



Northumberland
County Council

Local Area Council Meetings Budget and State of the County

Councillor Glen Sanderson
Leader of the Council

www.northumberland.gov.uk

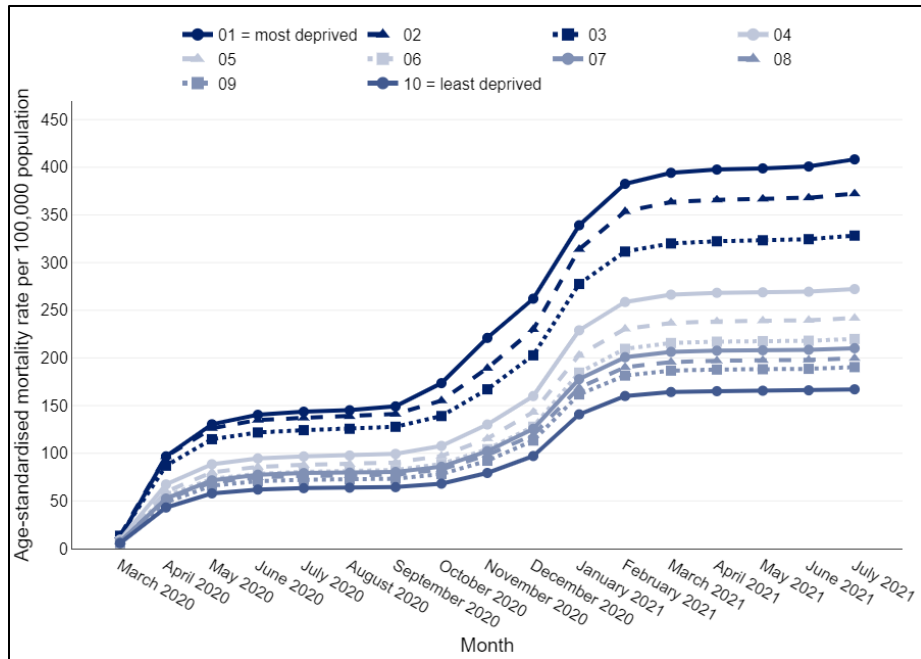
State of the County: Covid latest



State of the County: Covid & Inequalities

National inequalities and Deaths from Covid

- Nationally, evidence indicates a higher rate for deaths involving Covid in the more deprived areas of England. The gaps between the most and least deprived areas for this measure widened as the Pandemic progressed.

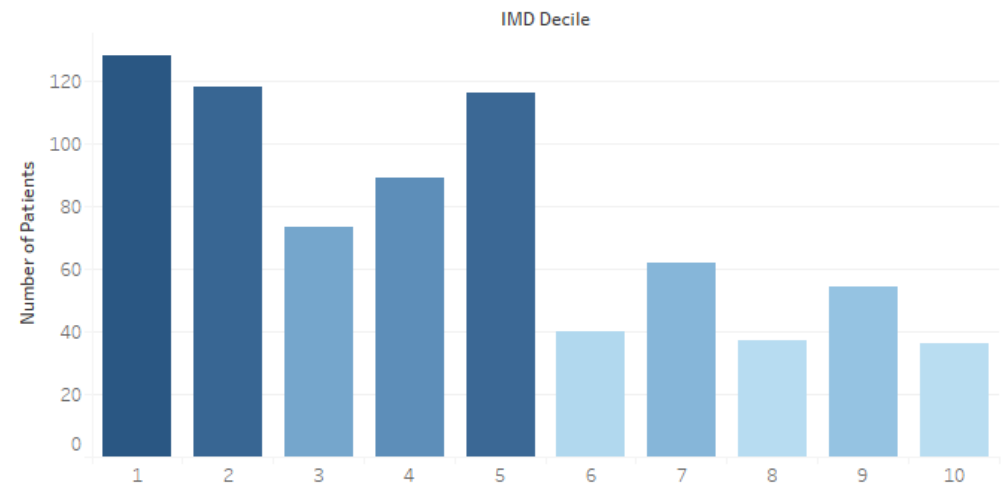


Cumulative age-standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population, for deaths involving COVID-19 in England by deprivation decile, March 2020 to July 2021

Acknowledgement: Sarah Sowden

<https://analytics.phe.gov.uk/apps/chime/>

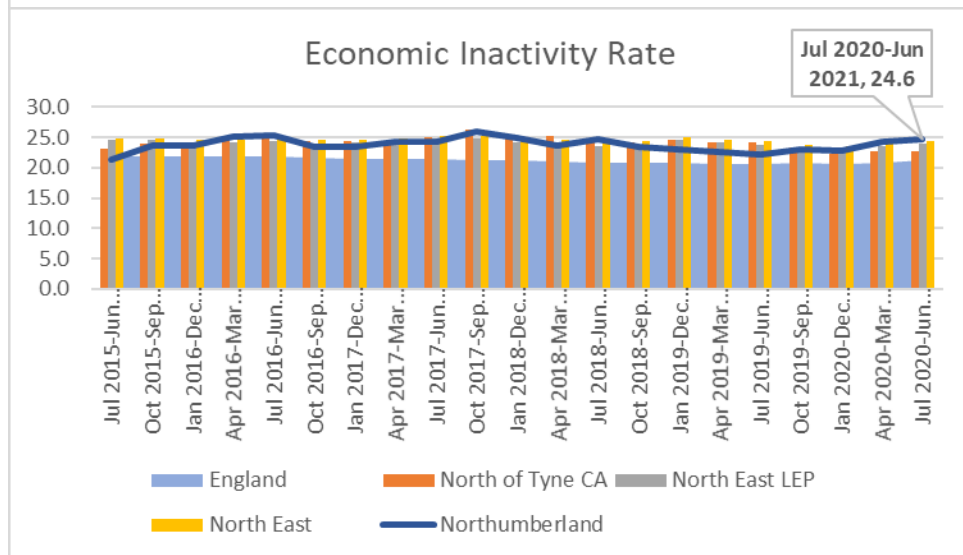
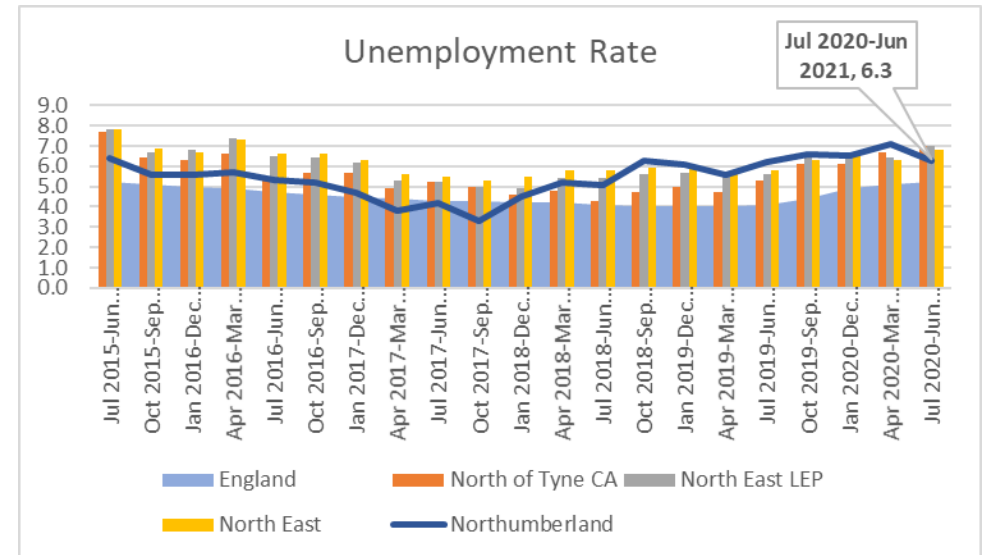
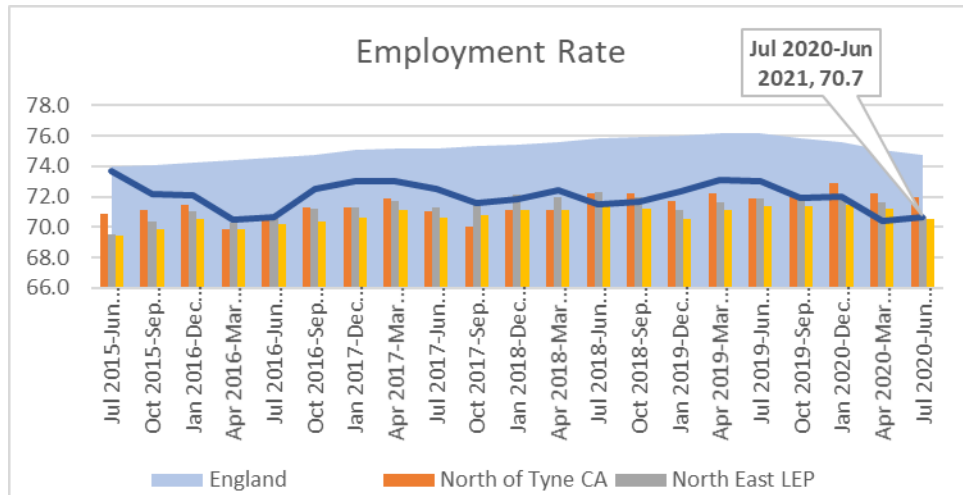
Deaths by IMD Rank



Local inequalities and Deaths from Covid

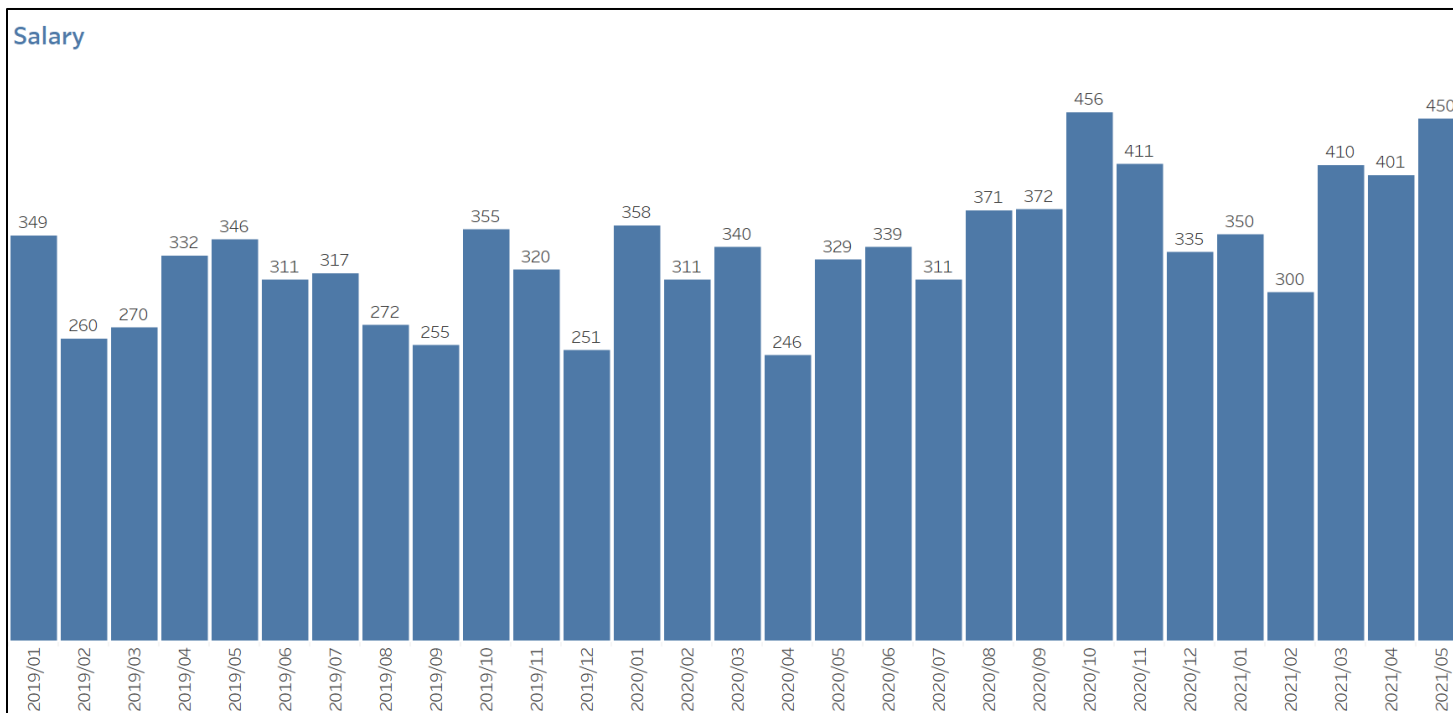
- Locally, evidence indicates a link between higher rates for deaths involving Covid and deprivation in the County although the pattern is less even than the national trends, suggesting other factors influencing Covid-related deaths beyond deprivation.

State of the County: Economic Recovery



Latest key indicators show employment increasing slightly and unemployment falling. Claimants of unemployment benefits in general are 25% less than the same time last year (October 21 compared with October 20). Economic inactivity indicates increasing numbers of early retired and long-term sick. Latest estimates for number of workless households in Northumberland (2020) are 19,300 (19.2%) a slight fall on 2019.

State of the County: Income



Headlines:

- Average weekly wages have fluctuated markedly during the Pandemic, as sectors have experienced differential impacts. As the lockdown restrictions gradually eased from Spring through the Summer period, average weekly earnings have risen steadily and are now above the immediate pre-Covid period. Seasonal variations and other economic factors (e.g. labour supply shortages in some sectors) make it difficult to make more definite forecasts in the short-term. For now, the growth in average wages, are cautiously welcomed.

Corporate Plan: Vision and Aims

“In everything we do, we will listen to and communicate with residents, businesses and partners and, ensure value for money in our services. We will pull our weight regionally and nationally, working with our partners to secure maximum benefit for residents and businesses.”

- **Thriving** – We will vigorously secure more and new investment and jobs into the County.
- **Living and Learning** - We will care for our residents, supporting the most vulnerable in our society. We will ensure the best education standards for our children and young people.
- **Enjoying and Connecting** - We will maintain, protect and enhance the environment, prioritising our commitments on Climate Change. We will deliver high-quality services in all our communities and secure investment in housing and transport across the county

The refreshed Corporate Plan sets out 48 key priorities, with targeted actions and measures of success to deliver on our vision and aims.

Corporate Plan: continued

Our refreshed Corporate Plan has two overarching priorities:

- 1. Driving economic recovery**, through growth, investment and jobs; and,
- 2. Tackling health inequalities in our communities** through addressing the wider determinants, including income, education, housing and environment.

Budget 2022-23: Overall funding context

- All councils are operating in a period of financial uncertainty including:
 - Ongoing significant budget pressures (including social care, waste);
 - Cost pressures arising from changing demographics, pay and price inflation;
 - Ongoing impact of Covid-19 upon the Council's expenditure and income
 - Pressures on national public finances more generally
- Government published SR 2021 (for consultation) on 27 October 2021, covering the three-year period 2022 to 2025.
- SR 2021 advised that the council tax referendum limit would be set at 2.00% and that councils could increase the precept in relation to Adult Social Care (ASC) at a rate of 1.00% per annum over the next three years.
- Provisional settlement was for 1-year only with an average real-terms increase of 6.9% a year in core spending power for local government (compared to 2021-22).
- The provisional settlement confirmed the council tax referendum limit would be set at 2.00% for 2022-23, councils could increase the precept in relation to ASC at a rate of 1.00% and could carry forward any used ASC precept increase from 2021-22.

Continuing to invest in our future

- Delivery of our Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23 namely Heat, Transport, Renewable Energy and Waste.
- Attracting investment and high-quality jobs to the county, including the British Volt Gigafactory as well as the wider development of Northumberland Energy Park
- Deliver the Borderlands Place Programme alongside other initiatives to drive rural economic growth
- Deliver the Energising Blyth Programme investment and secure 'Levelling Up' funding to deliver town regeneration across the county
- Re-open the Northumberland Line to passenger transport and develop an 'Economic Growth Corridor' along its route
- Secure funding for major road and junction infrastructure in the county, including at Moor Farm, A1 dualling and construction of the Blyth Relief Road
- Progress delivery on planned sites for extra care housing
- Deliver school builds at Berwick, Seaton Valley and James Calvert Spence
- Investing in our parks, open spaces, public conveniences and town-centre parking
- Deliver maintenance and investment in our roads, walkways and cycle paths,

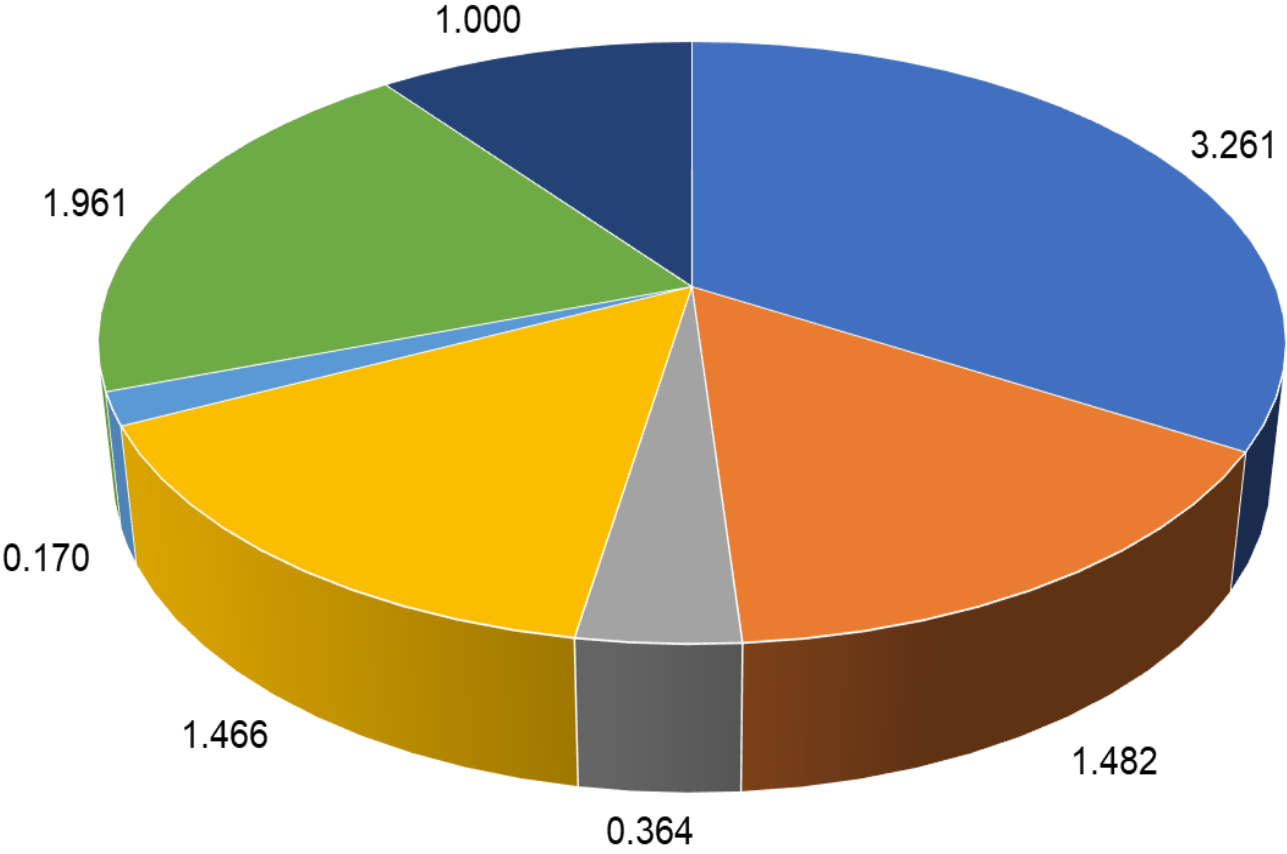
Budget 2022-23: Spend and Savings

- In line with previous practice the Budget for the next year and the MTFP model has been reviewed. A savings requirement of £9.704 million has been identified as required to balance the budget for 2022-23
- A provisional savings requirement of £28 million has been calculated as necessary for the following two financial years.

Approach to identifying spend and savings:

- Reviewing services in order to keep reductions to front line services to a minimum
- Ensuring that service and financial planning is fully aligned with the Corporate Plan
- Maintaining the Council's strong financial position so that it has sufficient reserves
- Maximising income generation while managing risk
- Ensuring the Council demonstrates value for money in the delivery of its priorities
- Investing to save so one-off resources can be used to generate future saving

Proposed Savings by Portfolio Holder 2022-23 (£m)



- Adults' Wellbeing
- Children & Young People
- Community Services
- Corporate Services
- Healthy Lives
- Local Services
- Cross-portfolio

Next steps

- Invite views from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Local Area Councils.
- Final version to be considered by Full Council 23 February 2022.



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Any questions?

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