

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

At a remote meeting of the **Cabinet** held on Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

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

CABINET MEMBERS

Dodd, R.	Riddle, J.R.
Jones, V.	Watson, J.G.
Oliver, N.	Wearmouth, R.
Renner-Thompson, G.	

OTHER MEMBERS

Flux, B.	Pattison, W.
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Angus, K.	Executive Director of HR/OD and Deputy Chief Executive
Aviston, S.	Head of School Organisation and Resources
Baker, M.	Service Director – Climate Change, Business Intelligence and Performance
Bradley, N.	Service Director – Strategic Commissioning and Finance
Hadfield, K.	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Hand, C.	Executive Director of Finance
Lally, D.	Chief Executive
Lancaster, H.	Principal Solicitor
McLoughlin, J.	Executive Director: Regeneration, Commercial and Economy
McEvoy-Carr, C.	Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services
O'Farrell, R.	Interim Executive Director: Place

Ch.'s Initials.....

Roll, J.

Head of Democratic and Electoral
Services

Willis, J.

Interim S151 Officer

152. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 12 January 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

153. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Budget 2021-22 and MTFP 2021-24

The purpose of the report was to enable the Cabinet to make formal budget recommendations to the County Council.

The report provided the Revenue Budget for 2021-22 and Revenue Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2021-24 and the Capital Budget for 2021-22 and Capital MTFP to 2021-24, following the Government's Spending Round Announcement 2020 (SR 2020) on 25 November 2020, and the publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on 17 December 2020. Members were asked to note that there may need to be some revisions to the figures following receipt of the Government's February 2021 Final Local Government Finance Settlement figures. It was proposed that any changes to the figures as a result of this announcement which impacted on the Budget 2021-22 and MTFP 2021-24 were delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.

The report of the CSEG OSC had been circulated.

The Leader paid tribute to all Council staff who had kept services going in very challenging circumstances, and this year there would be no compulsory redundancies. He also referred to the wider consultation process on the budget and the interactive public Q&A session.

Councillor Oliver thanked members of the Finance team for their work on the budget. It was planned to spend an additional £21m in the next financial year and the budget was on target in the current financial year, which was pleasing. There had been useful feedback from the public on the budget, which had identified that additional funding should be spent on adult, children's and local services which had been incorporated into the budget. He commended the budget to members.

Councillor Watson asked for comparator information with the LA7 which Councillor Oliver agreed to provide.

Councillor Renner Thompson referred to the capital investment of £71.6m into the school estate through new builds, with an overall investment of

£89m, which was unprecedented across the country and which would bring about long term benefits.

Councillor Riddle felt this was a very positive budget with increased spending on the previous year, whilst at the same time finding more efficient ways of doing things. He felt it was a good budget for both residents and business.

Councillor Oliver referred to the Scrutiny report which had been circulated. All Cabinet Members had attended the Scrutiny meeting.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be made to the County Council:

1. Note that the figures contained within the Budget 2021-22 within Appendix 1 are based on the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement of 17 December 2020. Members are requested to note the Revenue Support Grant of £10.508 million in each year of the MTFP, contained within Appendix 1.
2. Approve the revenue budget for 2021-22 including, the budget balancing targets totalling £8.172 million contained within Appendix 1.
3. Note the Revenue MTFP covering the period 2021-24 detailed within Appendix 1 and the requirement to deliver budget balancing measures in 2022-23 of £10.542 million and 2023-24 of £12.527 million.
4. Note the estimated retained Business Rates and the Top-Up grant funding to be received by the Council for 2021-22 of £82.669 million and £173.556 million over the remaining period of the MTFP.
5. Note the estimated deficit on Collection Fund Business Rates balances of £21.427 million.
6. Note the estimated receipt of Rural Services Delivery Grant of £2.456 million for 2021-22 and the indicative allocation of £2.456 million for both 2022-23 and 2023-24.
7. Note the estimated receipt of the New Homes Bonus of £4.303 million for 2021-22 and the indicative allocation of £1.337 million for 2022-23.
8. Note the total estimated receipt of Improved Better Care Fund grant (including Winter Pressure funding) of £12.128 million for 2021-22 and the indicative allocations of £12.128 million for both 2022-23 and 2023-24.
9. Note the receipt of Social Care funding of £9.534 million for 2021-22 and the indicative allocations of £9.534 million for both 2022-23 and 2023-24.
10. Note the indicative receipt of non-recurrent Covid-19 Support Grant Funding of £13.087 million in 2021-22 and note the intended use of the grant. This comprises of:
 - £8.509 million Covid-19 Support Grant, and
 - £4.578 million Local Council Tax Support Grant.
11. Note the receipt of non-recurrent Lower Tier Services Grant of £0.429 million in 2021-22.
12. Approve a 1.99% increase in Council Tax for 2021-22, noting that this is in line with the Government's assumptions regarding the Council's Core Spending Power: and, within the Government's referendum limit of 2.00%.

13. Note that the MTFP 2021-24 includes a 1.99% annual increase in Council Tax for 2022-23 and 2023-24, and, that an estimate of annual tax base growth has been included.
14. Note the non-collection rate for Council Tax purposes has been increased to 1.00% for 2021-22 (0.70% 2020-21).
15. Note the estimated deficit on the Collection Fund Council Tax balance of £2.376 million which will be recovered over the three years of the plan.
16. Approve a 1.75% increase in Council Tax for 2021-22 for use on Adult Social Care services; raising an additional £3.305 million to support the Budget 2021-22.
17. Approve the remainder of the 3%, an increase of 1.25% in Council Tax to be introduced in 2022-23 for use on Adult Social Care services; raising an additional £2.616 million to support the Budget 2022-23.
18. Note that the MTFP assumes no future increases in council tax for use on Adult Social Care services beyond 2022-23.
19. Note the schedule of Service Specific grants of £247.195 million contained within Appendix 2.
20. Approve the recurrent growth and pressures of £8.519 million and the additional revenue costs associated with the capital programme of £2.805 million for 2021-22; and, note the growth and pressures of £1.708 million in 2022-23 and £1.654 million in 2023-24, and the additional revenue costs associated with the capital programme of £4.058 million in 2022-23 and £6.366 million in 2023-24, included within Appendices 1, 3 and 4.
21. Approve the non-recurrent pressures of £1.325 million for 2021-22 and note the non-recurrent pressures of £0.565 million for 2022-23 included within Appendix 5.
22. Approve the use of the Strategic Management Reserve of £4.862 million 2021-22, £2.205 million 2022-23, and £1.640 million 2023-24, as follows:
 - non-recurrent pressures of £1.325 million for 2021-22, and £0.565 million in 2022-23 (as detailed within Appendix 5),
 - the Active Northumberland Management fee of up to £1.000 million per annum for the three years of the plan,
 - delayed receipt of investment income of £1.025 million in 2021-22 and note that £0.256 million is forecast to be repaid into the reserve in 2022- 23 and 2023-24 in this respect, and
 - Collection fund Deficit (not subject to Government Grant relief):
 - Business Rates; £0.244 million in 2021-22, and £0.342 million in each year, 2022-23 and 2023-24; and,
 - Council Tax; £1.268 million in 2021-22, and £0.554 million in each year, 2022-23 and 2023-24.
23. Approve the use of the Invest to Save Reserve to fund the costs of the Improvement and Innovation Team of £1.196 million per annum for the three years of the plan.
24. Approve the use of the Collection Fund Smoothing reserve of £20.499 million in 2021-22, to part fund the 2020-21 forecast deficit of the Business Rates aspect of the Collection Fund.
25. Approve the Inflation Schedule for 2021-22 totalling £10.974 million detailed in Appendix 6.

26. Approve the identified budget balancing measures contained in Appendix 7 of £8.172 million for 2021-22.
27. Note the Corporate Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 8.
28. Note the 2021-22 budgets by service area detailed in Appendix 9.
29. Note the Summary of the Reserves and Provisions contained within Appendix 10.
30. Approve the contribution to reserves of £8.509 million in 2021-22 for Covid- 19 grant funding, to be used in relation to pressures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic as they occur. It is also recommended that authority to utilise this grant is delegated to the Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Portfolio holder for Corporate Services.
31. Approve the transfer to the General Fund Reserve of £0.540 million in 2021- 22.
32. Note the receipt of Dedicated Schools Grant of £146.181 million in 2021-22; and note the revised allocation of £139.315 million for 2020-21. This is following the conversion of six schools to academy status during 2020-21.
33. Agree the Housing Revenue Account 2021-22 budget as detailed within Appendix 11, which will reduce the balance on the HRA reserve from £28.264 million at 31 March 2020, to £19.023 million at 31 March 2022; and note the indicative budgets to 2023-24 which will reduce the balance on the HRA reserve to £16.180 million. This will fund, alongside additional borrowing and grant funding, a Housing Investment Programme over the period to 2023-24 of £45.980 million of new investment in council housing.
34. Note that from 1 April 2021 in line with the Rent Standard for rent setting for Council tenants, the budget detailed in Appendix 11 assumes that rents and service charges will rise by the Consumer Price Index of 0.50% plus 1.00% for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
35. Approve the increase of 1.50% for Housing rents from 1 April 2021.
36. Note the indicative 30-year Housing Revenue Account business plan as detailed within Appendix 11.
37. Approve the Capital Strategy 2021-22 to 2023-24 contained within Appendix 12.
38. Approve the revised Capital Programme as detailed within Appendix 13; and, the projects highlighted within the main body of the report which will complete after 2023-24.
39. Approve the delegation of the detail of the final Local Transport Programme, any Pothole and Challenge Fund Grant received and any subsequent in year amendments to the Interim Executive Director Local Services and the Leader of the Council.
40. Approve the delegation of the detail of the capital allocation for highway maintenance investment in U and C roads and footways to the Interim Executive Director of Local Services and the Leader of the Council.
41. Agree delegation to Cabinet to approve individual projects which propose to utilise the flexibilities of capital receipts.
42. Approve the Prudential Indicators based on the proposed Capital Programme detailed within Appendix 14.
43. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy detailed in Appendix 15.

44. Approve the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-22 detailed in Appendix 16.
45. Approve the Revenues and Benefits Policies for 2021-22 contained within Appendix 17 and note the proposed changes to the Council Tax Discounts, Corporate Debt, Local Welfare Assistance and Rate Relief policies.
46. Approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2021-22 at Appendix 19 and note the Equality Impact Assessment.
47. Approve a delegation to amend the Budget 2021-22 and MTFP in light of any changes as a result of the final Local Government Finance Settlement to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Corporate Services; and
48. the report of the CSEG OSC be noted.

154. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2022/2023 Academic Year

The report informed Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation on School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2022/23 Academic Year as required by the School Admissions Code 2014. Approval (determination) of these admission arrangements was also sought (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A, along with the report of the FACS OSC circulated at the meeting).

Councillor Renner Thompson advised that this an annual statutory report. No changes were proposed to the current arrangements and there had been no comments from the consultation period.

Members noted that Scrutiny had supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet note the outcomes of the six week consultation undertaken in relation to the Council's proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2022/23 that took place between 19th November 2020 and 15th January 2021;
- (b) Cabinet approve the proposed co-ordinated admission scheme for all maintained schools and academies, as provided in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (c) Cabinet approve (determine) the proposed admission arrangements, including proposed oversubscription criteria and proposed admission numbers for First and Primary community and voluntary and controlled schools, as provided in Appendix 2 of this report;

- (d) Cabinet approve (determine) the proposed admission arrangements, including proposed over subscription criteria and proposed admission numbers, for Middle, High and Secondary community and voluntary controlled schools, including sixth forms, as provided in Appendix 3 of this report; and
- (e) the report of the FACS OSC be noted.

155. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

Northumberland Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23

The Climate Change Action Plan set out the actions that the Council will take to create a net-zero Northumberland by 2030, whilst also seeking to attract green investment into the county and generate more green jobs.

The Action Plan focused on the priorities for the next two years (2021/22, 2022/23) alongside the work required to develop the strategies and deliver the projects needed from 2023. Fundamental to the delivery of this Action Plan will be a county wide change in mindset and behaviours, which will only be possible through effective and far reaching engagement and partnerships with residents, communities, businesses, visitors and central government. The Action Plan builds on and supersedes the previous Climate Commitment Action Plan 2020-21 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

The Leader thanked all the groups and individuals who had fed into the Action Plan. The Steering Group met regularly and the first Q&A session had been held recently which had been a great success, with another one planned for March.

Matt Baker then delivered a presentation to members covering the main points of the report. Members made a number of comments including:-

- Councillor Watson welcomed the report on this very important topic and felt that getting the public on board would be key to its success. In particular, children and young people would be very receptive.
- Councillor Dodd commented that he had experience of hydroelectric operations which he could share.
- Councillor Riddle commented that superfast car chargers were essential in rural areas. The infrastructure needed to be there for these but Northern Powergrid did not have the capacity for the superchargers yet. Matt advised that he had a meeting with Northern Powergrid the following day and agreed that there was a need to sync their delivery plans with what the Council was aiming to do.
- In response to a query from Councillor Oliver regarding the opportunities for a green recovery and green jobs, Matt advised that £3.4m had been awarded in green home grant, aimed at increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy sources into homes where the income was less than £20,000. The Council was working with Eon

to help build some of the supply chain for this which would have a direct impact on around 50 jobs. There was further funding available depending on the successful execution of the first part of the programme. This was one specific example.

- Councillor Wearmouth commented there was a lot of work also going into this from the Regeneration Team to get to the milestone of being net zero by 2030. He very much welcomed the progress which had been made.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be noted and approved:

1. Northumberland County Council remain committed to a net-zero Northumberland by 2030 and that achieving this target is driven by a strategic intent to:
 - a) Achieve the Climate Change target,
 - b) Continue to attract Green Investment into the county,
 - c) Continue to grow the green economy,
 - d) Create new jobs.
2. The scenarios modelled as a potential route to net zero and the implications of these:-
 - a) 709.1 ktCO₂ will need to be removed from Northumberland's annual CO₂ emissions by 2030 in order to become net-zero.
 - b) Achieving this through the scenarios modelled in this plan will require an inward investment into the county of around £1.6bn over the next nine years.
 - c) This level of investment in the scenarios modelled in this plan could create up to 11,000 local green jobs.
 - d) We will proactively work with national government, our strategic partners, local and national businesses as well as the financial services sector to access relevant funding opportunities and attract green investment partners.
 - e) Beyond 2030, the Council understands that, in order to realise the national ambition of a net-zero UK by 2050, locations such as Northumberland which enjoy large areas of natural resources, will have to become carbon-negative in order to compensate for major urban conurbations which are unlikely to be able to achieve carbon neutrality themselves. The council will therefore continue to align itself with national objectives and support the UK's target of a net-zero country by 2050 by continuing to pursue the strategies set out in this plan beyond 2030.
3. Progress of the activities and projects completed and / or started in 2020-21 including that we are on track to reduce Council emissions by 50% by 2025.
4. The Climate Change Action Plan includes a focus on both enabling activities (Policy, Engagement and Partnerships) and delivery activities (Heating; Transport; Generation; Sequestration; Waste Reduction).

5. The key Policy recommendations detailed in this report:-
- a) Implementation of the carbon impact assessment.
 - b) Implementation of an enhanced corporate social responsibility policy.
 - c) Introduction of Carbon Literacy Training for all Members and Staff.
Exploration of opportunities to incentivise staff to make more climate-positive actions corporately and for themselves.
6. The key Engagement and Partnership recommendations:-
- a) Establishing Community Climate Champions, working with Residents, Communities, Businesses, Visitors, Staff and the Third Sector.
 - b) Continuation of the Free Tree Scheme, with the ambition to give a free tree to every household in Northumberland.
 - c) Developing and launching the Carbon Footprint behavioural change programme.
 - d) Holding regular virtual and in-person (COVID permitting) events with Residents, Communities, Businesses, Visitors and Staff.
 - e) Continue the work already underway to further develop key Strategic Partnerships with Public Sector organisations (e.g. Borderlands) and the Business Community.
7. The key Heating Action Area recommendations detailed in the report:-
- a) Working to maximise the reach of the Blyth and Cramlington district heat networks following techno-economic feasibility reports and ensure the best economic, social and environmental credentials for the scheme. It will be particularly key to deliver the maximum carbon savings physically possible through the scheme along with realising the social benefits in terms of reducing fuel poverty and improving public health.
 - b) Working with central government to secure funding in order that the full extent of the Blyth and Cramlington heat networks can be established and realised.
 - c) Working with central government to secure funding to assess the potential of low carbon district heat networks in all Northumberland's main towns.
 - d) Supporting the implementation of heat pumps across the county through funding streams that we can access or that we can support residents to access.
 - e) Where district heat networks are not an option, Northumberland County Council will seek to utilise the following heat hierarchy to install/replace heating within its own estate and encourage Residents, Communities and Businesses to follow the council's lead;
 1. Ground Source Heat Pumps.
 2. Air Source Heat Pumps.
 3. Electric (other).
 4. Biomass (where appropriate).
 5. Natural gas or developed gas blends.
 6. Other fossil fuels (oil/LPG).

- f) Identifying and supporting ways to encourage and incentivise Residents and Businesses to utilise the most modern insulation techniques and technologies to make properties more energy efficient.

8. The Transport Action Area recommendations detailed in the report:-

- a) Decarbonising transport across the county is crucial to achieving the 2030 net zero target.
- a) A commitment to update the LTP Implementation Plan giving greater emphasis to schemes that support the goal of carbon reduction, as well as improving quality of life and a healthy natural environment, whilst still working within the overall LTP strategy goals. Between 2021-2023, the Council will explore opportunities to fund active travel schemes, particularly those identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans.
- b) the Council will publish an online tool in 2021 that allows residents to register their interest in cycle storage, creating a demand map for potential future storage sites.
- c) When appropriate, depending on the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions, the Council will publish an online tool that will allow residents to register their interest in joining a car club.
- d) To act as a leading example for the county, between 2021-2023 depending on the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions, the Council will seek to introduce its own car sharing incentive for staff travel.
- e) The Council will publish an online tool in 2021 that will allow residents to register their interest in having an on-street EV charger. This will create a map of potential demand and implications on the power grid which will then be further explored through work with external partners.
- f) The Council is committed to continuing to maintain its above average number of EV chargers per capita through expansion of its own EV charging network together with attracting commercial EV charging companies to install facilities within the County. The Council will collaborate with private business to increase charging facilities at Northumberland workplaces and will promote funding opportunities, such as the Workplace Charging Scheme.
- g) Continue the Fleet Replacement Programme and look for opportunities to accelerate this programme include the use of novel and emerging technologies, especially where this can stimulate economic growth for the county.

9. the Energy Generation Action Area recommendations detailed in the report:-

- a) To continue supporting renewable technology where installations are technically possible, economically feasible, environmentally advantageous and socially acceptable: including Wind; Solar and Hydro.
- b) Undertake an evaluation of lighting across the whole estate, including maintained schools, and roll out LED lighting across the entire estate by 2023. A separate detailed case will be made for the resource to undertake this exercise in due course.

- c) Northumberland County Council commits to reviewing the solar energy generation potential of all its car parks by the end of 2023. Where an economic case can be made which is socially acceptable and technologically achievable a pipeline of solar car port projects will be developed for installation commencing in the 2023-24 financial year.
- d) Northumberland County Council will explore opportunities to increase the number of onshore wind turbines in the Blyth estuary in line with the other opportunities being explored through Future High Streets Fund, Blyth Town Deal, Energy Parks Development and Port of Blyth's ongoing investment.

10. The Natural Resource Based Carbon Sequestration Action Area recommendations detailed in the report:-

- a) Through the work of its Woodland Creation Group, Northumberland County Council will investigate and propose options for a more ambitious reforestation/afforestation scheme beyond the initially proposed 1,000,000 trees. This will consider economic, environmental and social benefits and seek funding for this.
- b) Working with Defra (including as part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy pilot) and Borderlands (including as part of the Natural Capital Innovation Zone).
- c) Exploring opportunities to enhance carbon sequestration through Peat Restoration.
- d) Exploring opportunities with landowners and land users communities and the Private Sector to ensure Northumberland gets the maximum benefits from new schemes like the Environment Land Management Scheme (ELMS) and emerging Green / Climate related financial instruments.

11. The Waste Action Area recommendations detailed in the report:-

- a) Undertaking a comprehensive baselining exercise to determine the carbon emissions associated with the current waste management services.
- b) Completing the review of the kerbside glass recycling pilot and report the findings to Cabinet and determine the costs, benefits and funding streams available for its potential roll-out.
- c) Identifying the implications of legislative changes to the council's waste services arising from the finalisation of the Government's national waste strategy and develop implementation plans including, where appropriate, funding bids to deliver these new obligations.
- d) Ensuring any planned changes to waste management deliver a positive contribution to reducing carbon emissions, whilst taking into account environmental, financial, legal, operational and technical constraints.

156. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING AND FINANCE

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 on 6 January 2021 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix C).

156.1 Car Parking Improvement Programme: Morpeth Goose Hill School Site

The Leader welcomed the report and acknowledged that the site conditions made it a difficult and expensive one to develop. However, this was the only site available to develop for car parking, which was essential to support business and visitors. It would include electric vehicle charging points.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve an additional allocation of £1,723,154 from the proposed £10,377,000 overall capital provision for parking improvements included in the 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Plan to enable the construction of a new 140 space car park on the site of the former Goose Hill School in Morpeth.

156.2 Solar PV

Members welcomed this proposal in the context of both the budget report and the climate change report just considered. The proposal would contribute to the aim of making the leisure centres self sufficient, benefitting both users and the Council and it was felt to be a really good scheme.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the capital budget requirement of £150,000 for installation of Solar PV panels at the new Berwick Leisure Centre, to be met from the renewable energy provision within the 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Plan.

156.3 SCIP Mobile Classroom Replacement Programme

Members welcomed this extra investment from the Government, which schools across the County would benefit from based on need.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

- accept the additional government grant funding of £3,623,573 and approve the associated increase in budget provision within the Council's Medium Term Capital Programme.

- approve the additional funding to be allocated to facilitate a mobile classroom replacement programme in Northumberland schools.
- approve the delegation to award the contracts for the individual school projects within the programme to the Director of Adults and Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services.

156.4 Disabled Facilities Grant

Councillor Jones commented that this extra funding was very welcome.

Councillor Riddle agreed and felt that a small amount of funding could make a big difference. He queried whether there was a way of getting more contractors on site to get the money spent quickly for the benefit of those in need.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

- accept the additional grant award of £395,058 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- approve the associated increase in budget provision within the Council's Medium Term Capital Programme.

156.5 England Coast Path – Amble to Bamburgh

Councillor Watson commented that this was important work and strengthened the work being done by the highways and country parks teams to ensure that there were sufficient parking facilities to support the initiative. It was important to ensure that the initiative was not a strain on wildlife or the coast.

RESOLVED that Cabinet accept the grant award of £99,559 from Natural England and approve the associated increase in budget provision within the Council's Medium Term Capital Programme.

157. 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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Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

AND The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure because the negotiations with Government to secure external funding would be prejudiced.

158. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION, COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMY

Borderland Inclusive Growth Deal

The report outlined the content of the negotiated Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the role of the County Council in subsequent delivery (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix D, coloured pink and marked not for publication, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

Juliemma McLoughlin highlighted the main points of the report for members. Members would continue to receive regular updates and she thanked the Regeneration Team and Janice Rose for their work on this. Members endorsed these comments.

Members' attention was drawn to the Scrutiny report, which requested the inclusion of an additional recommendation that, as tourism was a vital industry in the Borderland Growth area, a mechanism to enable the sector to contribute to the Partnership Board should be identified. Juliemma advised members that tourism was very much at the heart of this and was already well covered within the plans. Members accepted this, and the Leader asked that a response be made to the Scrutiny Committee by the Executive Director as detailed above. The position would continue to be reviewed as things went forward.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the four recommendations detailed in the report of the Executive Director of Regeneration, Commercial and Economy be agreed, and
- (b) the report from the CSEG OSC be noted, but the recommendation not accepted. A response to be made to the OSC by the Executive Director for Commercial, Regeneration and Economy on the reasoning for this.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....