

The Executive Director detailed the key points from the report. The new non-executive directors had now been appointed to the Board so it was timely for the Articles to be reviewed to bring them into line with the principles of the Cabinet decision and best practice.

There were currently 52 Reserved Matters. The proposal was to reduce this to 37, as many of them were set out in company law. The requirement to seek approval before applying to NCC for any loans, and a number of day to day issues, would in future be matters for the Board and not the Shareholder. The final version of the revised Articles would be presented to the Advance Board on 24th November and following their approval, would be submitted to the Shareholder Committee for formal adoption. The Operating Agreement would then be updated, and work had begun on this already.

Councillor Wearmouth welcomed the work detailed in the report which would ensure that the governance arrangements on the Council side were satisfactory. The report reflected much of what the Administration wanted to achieve with Advance in terms of the Board composition also. He thanked the Executive Director and Advance for their work on this.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Advance Northumberland Recruitment of Chief Executive Officer

The report informed the Committee of the resignation of the Group Executive Director of Advance Northumberland and the process and timetable for recruitment of his successor (Appendix B).

Mr Earl advised members that Advance was now in a great place and he felt the time was right for him to pursue other interests and to spend more time with his family.

The Leader commented that he and his colleagues supported Mr Earl in his decision, which he knew had been a personal one, and he thanked him for his work.

11. PRESENTATION FROM THE GROUP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Committee received a presentation from the Advance Northumberland Group Executive Director on progress against the Business Plan.

Mr Earl made a detailed presentation to the Committee which covered the following issues:-

- Business Priorities Overview
- Business Plan Progress Overview
- Business Context Factors

- AN Projects Update
- Ascent Homes Update
- AN Homes
- Economic Growth and Investments Update
- Commercial and Workspace Update

The Leader asked whether this update would be taken to Scrutiny. Mr Earl advised that they were next due to attend in March and could make an updated presentation then.

The Leader also asked about investment outside of the County. Mr Earl replied that there were no live projects outside of the County, though there some legacy assets. He reminded members that the company could only operate outside of the County for commercial profit. The company was working with North Tyneside Council on a digital project at the moment.

In response to a question from the Leader regarding recruitment to the Group Executive Director position, Ms Willis reported that shortlisting was due to take place on 17 November and interviews on 4 December. The Council would be represented by Councillor Ploszaj and Councillor Reid would chair the interview panel in his capacity as Chair of the Advance Board. Two non-executive Board Directors would also sit on the panel. It was hoped to make an appointment before Christmas to allow time for a full handover.

Members wished Mr Earl well for the future and thanked him for his efforts during a very difficult period.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the next meetings of the Committee take place on 12 March 2024 and 11 June 2024 at 10.30, or on the rising of Cabinet. Further dates would be included in the 2024-25 timetable of meetings on a quarterly basis, to be agreed by Council in May 2024.

13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

- 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
- 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

10-11	3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs
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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 disclosure could adversely affect the business reputation or confidence in the person/organisation and could adversely affect commercial revenue.

14. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Advance Northumberland Finance Update for the 6 months ending September 2023

The report provided a summary of the financial performance of Advance Northumberland Ltd and its subsidiary companies for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023 (Appendix C, coloured pink and marked Nor for Publication).

The Executive Director reported that financial performance was behind budget at the moment. Various issues had impacted on this, but she expected some recovery during the second half of the year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

15. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Newcastle Airport

The report updated the Shareholder Group with the intentions of the private shareholder at Newcastle International Airport (the Airport) to sell its shareholding and sought agreement regarding any further future investment in the Airport by the Council (Appendix D, coloured pink and marked Not for Publication).

The Executive Director detailed the key points of the report. The preferred option was to maintain the status quo, for the reasons set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee agreed that the Council does not take up the offer to purchase additional shares in Newcastle International Airport.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....