited to £0.200 million.

2. Gallagher Park

RESOLVED that:-

(a) Cabinet approve capital expenditure totalling £0.019 million for car park repairs, overflow provision and fencing at Gallagher Park; and

(b) Cabinet approve the reallocation in the Capital Programme of £0.010 million from the existing Parks Enhancement Programme and £0.009 million from Cllr Robinson, Cllr Taylor, and Cllr Wilciezk’s Members’ Local Improvement Scheme funds.

3. Plessey Woods – Bouldering Park

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet approve capital expenditure totalling £0.159 million for Plessey Woods Bouldering Park; and
- (b) Cabinet approve the reallocation in the Capital Programme of £0.088 million from the existing Parks Enhancement Programme, £0.067 million from Section 106 contributions and £0.005 million from Cllr Robinson's Members' Local Improvement Scheme funds.

46.6 Strategic Regeneration Investment

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet accept grant funding to establish the Northumberland Stewardship and Rural Growth Investment Programme as follows, noting that the establishment of the programme and projects below was previously agreed by Cabinet in February 2023:
- Accept grant funding of £4.810 million including £2.000 million capital and £2.810 million revenue for the Northumberland Small Business Service (NSBS).
 - Approve the addition of the £2.000 million capital funding to the Capital Programme in line with the three-year funding profile further in the report.
 - Accept grant funding of £3.510 million including £1.543 million capital and £1.967 million revenue for the Rural Asset Multiplier Programme (RAMP).
 - Approve the addition of the £1.543 million capital funding to the Capital Programme in line with the three-year funding profile further in the report.
- (b) Cabinet approve the below projects and the reallocation of capital funds of £0.600 million in 2023-24 from the Ashington North East Quarter Redevelopment (Phase 2). The Strategic Regeneration Projects budget will reallocate £0.600 million to the Ashington North East Quarter Redevelopment (Phase 2) project in 2024-25. Note that the Ashington North East Quarter Redevelopment (Phase 2) does not require the funds in 2023-24 due to slippage in the project delivery.
- Approve the allocation of capital funds of £0.500 million in 2023-24 for Hexham HSHAZ Public Realm Scheme.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the creation of a new capital project in 2023-24 for the Berwick Gateway and approve the allocation of capital funds of £0.050 million in 2023-24 for the Berwick Gateway. • Approve the allocation of capital funds of £0.010 million in 2023-24 for the detailed design of the Royal Border Bridge Floodlighting Scheme. • Approve the allocation of capital funds of £0.020 million in 2023-24 to finalise the successful Rural Business Growth Service project. • Approve the allocation of capital funds of £0.020 million in 2023-24 for the detailed design of the Alnwick Cobbles Streetscaping scheme. <p>46.7 Great Northumberland Forest Tenant Lead Pilot</p> <p>RESOLVED that:-</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the proposed spend of £2.550 million for the Great Northumberland Forest Tenant Lead Pilot and note the funding of £2.550 million from the national Nature for Climate (NfC) fund; and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet approve the inclusion of an additional £2.550 million (2023-24 £1.500 million and 2024-25 £1.050 million) in the capital programme.</p>
<p>Delegate Authority to Award Leisure Contract</p> <p>The report sought permission to delegate authority to enable the contract award of the Northumberland Community Leisure and Well-being Service to the preferred bidder, following final evaluation by the panel</p>	<p>7 November 2023</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director of Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities in consultation with the Leader, also Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services, the Deputy Leader, also Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, the Portfolio Holder for Healthy Lives, the Director of Law and Corporate Governance and the Executive Director of Transformation and Resources to award and enter into a contract for the Northumberland Community and Wellbeing Service with the preferred bidder.</p>

FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS

<p>Adaptions for Disabled People</p> <p>To report on additional Disabled Facilities Grant funding received from Government, and to ask the Cabinet to consider the case for revisions to the Council's discretionary grants policy.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Budget 2024-25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28</p> <p>This report provides an update on the development of the 2024-25 Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period 2024 to 2028, prior to the receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25 in December 2023.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Corporate Risk Management</p> <p>To inform Cabinet of the latest position of the County Council's corporate risks following review by Executive Management Team.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Education, SEND and Skills Annual Report</p> <p>Annual Report of the Director of Education, SEND & Skills.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Merger of North and South Northumberland Coroner Areas</p> <p>To seek approval from Cabinet to agree to the merger of the North and South Northumberland coroner areas, to become one Northumberland area effective from 1 April 2024.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Northumberland Leisure and Wellbeing Procurement and Provision</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the Northumberland Leisure and Wellbeing Procurement and Provision.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Financial Performance 2023-24 – Position at End of September 2023</p> <p>The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital financial performance against budget as at 30 September 2023.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>Q2 Corporate Performance Report</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>PFI Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) Responsibilities</p> <p>This report seeks governance approval for NCC to take over responsibility for the provision of FF&E for the PFI Fire and Rescue Service buildings at West Hartford and Pegswood, with an annual saving on the PFI unitary charge of £79,471 amounting to £1,192,065 for the remainder of the contract.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>

<p>Outcomes of the Tender for New School Buildings for Astley High and Whytrigg Middle Schools</p> <p>Update Cabinet on the outcomes of the tender process for the construction of new school buildings for Astley High School and Whytrigg Middle School and seek the delegated approval to award the construction contract.</p>	12 December 2023
<p>Setting of the Council Tax Base 2024-25</p> <p>To advise Cabinet of the tax base calculation for 2024-25 for all domestic properties liable to pay council tax.</p>	12 December 2023
<p>Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group</p> <p>This report details the Capital Proposals considered by the Capital Strategy Group on 30 October 2023.</p>	12 December 2023
<p>Notification of the Estimated Collection Fund Balances 2023-24 – Council Tax and Business Rates</p> <p>The report will advise members of the estimated surplus or deficit balances on the Collection Fund in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates at 31 March 2024. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) requires the Council as the Billing Authority to calculate a Council Tax Collection Fund estimate by 15th January each year. The Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 require the Council as the Billing Authority to calculate a Business Rates Collection Fund estimate on or before 31st January each year.</p>	16 January 2024
<p>Budget 2024-25, Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28 and 30 Year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>The report presents to Cabinet, the updated Budget 2024-25, Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28 and 30 year Business plan for the Housing Revenue Account</p>	16 January 2024 Council 17 January 2024 21 February 2024
<p>Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26</p> <p>To replace the expiring Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23 and to set out our intended strategies for reaching our climate change targets across the next three years and beyond.</p>	12 March 2024
<p>Financial Performance 2023-24 – Position at end of December 2023</p> <p>The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital financial performance against budget as at 31 December 2023.</p>	12 March 2024

Northumberland County Council

Family and Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme and Monitoring Report 2023 - 2024

Page 37

Chris Angus, Scrutiny Officer
01670 622604 - Chris.Angus@Northumberland.gov.uk

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(a) To monitor, review and make recommendations about:

- Early Years
- Education and Schools
- Special education needs and disability
- Adult and Community Education
- Training and Vocational Education
- Lifelong Learning
- Youth Offending
- Social Services for Children and Young People
- Children's Health
- Teenage Sexual Health
- Looked After Children
- Safeguarding – Children
- Youth Services
- Family Services
- Children's Centres

(b) To oversee and monitor school improvement, as follows:

- (i) To receive feedback on the Ofsted inspection of schools.
- (ii) To support the work of the County Council and the progress of schools on the School Intervention and Support Programme in specified categories.
- (iii) To receive an annual report about the number of schools that have been on the School Intervention and Support Programme, the reason(s) for their inclusion, the support given by the Council and the success of this support.
- (iv) To receive an annual report on the performance of schools.

ISSUES TO BE SCHEDULED/CONSIDERED

Regular updates:

Safeguarding Activity Trends Report
Finance and Performance Six Monthly Report
Children Permanently Excluded from School/Elective Home Education
Schools performance
Joint Targeted Area Inspection

Issues to be raised:

Themed Scrutiny:

Issues to be scheduled:

**Northumberland County Council
Family and Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2023 - 2024**

7 December 2023

Director of Education Annual Report: Key Educational Outcomes (2022-2023 Academic Year)

Annual report on the key educational outcomes of the previous academic year. The Committee will be asked to identify any further areas for scrutiny.

9 January 2024

Page 40

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh – Giving Children and Young People the Best Start in Life

To update members on progress on actions within the JHWS. Members are asked to review this theme and propose amendments to priorities, actions, and indicators to measure progress for the remaining period of the strategy 2023 – 2028.

Joint Health and Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh – Building Blocks Theme

To update members on progress on actions within the JHWS. Members are asked to review this theme and propose amendments to priorities, actions, and indicators to measure progress for the remaining period of the strategy 2023 – 2028.

Adults and children’s Safeguarding Board Annual Report

To provide an overview of the work carried out under the multiagency arrangements for Safeguarding Adults and Children.

7 March 2024

Director of Education Annual Report: Key Educational Outcomes (2022-2023 Academic Year)

Annual report on the key educational outcomes of the previous academic year. The Committee will be asked to identify any further areas for scrutiny.

	Annual Report of the Virtual School Headteacher and Elective Home Education	To present the education outcomes of Northumberland's looked after children for the academic year and information about the increase in the number of children who are electively home educated, and the multi-agency support that is in place for families.
25 April 2024		
	Home to School Transport Review	An update on following the Home to School Transport Review presented to FACS in June 2023.

**Northumberland County Council
Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report 2023-2024**

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
-----	------	--------	----------	---------

1	1 June 2023	Annual Report of the Principle Social Worker	RESOLVED that the contents of the report and work completed over the year be acknowledged and the priorities identified be agreed. Information was requested to be included in next year's report on the progress in raising the profile of becoming a social worker within schools and how the sector could be more welcoming for men.	No further action.
2	1 June 2023	Home to School Transport Review	RESOLVED that the information be noted.	An update on the implementation to be given to FACS at a future date.
3	18 July 2023	Outcomes of Statutory Consultation on Proposals for The Berwick Partnership	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that the recommendations outlined in the report were supported by this Committee.	The Committee's comments were considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 th July 2023
4	7 September 2023	SEND Self-Evaluation Framework	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and next steps be supported by the Committee.	The Committee will continue to examine SEN services.
5	7 September 2023	Report of the Schools Improvement Team	RESOLVED that the report be accepted and that whilst the Committee noted the changes to funding imposed by the DfE they asked that Northumberland County Council continue to fund the service.	FACS recommends that Northumberland County Council continue to fund the Schools Improvement Team
6	2 November 2023	Quality of Practice in Children's Social Care	RESOLVED that the way in which the Council assured itself that they were improving the lives and safeguarding children and young people was recognised by the Committee.	No further action.

7	2 November 2023	Children's Social Care Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan	RESOLVED that <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The areas of good practice in safeguarding and supporting children young people and their families be recognised; and2. Areas for additional scrutiny and challenge had been identified and clarification provided.	
---	-----------------	---	---	--

This page is intentionally left blank