

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NH on Tuesday, 15 November 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor T Cessford
(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 64-65, 73-81)

A Scott
(Vice-Chair (Planning) in the Chair, agenda items 66-72)

MEMBERS

A Dale (64-78)
SH Fairless-Aitken (64-79)
C Horncastle (64-72)
I Hutchinson
D Kennedy (69-79)
N Morphet

N Oliver
JR Riddle (66-81)
A Sharp
G Stewart
H Waddell (64-79)

OFFICERS

K Blyth

M Bulman
R Campbell
G Cowell

D Hunt

D Laux
R. McCartney
A Olive
E Scott
P Soderquest

N Turnbull
K Westerby

Development Management Area
Manager (West)
Solicitor
Senior Planning Officer
Business and Community
Engagement Officer
Neighbourhood Services Area
Manager
Head of Technical Services
Highways Infrastructure Manager
Highways Delivery Area Manager
Built Heritage and Design Officer
Service Director - Housing and
Public Protection
Democratic Services Officer
Highways Delivery Manager

ALSO PRESENT

3 members of the public.

Ch.'s Initials.....

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Riddell who was delayed.

65. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Tynedale Local Area Council held on 11 October 2022, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

66. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT MEETINGS

The Chair advised members of the procedure which would be followed at the meeting.

67. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The committee was requested to decide the planning applications attached to the report using the powers delegated to it. Members were reminded of the principles which should govern their consideration of the applications, the procedure for handling representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of permission or refusal of planning applications.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

68. 21/04595/LBC

Listed Building Consent for change of paint colour on front of building at Brew Bar, Market Square, Haltwhistle, NE49 0BL

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Development Management Area Manager (West) referred to the significant debate on the application at the previous meeting and confirmed that some additional information had been circulated to members from the Built Heritage and Design Officer who was in attendance. She stated that answers could be provided in response to the information emailed by the applicant to Members during the question part of the meeting. She confirmed that the Council wanted to work with the applicant who had not been aware that consent had been required when they carried out the work.

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

Mr Sam Jackson, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. He made the following comments:-

- The building had been painted prior to their redecoration.
- Literature from Historic England (page 23, scenario 3): stated “Redecoration with impermeable paints, except where the building is already painted with impermeable paint, is not a like-for-like replication and needs LBC (Listed Building Consent).”
- The Committee needed to be made aware that not enough emphasis had been put on this and needed to be made aware.
- They were disappointed that the current committee report did not include information he had provided, namely a professional building report, supporting literature from Historic England and additional comments.
- The application had been considered as if this was the first time the building had been painted since its original finish which was incorrect and confirmed by a professional.
- It was therefore irrelevant what paint type they had used as the building had already been painted over its original finish.
- Concern that the decision was focused on something which it seemed did not require consent.
- The only issue under debate should be the paint colour. At the previous meeting there was almost unanimous agreement that the building looked great, a view supported by Haltwhistle Town Council and the people of Haltwhistle themselves. This clearly proved a public benefit which far outweighed the ‘less than substantial harm caused.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- Listed building consent had not been obtained previously when the ‘plastic based’ paint had previously been applied. Permission would not be required if the building had been painted for upkeep or maintenance. As permission had not been sought previously, enforcement action could be taken at any time against the current owner of the building.
- It was suggested that due to the delicate nature of stone, the paint would need to be removed by hand with tools. It was acknowledged that it would be challenging, costly and time consuming to remove. ‘Sandblasting’ the front of the building to remove the paint would not be appropriate. The officers were not stonemasons and unable to offer further guidance on the technique for paint removal which would need to be sought by the applicant.
- 3 similar cases had recently been investigated in Haltwhistle with consistent approach regarding enforcement action. One building had been changed back to an appropriate colour and the other was ongoing.
- There was a maximum period of 10 years for enforcement action against planning regulations. There was no maximum time frame for

contraventions of Listed Building rules as action could be taken at any point in time.

- Information regarding complaints leading to enforcement action were confidential.
- The advice from Historic England was that Listed Building Consent was not required for repairs if the same type of paint and same colour were to be used. Permission was required in this case as a different type of paint and different colour had been used and permission had not been obtained.
- If information was provided to officers regarding possible unauthorised paint used on other buildings, they would be investigated. However, if buildings were not listed, they might not have required permission.
- The report provided by the applicant did not specify the type of masonry paint they said had been used of which there were different types. The implication was that acrylic paint had been painted over a layer of acrylic paint.
- Some photographs in the powerpoint slides depicted examples of the damage caused to stonework following application of impermeable paint to other historic buildings where water had collected at vulnerable joints. Moisture behind the paint would vaporise leading to the paint blistering and flaking and further damage from freeze thaw action. Use of impermeable paint could also lead to internal dampness within the building.
- A small number of higher status buildings in the town had been painted in bolder/darker colours. This building had originally been finished with limewash as a traditional approach to protecting masonry from exposure to rainwater and frost damage where poorer quality stone had been used. The building was described as off-white in the listing entry. The grey colour was modern in appearance whereas limewash tended to be off-white or cream or earthy tones from natural based pigments.
- Officers were unaware of sources of grants which the applicant could access. Once a decision on the application was taken, officers would be happy to do what they could do assist the applicant.
- There was photographic evidence which demonstrated that the grey paint was flaking although it was not extensive across the front elevation.
- The damage from the use of permeable paint would be cumulative and take time and was based on scientific knowledge of how materials and buildings reacted.
- If the application was refused, there could be flexibility regarding time limits of enforcement action which had to be reasonable and justified. The timescale for removal of the paint might be longer than usual due to the nature of the work which would be weather dependent.
- The committee had the following options:
 - The application be granted with the existing paint type and colour be approved and retained. Permission would be needed in the future if the colour was to be changed.
 - The application be granted with a condition to remove the paint and reapply a suitable agreed paint within a certain period.
- If Members wished to approve the application, they would need to conclude that the public benefit outweighed the harm identified. If

Members considered that the building was a community asset which contributed to the economic viability of the town, then approval of permission would not necessarily set a precedent when determining other perhaps similar applications.

- Application of additional layers of plastic based paints would likely compound the problem of the stonework not being able to breathe.
- It was thought unlikely that a mineral based paint would adhere or bind to the surface, if applied on top of a plastic based paint.
- Whilst Councillors familiar with the premises believed the building not to have been painted internally, the officers were concerned that as the fabric had been sealed externally with the use of a plastic based paint, it would affect the ability of the building to breathe and increase moisture levels.
- If consent were granted, inclusion of a condition requiring a formal application regarding a change of colour in the future could be possible, although if a plastic based paint was approved once it was suggested that it would be difficult to refuse when considered again.
- If consent was granted, it would be difficult to include an informative regarding future consideration of the removal of the plastic-based paint and assistance. The applicant was present at the meeting and aware of the suggestion about seeking assistance for grants to help him with the cost.

Councillor Hutchinson proposed that Listed Building Consent be granted, contrary to the officer's recommendation. He discussed with officers whether the wording of conditions could be delegated to the Director of Planning in conjunction with the Chair or whether the application should be 'minded to approve' but deferred for conditions to be approved by the committee.

The Development Management Area Manager (West) reminded the committee that this was a retrospective application and therefore any conditions would be few and not be unduly onerous. This was also the second time the application had been to committee.

The Solicitor referred to the test that any conditions had to be reasonable and proportionate. She also asked the Councillor to state the reasons for his proposal which was contrary to the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Hutchinson proposed that Listed Building Consent be granted with the wording of conditions to be delegated to the Director of Planning in conjunction with the Chair. He stated that he was concerned that the removal of the paint would cause damage to the building and be a detriment to the town if the cost of the work caused the business to close. He also stated that he proposed that the existing grey colour be approved and not changed.

The Development Management Area Manager (West) explained that if members were of the view that the less than substantial harm to the heritage asset was outweighed by the benefit to the public as the premises were an asset to the community and they were concerned that the cost of work could affect the economic viability of the business and thereafter the town.

Councillor Sharp seconded Councillor Hutchinson's proposal that consent be granted as it was supported by residents and the Town Council and the only objection was from Building Conservation.

Whilst some members were concerned about the damage to the stonework if the applicant was required to remove the paint, others did not think the colour was suitable but did not want to compound the problem with another layer of paint. Reference was also made to the reasons for conservation area designations and listed building status and that these should be upheld.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

FOR: 3; AGAINST: 9; ABSTENTION: 0.

The motion failed.

Councillor Dale proposed the officer's recommendation that Listed Building Consent be refused which was seconded by Councillor Fairless-Aitken.

In answer to a question, the Development Management Area Manager (West) stated that conditions could not be included if the decision was that consent be refused. However, officers were aware of the views expressed by members and would ensure that the applicant was given sufficient time for the work to be carried out. She also suggested that in response to concerns regarding possible damage to the stonework from the paint removal, the applicant could be asked to work a sample area to enable the position to be monitored and reviewed.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

FOR: 9; AGAINST: 3; ABSTENTION: 0.

RESOLVED that Listed Building Consent be **REFUSED** for the reason set out in the report.

69. 21/03549/FUL

Retrospective planning permission is sought for the construction of one residential dwelling, with associated car parking and garden space, at 11 The Forge in Gilsland

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and confirmed that there were no updates.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the following information was provided:-

- The rear boundary fence had been adjusted with the repositioning of the building and was also located 1.5 metres further south, in comparison to the approved plans.
- If the boundary was moved 1.5 metres further north back to the original position, it was considered that there would be insufficient outdoor amenity space. The committee were required to consider the application as it was submitted and could not change the application site by reducing the garden.
- The officers were unable to comment on the period of time between the plans being approved in 2015 and the submission of the application in 2021. The Parish Council had objected to the application. The Director of Planning and the Chair and Vice Chair had considered whether the application should be considered by committee under the Scheme of Delegation.
- The County Archeologist and Historic England were in agreement, after further consultation, that the development did not encroach into the Hadrian Wall scheduled monument although it was in the buffer zone and recommended removal of permitted development rights.
- The error was made by the developer/builder and not the current applicant/owner who had bought the property in good faith. However, the current owner would become liable if enforcement action was taken. The remedy would be for the property to be demolished and rebuilt.
- Building regulation would not normally involve cross reference of approved plans associated with planning permission. Searches in the conveyancing process would reveal if there had been any enforcement action.

Councillor Kennedy proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Fairless-Aitken.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

70. 21/03984/FUL

Planning permission is sought for the siting of one glamping pod for holiday accommodation purposes on land to the south of Hill Top, Lambley

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and confirmed that there were no updates.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- Whilst the site was located on land between two residential dwellings, it was outside a settlement boundary in an isolated location which was classed as being in the open countryside.
- Whilst former Tynedale policies were supportive of tourism development, this application needed to be considered following adoption of the Northumberland Local Plan in March 2022. This application site was not now considered to be an accessible location, it was away from a settlement with no footpaths or public transport therefore tourism development in this location was considered to be unsustainable.
- Caselaw considered whether buildings (with wheels) required planning permission if they were capable of being moved. Caravans permanently sited in the same location for occupation required permission.
- Permission may have been granted for similar structures located nearby, if they had been determined prior to adoption of the new Northumberland Local Plan.
- The site was not in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The application site was located approximately 2.9 kilometers (as the crow flies) from Lambley.

Councillor Morphet proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation to refuse the application which was seconded by Councillor Stewart.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** permission for the reasons outlined in the report.

71. 22/00236/LBC

Listed Building Consent to install 18 solar panels in 2no. rows of 9no. to the entire southeast facing roofscape, which is the front/principal elevation of the property known as Dawson Place Hall, Allendale, NE47 9PP

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and confirmed that there were no updates.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- It was considered that the 18 solar panels, which would cover the whole of the south east facing roofscape, would be extremely visible and would cause too much harm in the Conservation Area.
- It was likely that more applications of this nature would be considered in the future and each application would be considered on its own merits. An application if sensitively sited on a second roof which was not on the principal elevation, may be supported.

- This application had been referred to the Committee due to the support given by Allendale Parish Council.
- It was appreciated that alternative energy sources would be difficult to be located or approved at this particular location, but officers could not recommend approval where the measures would cause harm to the listed building. They would also not enhance the distinctiveness of the conservation area, contrary to Policy ENV 9.

Councillor Kennedy proposed that Listed Building Consent be granted, contrary to the officer's recommendation, the wording of conditions be delegated to the Director of Planning in conjunction with the Chair. He was of the opinion that the public benefit to the environment, reduction of CO2 emissions in line with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency outweighed the less than substantial harm. This was seconded by Councillor Horncastle who suggested that the building was shielded by the adjacent library.

Members of the Committee enquired whether officers had any photographs of the proposed solar panels as some panels were less intrusive and would blend in with the slate roof. Unfortunately, only the drawings supplied with the plans were available and it would not be possible to specify use of a less visually intrusive panel.

Some of the Councillors understood the difficulties experienced by occupants of old buildings which were difficult to insulate and were looking at alternative methods of powering and heating their homes which were 'greener'.

The local member believed that solar panels had been approved elsewhere in the town and but perhaps not on a listed building. Sources of renewable energy were also supported within the Allendale Neighbourhood Plan. This dilemma would be repeated in the future and it would be desirable for the issue to be addressed via supplementary planning guidance and a holistic approach.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

FOR: 4; AGAINST: 8; ABSTENTION: 1.

The motion failed.

Councillor Stewart proposed the officer's recommendation that Listed Building Consent be refused which was seconded by Councillor Scott.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

FOR: 8; AGAINST: 4; ABSTENTION: 1.

RESOLVED that Listed Building Consent be **REFUSED** for the reason set out in the report.

72. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

The report provided information on the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Councillor Horncastle left the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5.59 p.m. until 6.11 p.m.

LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

73. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

74. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING

Philip Soderquest, Service Director - Housing and Public Protection, outlined the report which updated members of the service provision for residents who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, in Northumberland including key data and the services available for people sleeping rough. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the signed minutes).

He explained the duties placed on local authorities by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness reduction Act 2017. Consultation earlier in 2022 had resulted in a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 – 2024 which identified 5 priorities to meet the Government's ambition that no one should be sleeping rough by 2027. The strategy was to be presented to Cabinet for approval and adoption.

The Northumberland Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 implemented recommendations of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 with regard to statutory duties for safe accommodation and support.

The committee were informed that there had been an increase in the number of applications to the Homelessness and Housing Options Service from 767 in 2020/21 to 5,408 in 2021/22 due to a change in the way cases were recorded on the system. The report provided a breakdown of the reasons for homelessness and current Council provision for temporary and emergency accommodation.

In answers to questions, he provided the following information:

- Officers were working with colleagues in planning to arrest the numbers of properties changing use from residential to Airbnb accommodation which was more financially lucrative to owners but was impacting on the number of residential properties available for let. They were working with partners

to increase housing supply, including building new Council properties, although costs had significantly increased in recent years and impacted on what could be delivered.

- Approximately 40-50 council properties were sold each year under Right to Buy legislation.
- The decent homes standard had applied to properties in the social rented sector since the early 2000's. This was under review and could be required to be met by private rented properties in the future, which could further impact on housing supply.
- Often cases involved residents with complex needs and therefore the service worked in partnership with organisations such as Changing Lives to ensure that tenancies were sustainable.
- They had an excellent working relationship with Advance Northumberland who had made brought back a number of properties back into residential use with hopefully more available in the future.
- Eviction was treated as the last option by Housing providers, with the Homelessness and Housing Options Service working with all services to prevent homelessness. Length of occupation of temporary accommodation varied but residents should be moved to other accommodation.
- The Council would be unable to provide further accommodation to tenants if possession had been sought due to rent arrears, until such time as any arrears had been cleared. To assist those seeking housing in the private rented sector, the council could, in specific circumstances assist by offering "paper" bond under the rent deposit guarantee scheme to other landlords.
- The Council's duty to provide accommodation depended on whether a tenant had become intentionally or unintentionally homeless. If this was a consequence of their own anti-social behaviour, they would be provided with advice.
- There had been 5 successful placements for rough sleepers since May 2021. There had been 20 referrals but not all accepted assistance as it was a lifestyle choice for some individuals.
- An assessment of an individual's needs was undertaken for each case of homelessness with involvement by the police and other agencies if identified at risk.

The Director and the Homelessness and Housing Options Service were thanked for the assistance given to complex and demanding cases.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

75. PETITIONS

This item was to:

a) Receive any new petitions:

It was reported that the e-petition to Request a speed limit on a section of the C234 between Warden Bridge and Fourstones had been closed and a report had been requested for the meeting on 14 March 2023.

b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

There were none to consider.

c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:

i. Peth Head, Hexham

Robin McCartney, Highways Infrastructure Manager, reported that additional 20mph repeater signs had been erected and it was hoped these would provide a reminder to motorists of the need to drive at 20mph.

A further speed survey was also to be arranged as the data obtained in the previous survey was incomplete due to the equipment being damaged.

ii. Allendale Road, Hexham

Robin McCartney, Highways Infrastructure Manager, reported that since the petition had been discussed in March, officers had made several visits to the site and had identified a number of "features" which could easily be incorporated into a forthcoming planned maintenance scheme on Allendale Road. This had been discussed with local councilors and included:

- Proposals to raise the existing pedestrian crossing on Allendale Road near the Whetstone Bridge Road junction to encourage reduced speeds.
- Provision of a 'raised junction' at the Hextol Terrace junction, to reduce speeds and improve visibility for pedestrians wishing to cross the road and for motorists exiting Hextol Terrace.
- Provision of dropped kerbs at the existing bus parking area on Allendale Road which would improve access for those pedestrians travelling from the Causey Hill Road area.

In answer to a question, he expected the work to be undertaken in April/May as they had been unable to get permits sooner.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

76. DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY INFRASTRUCTURE ACCELERATION PROJECT

Gillian Cowell, Business and Community Engagement Officer, iNorthumberland Programme, attended the meeting to share information with Members about the Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Acceleration (DCIA) project. (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes).

The presentation outlined the following information:

- The main aim of the project was to drive improved connectivity, including 5G, to transform the public sector in the North East and help address deprivation, inequality, poor health outcomes, and drive economic growth, sustainability and inward investment.
- This was one of 8 pilot projects funded by the Department of Culture Media and Sport.
- Circa £0.5 million had been awarded to North of Tyne Combined Authority, Northumberland County Council, North Tyneside Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council, Sunderland City Council.
- The project intended to make LA asset information (including streetlights, public buildings, CCTV columns and land) visible to commercial operators using a digital asset management platform. It also had potential to be expanded to include other partners and bus shelters and other street furniture.
- They hoped to streamline the process, including use of a standardised approach and agreements using ECC compliant guidelines for calculating the commercial value of assets for rent. This would make it easier and quicker for operators to know the assets available and types of equipment the assets could take.

She confirmed that it was intended that the scheme would be sustainable and used beyond the initial period of the project.

- The project was to facilitate improved connectivity across the north east and where possible include 4G where this was currently not available.
- A written response would be circulated from the project officer regarding information on use of 5G and public health.
- It was believed there would be protocols for the sharing of assets if more than one provider was interested. This would be checked when officers met with DCMS the following week.

RESOLVED that the information be received.

77. LOCAL SERVICES UPDATE

Members received the following updates from the Area Managers from Neighbourhood Services and Technical Services:

Neighbourhood Services:

- Grass cutting had finished for the year with leaf clearance hot spots being prioritised by both grounds maintenance and cleansing staff. The team were also responding to reported areas of concern as soon as possible as they were a safety issue to prevent them becoming a trip hazard when wet.
- The areas around the war memorials had been tidied the previous week prior to the Remembrance Day services.

- The winter cut back of shrubs and hedges was underway.
- Some of the Grounds and Cleansing team were part of the winter services rota with other staff assisting with footpath gritting when required.
- Waste collection services were currently running well and fully staffed after problems experienced earlier in the year with a shortage of HGV drivers.
- There were 3 weeks remaining of the garden waste collection service. Refuse collections would be a day late in the weeks commencing 26th December and 2nd January, due to the bank holidays. Existing rounds continued to be reviewed with houses being built and additional take up of the garden waste collection service with collections in some areas now being passed to depots in the southeast.
- The interval between collections for the glass recycling trial was to be extended to 6 weeks after the collection in January, as capacity in the bins and vehicles identified that this was feasible and would significantly reduce costs. A text alert service was available to receive reminders about collection dates if householders subscribed. Participation rates and yields would be closely monitored and returned to 4-weekly if negatively impacted.

It was agreed that clarification would be obtained after the meeting regarding charges for the disposal of rubble at Household Waste Recovery Centres.

Technical Services:

- Highway inspections were up to date in the Tynedale area with 5,997 actionable defects recorded over the last 3 months and 96.4% repaired in accordance with the policy.
- The main slurry sealing work had been completed before the temperature had dropped and preparatory work had commencing ahead of the 2023 season.
- The gully tanker was continuing its routine cleansing programme with the dedicated drainage gang and JCB renewing gully pots, cross drains and ditching in known problem areas.
- A number of LTP surfacing works had been completed and it was anticipated that the U & C investment projects in the west would be completed before the end of the financial year.
- Carriageway permanent repairs refurbishment / patching had been undertaken at 5 locations out of the areas budget allocation where there were concerns regarding the extent of deterioration.
- A number of safety schemes and other works had also been completed.
- An update on the County wide winter services arrangements had been circulated electronically with no change to service standards or the winter maintenance policy since the previous year. The same roads would be treated within the specified timescales by 105 members of staff with assistance from colleagues in Neighbourhood Services and farmers. The 3-shift rota had commenced on 31 October. Grit bins and heaps were replenished throughout the season
- All requests and issues regarding winter services during snow and ice events were to be directed via the Contact Centre on 0345 600 6400.

During out of hours periods calls were transferred to the Fire and Rescue Control Room who would contact relevant members of staff on duty at that time.

The following information was provided in response to issues raised by Members:

- Weather stations including road sensors had been upgraded during 2022.
- Some dry test runs with the gritters had taken place in the last few weeks as part of the winter preparations. A query regarding unexpected use of the gritters would be investigated on provision of the date, time and route.
- Grit heaps would be located next to main junctions on the A68.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

78. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

At 7.15 pm it was agreed that standing orders be suspended to continue the meeting beyond the 3-hour limit.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, standing orders be suspended and the meeting continue over the 3-hour limit.

79. LOCAL SERVICES – HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

David Laux, Head of Technical Services, Robin McCartney, Highways Infrastructure Manager and Kris Westerby, Highways Delivery Manager were in attendance to provide an overview on the operation and challenges of Highways Maintenance. (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes.)

The presentation included:

- Reference to the Highway Law on Maintenance - section 41(1) Highways Act 1980 "...duty to maintain the highway."
- Definition of highways assets
- Processes followed to manage and maintain the safety of the asset and minimise public liability exposure.
- Definition of functional road hierarchy and inspection frequencies.
- Assessment of defects and repair response times where hazardous criteria met.
- Management of footways and cycleways, bridges, drainage, gully data/monitoring, other assets (street lighting, traffic lights, signs and lines, safety fences, soft landscaping).
- Current performance data.

- Annual budgets in excess of £25 million with additional funding from DfT Challenge Fund and additional capital funding for U and C footway programme etc.
- New equipment and innovative new systems to improve the service and provide feedback to members of the public.

Members expressed their appreciation to the officers for the informative presentation and work undertaken by everyone in the Highways team. It was suggested that it would be beneficial if there were a highways maintenance video similar to the winter readiness film.

The following issues were highlighted by Councillors:

- Insurance claims had peaked in 2018/2019 with 250 claims received within a 6-month period following damage to the highway network as a result of the extreme winter weather from the 'Beast from the East'. Officers worked closely with colleagues in the insurance section and Zurich Insurance to provide evidence regarding inspections with many claims successfully defended. The amount of insurance paid out in relation to any specific claim where the Council was found to be liable depended on the type of case and varied from small amounts for say a puncture to larger amounts for those with serious injuries following an accident.
- The new technology being developed for fault reporting would be application based which would appeal to the younger demographic.

RESOLVED that the presentation be received.

80. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated. (A copy is enclosed with the minutes.)

Members were invited to email any requests to the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer between meetings.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

81. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting (planning only) would be held on Tuesday 13 December 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____