

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Northumberland County Council** held on Wednesday 20 March 2024 at County Hall, Morpeth at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor B. Flux (Chairman in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Ball, C.	Lang, J.A.
Bawn, D.	Lee, S.
Beynon, J.	Mather, M.
Bowman, L.	Morphet, N.
Carr, D.	Murphy, M.
Cartie, E.	Nisbet, K.
Castle, G.	Oliver, N.
Cessford, T.	Parry, K.
Chicken, E.	Pattison, W.
Clark, T.	Ploszaj, W.F.
Dale, A.	Reid, J.
Daley, W.	Renner-Thompson, G.
Darwin, L.	Richardson, M.
Dodd, R.	Riddle, J.R.
Dunbar, L.	Sanderson, H.G.H.
Dunn, E.	Scott, A.
Ezhilchelvan, P.	Seymour, C.
Fairless-Aitken, S.	Sharp, A.
Ferguson, D.	Simpson, E.
Gallacher, B.	Stewart, G.
Grimshaw, L.	Swinbank, M.
Hardy, C.R.	Swinburn, M.
Hill, G.	Taylor, C.A.
Horncastle, C.	Thorne, T.N.
Humphrey, C.	Watson, A.
Hunter, I.E.	Watson, J.
Hutchinson, J.I.	Wearmouth, R.W.
Jones, V.	Wilczek, R.

OFFICERS

Binning, G.	Chief Fire Officer
Bradley, N.	Executive Director – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing
Gerrard, S.	Director of Law and Corporate Governance (MO)
Hadfield, K.	Democratic Services Manager
Hunter, P.	Assistant Chief Executive
Kingham, A.	Executive Director – Children and Young People

Masson, N. Neilson, S.	Deputy Monitoring Officer Executive Director of Place and Regeneration
O'Neill, G.	Executive Director - Public Health, Inequalities, and Stronger Communities
Paterson, Dr H. Willis, J.	Chief Executive Executive Director for Resources & Transformation (S151)

One member of the public was present and one honorary alderman.

69. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Bridgett, Dickinson, Kennedy, Purvis, Robinson, Waddell and Wallace.

70. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of County Council held on Wednesday, 21 February 2024, be confirmed as a true record subject to the inclusion of Councillor Ball in the attendance.

71. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor Hill declared an interest in item 11 on the agenda (Corporate Peer Review Report) due to her role with the LGA. However, this was not a prejudicial interest.

72. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported to Council the passing of former MP Ronnie Campbell and former County Councillor Alan Thompson. Ronnie was the Member of Parliament for Blyth Valley from 1987 until 2019. On behalf of the Council, he conveyed condolences to his wife Deirdre, who was a County Councillor herself for a number of years, and also to his family.

Alan was a former Liberal Democrat councillor and a Cabinet Member between 2008 and 2013. On behalf of the Council, he also conveyed condolences to his family. Members stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

73. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Two questions had been received from the public, but the questioner for both was not present. A written response would be provided to them.

74. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Question 1 from Councillor Hill to Councillor Riddle

The Leader recently declared that the war against potholes is being won. I am not sure how many Northumberland residents would concur.

On the issue of fighting potholes - how many tonnes of tar has been wasted by this authority over the last 12 months? That is tar, which has been ordered and delivered, hot and ready to fill in some of the county's countless potholes but then not used and having to be discarded.

Councillor Riddle was disappointed that the Council meeting had been used to raise the question when he had an open door policy. The response to the question was that none was being wasted. Any which was left over was recycled.

Councillor Hill was disappointed at the response to her raising this in public. She had seen evidence from whistleblowers within the Authority of vast amounts of waste tar piled up in depots and discarded. She understood that it was an issue countrywide and that the county had a lot of roads but the routine waste of tar was not acceptable. When this had been raised by staff it had fallen on deaf ears, and she asked if Councillor Riddle would investigate this.

Councillor Riddle responded that these were serious allegations and they would therefore be looked into. However, as far as he was aware, there was no wasted tar.

Question 2 from Councillor Dale to Councillor Riddle

A statutory duty to maintain was imposed on the local highway authority through the Highways Act 1980. The local authority is responsible for maintaining and repairing the highway, which can be a road, cycle tracks, walkway, footpath over which every member of the general public has a right of passage. The publication of a revised National Code of Practice, Well Managed Highway Infrastructure on 28th October 2016 resulted in the County Council reassessing the Council's defect intervention response times accordingly.

The atrocious weather since the end of last year has put considerable pressure on the Council's Highways workforce in particular. The public, tax payers are very unhappy with the level of service provided by the Council especially with the pothole defect intervention. The workforce are working as best as they possibly can with the resources made available to ensure that they meet the defect intervention response times.

How many complaints has the County Council received since November 2023 about potholes? How many potholes have been reported on Fix My street since November 2023? How many insurance claims have been received since November 2023?

Councillor Riddle responded that everything that was reported went through FixMyStreet. There were 6,579 reports, but when checked it had been found that over 50% of them were duplicate reports, resulting in just over 3,000 reports having been made. 353 insurance claims were received for the period 1/01/23- 11/03/24.

Councillor Dale asked that an OSC working group be set up on this subject so that the public could understand the position better. Councillor Riddle responded that was for Scrutiny to decide, but he reminded members that the Administration had honoured its pledge to spend extra money on the County's roads. He accepted that potholes were a major concern for everyone but stressed that progress was being made.

75. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES

Annual Portfolio Report – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

This was the Annual Report from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services. The report contained issues that set the context for delivery of the Portfolio. It highlighted achievements over the past year and, outlined the areas of focus for the coming year.

Councillor Wearmouth presented the report in some detail and thanked officers across the Council for their work on it. A number of questions and comments were raised:-

- With regard to the capital programme, Councillor Grimshaw asked about the plan for the empty wing within County Hall and whether there was any interest from business in utilising that space, and other assets in the County which were currently under-utilised.
- Councillor Morphet asked whether Councillor Wearmouth felt it was good practice for all four Chairs of Scrutiny to be Conservative members and whether there were any plans to change this, given that the purpose of Scrutiny was to scrutinise the decisions of the Administration.
- Councillor Dale commented that sometimes the public had to call twice about garden waste collections, to arrange them and then to make payment which wasn't very efficient. She asked if this could be looked into. She then thanked the IT team for their help in rolling out full fibre broadband.
- Councillor Cartie asked for an update on the telephone contact system for officers.

In response to these points, Councillor Wearmouth advised that the vacant wing was being incorporated into the strategic estates review following the adoption of new ways of working post covid. He anticipated that a report would be coming to CSEG OSC on this in due course.

There were no plans to change the Scrutiny Chairs.

Garden waste collection and digital issues would be taken on board, and he welcomed the progress which had been made with full fibre broadband. More would come forward on this.

Regarding contacting officers, he understood that a solution was imminent but if Councillor Cartie had any further problems, she should let him or the Head of Communications know.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

76. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CARING FOR ADULTS

Annual Portfolio Report – Caring for Adults

This was the Annual Report from the Cabinet Member for Caring for Adults. The report contained issues that set the context for delivery of the Portfolio. It highlighted achievements over the past year and outlined the areas of focus for the coming year.

The report was presented by Councillor Pattison. She highlighted that over 7,000 residents accessed adult social care and this was overseen by over 1,000 staff and the Executive Director and his senior management team.

She drew members' attention to the "Shared Lives" publication and asked if any member knew anyone who was interested in getting involved to get in touch. She also mentioned Safe Havens in Ashington for those suffering with mental health concerns. This was the first of its kind in the North East and she thanked the Council's partners for their involvement with this.

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub at Foundry House, was an amazing facility which was again operated with partners.

Finally she mentioned Hannah Dawson, who had been awarded mental health social worker of the year.

Councillor Hill thanked Councillor Pattison and the team for coming to Berwick recently. This had been a very useful meeting. In terms of the content of the report, she asked Councillor Pattison whether it was time to declare a housing emergency, given the state of the service at the moment. Councillor Pattison responded that good progress was being made in extra care and supported housing, including 13 dementia bungalows at Lyndon Walk in Blyth.

Councillor Hardy asked whether carers' assessments would be looked at as part of the Strategy. Councillor Pattison replied that it was very much on the radar to see what assistance could be provided to unpaid carers.

Councillor A. Watson asked what support would be available for telecare users when the digital switchover happened and what risks had been identified, as she felt this would be difficult for elderly people to deal with. Councillor Pattison acknowledged that digital switchover was causing some concerns,

particularly in rural areas. This was being addressed and IT staff were visiting parish council meetings.

Councillor Hunter asked that more efforts be made to promote Northumberland Communities Together as the first point of contact for those struggling and needing assistance, as she felt this was not as widely known as it could be. Councillor Pattison agreed, and reminded members that there was a lot of information readily available on the Council's homepage.

Councillor Wearmouth advised that there should be a presentation being made to LACS on the digital switchover which would give members a lot of reassurance.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

77. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Portfolio Report – Supporting Business and Opportunities

This was the Annual Report from the Cabinet Member for Supporting Business and Opportunities. The report contained issues that set the context for delivery of the Portfolio. It highlighted achievements over the past year and outlined the areas of focus for the coming year.

The report was presented by Councillor Ploszaj. His portfolio was very broad, and followed the Economic Strategy, which would be refreshed in the next couple of years. He then highlighted some key points for members.

Councillor Hill commented that 95% of the £21m for the Maltings project had been provided by Borderlands, and the Council had provided a negligible amount, which was threatening the viability of the project.

Councillor Ball asked what the total value was of all the projects as this was not clear, and asked for more definitive dates for the Ashington projects, instead of anticipated dates for completion. As the ward councillor for the area where most of the projects were planned, she had not seen a definitive plan yet. She also asked for an update on the plan for the British Volt site.

Councillor Wilczek commented that the report stated the Bedlington Town Centre development was due for completion in early 2025 and she asked if that was still likely to be the case since Circle had gone into administration. She also asked whether any other projects across the County could be affected.

In response to some of these points, Councillor Ploszaj acknowledged that the majority of the Maltings funding was from Borderlands but the Council was delivering the scheme. The Council was working to find additional funding to expand the scheme and it would be delivered as promised.

Regarding the Ashington projects, once they were at full business case stage then firm dates could be identified and the team could set up meetings with the local members to provide an update. Regarding British Volt, the Leader would speak more about this but everything possible was being done to find a solution for the site and he hoped there would be an announcement soon about it.

As far as he was aware, no other projects were affected by the collapse of Circle. He was aware that Advance were doing all they could to mitigate against the effects on the Bedlington Town Centre development. As soon as more was known, an update would be provided to members.

Councillor A. Watson asked if Spring 2026 was still a realistic timescale for the Blyth Relief Road, given progress to date and the delays in other projects across Blyth. She felt it was better to be honest with people about it.

Councillor Reid suggested that a report be made to Scrutiny on progress with the Great Northumberland Forest as he felt some political oversight was needed.

Councillor Nisbet referred to the regeneration projects in Blyth which were getting a lot of negative local reaction at the moment. She stressed there had to be a mix of development of retail, leisure and employment.

Councillor Ploszaj responded that Blyth Relief Road was still on track for April 2026. The planning application would be submitted in April and OBC was with government being assessed. He agreed that the Great Northumberland Forest should come to Scrutiny Committee and in respect of Energising Blyth, a mix of users was planned including education, energy institute, cultural hub and public realm improvements which would encourage trade back into the town centre. Increased footfall was needed and that would bring business. He suggested that Energising Blyth be looked at by Scrutiny so a more detailed discussion could be had.

Councillor Dale asked how the Council as planning authority could input into the delivery of visitor accommodation along Hadrian's Wall in discussions with Visit Northumberland. She also asked how long the Borderlands funding was to last.

Councillor Grimshaw suggested that there should be more publicity about the Community Chest funding scheme, which she felt was very valuable and worthwhile. It made a great difference to small organisations and this should be applauded.

Councillor Scott welcomed the £1.5m that was coming to Prudhoe Waterworld. She asked what else was coming to Prudhoe given that £66m had been spent in nearby Ponteland.

Regarding planning, Councillor Ploszaj agreed to discuss this with Councillor Horncastle and would come back to Councillor Dale. He agreed about the point made on the community chest scheme and would discuss additional

publicity with the Head of Communications. Finally, there were many other initiatives for Prudhoe.

Councillor Oliver commented that there were unprecedented levels of Government and Council investment in Blyth and the south east of the County, and asked why the local councillors were so intent on talking it down.

Councillor Darwen commented that the great work done on the Ponteland to Callerton cycling corridor had had the unwelcome effect of attracting a lot of taxis to park there, often outside residents' homes, which was causing complaints. He asked what action could be taken to disperse the taxis.

Councillor Cartie commented that there were some amazing initiatives going on in Blyth at the moment, however she was not impressed with the way some of the work was being done in Blyth. She had repeatedly asked for an impact assessment to be done on the surrounding area of the cultural hub without success. It was important for everyone to thrive, not just certain sectors. No-one was talking Blyth down but she did want answers to the questions she had raised in the town forum meetings.

Regarding the taxis issue, Councillor Ploszaj responded that this was a Local Services issue but he could pick up with Cabinet colleagues. Regarding the impact assessment for Blyth, he reassured members that all of the offer at the Cultural Hub would not compete with existing facilities in Blyth. Impact assessments had been done as part of the business cases and he was happy to meet with Blyth members and relevant officers to discuss this to ensure that responses were provided.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

78. REPORT OF THE LEADER

Annual Achievements Report 2023-24

The report highlighted key achievements of the Council in the year 2023-24.

The report was presented by the Leader. He highlighted the key points of the report, which detailed some amazing achievements across the board and across all services. He thanked all members and staff for playing their part.

A number of questions were asked as follows:-

- Councillor Foster thanked the Executive Director for Children, Young People and Education and her team for the amazing work they did. The government grant for the high needs block was likely to be overspent this year and next because the demand for the service had increased. Children with SEND could achieve good things in life, but only with the right support. She asked if the Council would lobby the Government to increase its funding to the appropriate level.
- Councillor Grimshaw commented that it had been a Labour Administration which had introduced free car parking and a

Conservative Administration which had begun charging for it in the past. She agreed with Councillor Foster's comments about more funding for children with SEND. These children were highly capable and she asked whether there was any statistics available on the outcomes for children with SEND when they left school.

- Councillor Cartie commented that the Conservative Administration had tried to introduce car parking charges on Blyth Beach and the local members had lobbied against this. She asked if more money could be spent on some safety measures on the prom at Blyth given that it was now a very popular tourist spot. Also, while she understood the sentiment and reasoning, there were a number of memorial seats there with dead plants or flowers on them which was preventing them from being used and enjoyed.

In response, the Leader advised that the Authority was already talking to Government about this and he agreed it was a very important subject. Significant money was being spent on projects at Blyth Beach, and he suggested that this was something Scrutiny might want to look at. He would discuss with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee and was happy to attend if necessary.

- Councillor Ball commented that there was £460m coming into the County and as a representative of the Authority, she was keen to know where that funding was being spent. 32% of children in poverty and many thousands of people on the waiting list for housing. She asked where the high skilled jobs were which had been promised and how the housing waiting list was being tackled.
- Councillor Dunn referred to the safer communities section of the report. She welcomed the efforts which had been put in to tackle anti-social behaviour. However, she expressed her concern that a supported living facility had been set up in her ward without any member or resident consultation into the suitability of the location. She felt that no matter how much of a roadmap was developed, communities would not feel safe or equal, unless they were consulted on matters within their communities which affected them and their quality of life. She asked if the Leader agreed with that.
- Councillor Stewart asked if the Leader was aware that an additional £60,000 had gone into the soft play area. The retail park in Tynedale was now employing hundreds of people. Money was being spent on the Glade on Front Street, Prudhoe and Eastwood Park was now the jewel in the crown of the town. He asked if the Leader was aware that there was a possible £3m Borderlands funding deal also on the table.

The Leader could not answer Councillor Dunn's question as it had not been in his report. He asked Councillor Dunn to contact him in writing and he would take the matter up, along with Councillor Horncastle.

He was aware that Blyth and Ashington had needed investment for some time. There was a big injection of funding coming from Government and he urged all members to feel positive about this and work together on it. What was happening in Prudhoe was impressive and Borderlands funding was just ready to be switched on when the process was complete. The Council had

given a commitment to ensure that the Eastwood Centre would get the renovation and investment it needed.

- Councillor Gallacher did not agree with Councillor Oliver's earlier remarks as every member was behind their own area and wanted to see it thrive. He also referred to the Leader's earlier comments regarding thanking staff and stressed that all members of all parties were extremely thankful to staff for the work they did.
- Councillor Hill commented that the current issues in housing in no way lay with the Council's Housing Team, who were excellent. This was due to successive governments not building enough social housing and private developers land banking and drip feeding the market. Her question to the Cabinet Member about declaring a housing emergency was not a criticism but she asked the Leader if he agreed that the Council needed to declare a housing emergency.
- Councillor Fairless Aitken referred to the Hexham Middle School masterplan and asked about the inclusion of social housing in that site plan, or whether an approach could be made to Advance to build some.

The Leader replied that social housing had been included in the consultation and the results of this consultation would be carefully considered. This would not be simple because it was important to get it right and find a compromise that suited everyone. Regarding a housing emergency, he would need to know more about levels of demand, waiting lists etc before he could answer the question.

- Councillor Hunter commented that there were pockets of deprivation in her ward but also areas that were more affluent. She asked that when the data was looked at in more detail that it was not just inequalities that was looked at.
- Councillor Reid queried whether the Leader thought it was ironic that the shortest report in the agenda was the annual achievements report. He also reminded the Leader that again this year Mazars had failed to certify the Authority as providing value for money, and asked how concerned the Leader was about this.
- Councillor Murphy asked if the Authority could be better at highlighting the equalities impacts in reports. Policies in reports would disproportionately impact on protected characteristics and more effort was needed to consider this in report writing. Also, the Equality Act was not the Equalities Act and not getting either of these things consistently right was frustrating.

The Leader asked Councillor Murphy to write to him on that so he could make a formal and detailed response, or she could raise it as a question at a future Council meeting, as this was an important point. Seton Hall would provide a significant number of affordable homes and should be up and running soon.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

79. REPORT OF THE LEADER

Corporate Peer Review Report

The report summarised the process of the Council's recent Corporate Peer Review, shared the Report of the Peer Review Team, and proposed further actions including ongoing activities, which responded positively to the Peer Review Team's recommendations.

The Leader presented the report and thanked the Peer Review Team and the people they spoke to for their time. They had spoken to a wide range of people in order to gain a cross section of opinion, and their work had focussed on the content of the Corporate Plan. He reflected on the key areas they had looked at and expressed his thanks to all staff across the Authority who all contributed to the delivery of the Council's services. The report commented that great progress had been made, but he was not complacent as there was always more work to do.

Councillor Hunter commented that the Town and Parish Council Liaison Working Group should be used more to strengthen relations with town and parish councils. She asked if, when changes were being made by the County Council, that town and parish councils be consulted if they were going to be impacted, and could they especially have more consultation on the budget before the County Council set it.

Councillor Carr asked the Leader for his opinion on the comment in the report that there was still some mistrust amongst elected members. He felt that he had good relationships with the Labour members on the Ashington and Blyth LAC as a minority Conservative member but asked what the Leader thought could be done to improve relationships.

Councillor Dale felt it was important that the work mentioned to define and articulate what VFM meant was actually done. Also, the reference to the need to take steps to strengthen alignment between the budget, corporate plan, performance management and BEST needed to be looked at more closely and it should be identified where both of these areas of work would be done.

The Leader agreed this was a good point. In terms of VFM, he felt the Peer Review Team was satisfied with what was being delivered on the key priorities, but if there was still work to be done then it was right that it should be looked at. Regarding town and parish council consultation, he agreed on this and a focus group would be set up early in the budget setting process.

The point about mistrust was a difficult one to deal with. He had a good relationship with many councillors and did not feel that there was a need for any mistrust. Improvements in Ashington and Blyth could not proceed without the involvement of the local members and local town councils, and his door was open to any member who needed help.

Councillor Gallacher commented that there was a need to be mindful of staff workloads as some areas were extremely busy. The Leader acknowledged

this and added that one of the key issues had been whether all of the ambitious investment programmes could be delivered. As a result, additional regeneration staff had been recruited and he was confident that the resource was now there to deliver the schemes.

RESOLVED:-

- (a) Council thank the members of the Local Government Association's Peer Review Team for their time and hard work on the Council's Corporate Peer Review;
- (b) Council note the recommendations set out in the Peer Review's Report; and
- (c) Council note the proposed actions, including ongoing activities and initiatives, which respond positively to the Peer Review Team's recommendations.

80. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING OFFICER

The purpose of the report was to assure Council that all appropriate steps had been taken such that future decisions would be in full compliance with the law and guidance.

The Director reminded members that he had written to them all prior to the Council meeting. The report had been written in his capacity as the Monitoring Officer and he recognised that the situation was unusual. The report was to draw a line under the shortfalls in process highlighted in various reports to the Audit Committee about exit payments to some staff. The report detailed that once these were discovered, steps had been taken immediately to regularise the situation and put in place an amended procedure to ensure there could be no repeat. He thanked all members for their support in doing that. He stressed that democratic oversight of the process had been restored and in fact enhanced.

He appreciated that some members wished to take matters further, however, this was not possible as the information was not available and it would not be appropriate as individuals could not respond. He asked all members to respect that stance.

Councillor Grimshaw thanked the Monitoring Officer for coming to this conclusion. It had been a difficult issue for the Audit Committee to deal with.

Councillor Dale asked whether this report also closed down matters which had been referred to the Police. The Director advised that he had nothing to add to his report or his statement.

Councillor Murphy wished to register her concern that many officers had been dismissed in the past and not had the same protection as that offered to senior officers. Her concerns were about the inequality of this. Senior officers had

made decisions which could not be scrutinised, and now a line was being drawn under it.

Councillor Hill asked if exit payments had been signed off by an officer in the past or officer/member, and whether there was any change to that process now.

The Director replied that there were levels of sign off which were required by law to be done by the Council. For reasons which were not clear, that had not happened. This democratic oversight had now been restored so going forward, sign offs would be done in accordance with law and regulations.

RESOLVED that the report of the Director of Law and Corporate Governance reporting as the Monitoring Officer under Section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 be noted and adopted.

81. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE STAFF AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Proposed reconfiguration of role of Director of Integrated Commissioning and Performance – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing

The report asked Council to consider the recommendation of the Staff and Appointments Committee held on 22 February 2024 that confirmed staffing budget be utilised to increase the establishment from 0.5 FTE by a further 0.5 FTE to create a 1.0 FTE role.

The report was presented by Councillor Wearmouth.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Council approve the recommendation from the Staff and Appointments Committee which was held on 22 February 2024 to increase the establishment from 0.5 FTE by a further 0.5 FTE to fund a 1.0 FTE role;
- (b) Council note that the Staff and Appointments Committee has agreed that the Band 16 (£100,157 - £109,081) job description and associated job evaluation established via the senior management review of summer 2023 continue to apply;
- (c) Council note the approved selection process; and
- (d) Council note that any offer of appointment will be subject to full Council approval and the Council's standard pre-employment checks.

82. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE STAFF AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Appointment of the Preferred Candidate for the Position of Assistant Chief Fire Officer

The purpose of the report was to consider the recommendation of the Staff and Appointments Committee held on 22nd February 2024 to appoint Stephen Kennedy to the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

The report was presented by Councillor Wearmouth.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Council approve the recommendations from the Staff and Appointments Committee which was held on 22nd February 2024 to permanently appoint Stephen Kennedy to the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer;
- (b) Council note that the Staff and Appointments Committee has agreed that the remuneration for the post of Assistant Chief Fire Officer will be at £103,133 per annum with access to staff benefits in line with all Council employees; and
- (c) Council note the appointment will be subject to the Council’s standard pre-employment checks.

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Chair of the County Council

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Duly Authorised Officer