

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

At a meeting of the **Cabinet** held at County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday, 12 July 2022 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillor G. Sanderson
(Leader of the Council, in the Chair)

CABINET MEMBERS

Horncastle, C.
Pattison, W.
Ploszaj, W.

Riddle, J.R.
Watson, J.G.
Wearmouth, R.

OTHER MEMBERS

Flux, B.
Stewart, G.

Seymour, C.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Binjal, S.
Bradley, N.
Hadfield, K.

Hunter, P.
Kingham, A.

Liddell, J.
O'Farrell, R.

O'Neill, G.

Reiter, G.

Roll, J.

Soderquest, P.

Taylor, M.

Monitoring Officer
Director of Adult Social Services
Democratic and Electoral Services
Manager
Interim Senior Service Director
Interim Joint Director of Children's
Services
Senior Public Health Manager
Interim Executive Director of Place
and Regeneration
Interim Deputy Director of Public
Health
Interim Joint Director of Children's
Services
Head of Democratic and Electoral
Services
Director of Housing and Public
Protection
Interim Executive Director for
Communities and Business

Ch.'s Initials.....

Willis, J.

Development
Interim Executive Director of
Finance and S151 Officer

One member of the press was present

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Renner Thompson.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 7 June 2022, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

18. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillors Riddle and Watson declared personal interests in respect of item 5 on the agenda (Advance Northumberland Ltd and its subsidiaries – Request For Reserved Matter Approval) as Directors on the Advance Board.

19. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

Homes for Ukraine – Financial Support

The report provided an overview for Cabinet of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, and requested approval to spend in advance of payment being received from Government to support the delivery of the required Local Authority commitments (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A).

Councillor Horncastle introduced the report, highlighting the key points.

Phil Soderquest reported that there were now 279 arrivals in the County with people still arriving. An enhanced period of support was now being entered into, and thirty individuals were being supported where the relationship with the host family had broken down.

The first six month period was now coming to an end and hosts were being contacted to see if they wanted to continue. Extra resource had been put into the team to meet the demand and a working group had been established with an education sub group in place. Approval was being sought to spend in advance of the receipt from Government, this would not be exceeded. Any underspend would have to be returned to Government so all efforts would be made to spend all of it.

Audrey Kingham advised that the education sub group was working very well and 119 Ukrainian children were now placed in Northumberland schools.

There had been areas of pressure in some schools as a first choice and extra support had been put in for English. There had also been some success in finding jobs.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet approve the request to spend in advance of receipt of the grant funding;
- (b) Cabinet approve the request to spend up to the value of the grant funding which will be received; and
- (c) Cabinet agree the completion of enhanced DBS checks be for all hosts and their family members over the age of 16, and the costs associated with doing so.

20. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S.151 OFFICER, AND INTERIM SHAREHOLDER REPRESENTATIVE

Advance Northumberland Ltd and its subsidiaries – Request For Reserved Matter Approval

The report requested formal Shareholder approval of Reserved Matters under the current Articles of Association of Advance Northumberland Ltd (“Company”) and its subsidiary companies Advance Northumberland (Commercial) Ltd, Advance Northumberland (Developments) Ltd, Advance Northumberland (Housing) Ltd, and Advance Northumberland (Finance) Ltd (together the “Advance Subsidiaries”) to:

- I. Adopt new Articles of Association of the Company and the Advance Subsidiaries
- II. Approve a Financial Delegation Policy of the Company and the Advance Subsidiaries, and
- III. Approve the Role Profile for the “Controlling Shareholder Representative”. (Copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

The report was introduced by Councillor Wearmouth. He made a statement regarding the criticism of Advance governance by Max Caller in many parts of his report into governance at the Council and issues around the shareholder role. He also referred to reports about Advance being considered by Audit Committee when it was clear that the proper place for them to have been considered was Scrutiny, as the report on today’s agenda had been. Mr Caller had referred in his report to the role of scrutiny as being to consider the actions of the shareholder in developing the company or holding it to account. The Articles and associated report on today’s agenda reflected changes that the officer team had identified as being necessary, some independently or in association with Advance management and board, and others reflected the findings of Mr Caller.

The Leader commented that he supported Advance in the work it did, which was far more than was generally realised. There would be more reports on the future of Advance after the summer break.

Mrs Willis summarised the key changes in the Articles as set out in the report. She referred to the recommendation from Scrutiny regarding the attendance and participation of the shareholder representative at Board meetings and commented that she had no problem with this.

Councillor Ploszaj commented on the integral role played by Advance in the Council's regeneration projects particularly in Ashington and Blyth. He thanked the whole team for their work.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet approve the proposed new Articles of Association of the Company dated "July 2022" as per the attached document at Appendix A;
- (b) Cabinet approve the proposed new Articles of Association of each of the Advance Subsidiaries dated "July 2022" as per the attached documents at Appendix B, C, D & E respectively;
- (c) Cabinet approve the proposed Financial Delegation Policy dated "July 2022" as per the attached document at Appendix F;
- (d) Cabinet approve the Role Profile for the "Controlling Shareholder Representative" as per the attached document at Appendix G; and
- (e) the report of the CSEG OSC and its recommendation be approved.

In accordance with Minute No.18, Councillors Riddle and Watson did not vote on this matter.

21. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S151 OFFICER

Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group

The report summarised proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group via email on 6 June 2022 (Copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix C).

RESOLVED that:-

21.1 Concordia Glass and Roof Replacement

Cabinet approve the replacement of the glass curtain-walling along the front of the Concordia Leisure Centre and renewal of the flat roof area above as

both have reached end of life with serious water ingress now occurring into the Leisure Centre. The estimated cost will be £640,000 as detailed in the table in the report and will be funded through the Leisure Remedial Budget for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

21.2 Blyth Welding & Fabrication Training Centre Additional Funding

Cabinet approve a £300,000 increase in the cost of construction of a welding and fabrication centre to be funded from the Strategic Regeneration Project in 2022/23. This will supplement the previously allocated funding from the Medium Term Financial Plan of £1,082,000 allowing delivery of the centre which will focus upon training school leavers, adults and sector employees in welding and fabrication disciplines, management of sector related apprenticeships and delivery of professional industry qualifications to support the sector.

21.3 Energising Blyth Programme – Connectivity Projects

Cabinet approve the establishment of the three Energising Blyth Connectivity Projects (Blyth to Bebside Cycle Corridor, Northern Gateway Phase 2; and The Link Bridge Street) as defined projects in the Capital Programme with a combined budget of £12,398,789 and revised funding profile as set out in Annex 1.

22. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act, and
- (b) That the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the following reasons:-

Agenda Item	Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A
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9-11	3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information
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AND	The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure because the information can be considered to be commercially sensitive (item 9), disclosure could adversely affect the business reputation or confidence in the person / organisation and could adversely affect commercial revenue (item 10), and because disclosure could adversely affect the business reputation or confidence in
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the person / organisation, and could adversely affect commercial revenue (item 11).

23. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S151 OFFICER

Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group

The report summarised proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the officer Capital Strategy Group (CSG) via email on 6 June 2022 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix D, coloured pink and marked “Not for Publication”).

RESOLVED that the recommendation as detailed in the report be agreed.

24. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Integrated Sexual Health Service for Northumberland – Permission to Tender

The report provided the background to the need to provide a comprehensive open-access sexual health service as part of the council’s statutory public health functions; and sought permission to proceed with a formal tender exercise (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix E, coloured pink and marked “Not for Publication”, along with the report of the Health and Wellbeing OSC circulated at the meeting).

Cabinet welcomed this report.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the recommendations as detailed in the report be agreed; and
- (b) the report of the Health and Wellbeing OSC be noted.

25. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Leisure Service Programme

The report sought approval to further extend the existing Active Northumberland Agreement for a period of twelve months following consideration of specialist Leisure Services procurement advice (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix F, coloured pink and marked “Not for Publication”).

The report was presented by Mrs Taylor as Councillor Watson was a member of the Active Northumberland Board, though was in the process of resigning. She advised that specialist procurement advice had been taken on this matter as the contract was a very complex one.

RESOLVED that the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved. Councillor Watson did not take part or vote on this matter.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....