

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET SINCE LAST OSC MEETING AND FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS - NOVEMBER 2024 TO MARCH 2025**

DECISION	CABINET DATE/DECISION
Cabinet Papers - 10 December 2024	<a href="https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&amp;MId=2898">https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&amp;MId=2898</a>
<b>Q1 &amp; Q2 Corporate Performance Report</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet note the progress against the Corporate Plan Priorities as summarised in the report.
<b>Housing Policy – Towards a New Countywide Housing Strategy</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that:- a. Cabinet note and agree the issues set out in the report to inform a new “Countywide Northumberland Housing Strategy”; and b. Cabinet agree that the issues in the report will inform; • the Northumberland Local Plan review • Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-year budget setting process • NCC Social Housing Regulation Assurance Framework • The Council’s work with partners to tackle inequalities.
<b>Budget 2025-26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025-2029</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that:- (a) Cabinet review and note the revisions to the assumptions (and the risks) within the Budget 2025-26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan; (b) Cabinet note that further work is required to refine and finalise the Budget 2025-26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan; (c) Cabinet note that the revenue implications of the capital programme are still to be updated; and (d) Cabinet note that there are still budget balancing measures required to be identified over the term of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
<b>Council Tax Base 2025-26</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet approve the council tax base for 2025-26 as detailed within Appendix A equating to 116,999.73 Band D equivalent dwellings. This is an increase of 4,814.27 Band D equivalents from 2024-25 .
<b>Financial Performance 2024-25 - Position at the end of September 2024</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that:- (a) the following be approved: (i) the re-profiling to the Capital Programme of £69.689 million from 2024-25 to 2025-26 to reflect estimated expenditure levels in the current financial year. (b) the following be noted: (i) the projected overspend on services of £5.996 million and the assumptions outlined in this report; (ii) the supplementary estimates at Appendix A and the required changes to the budgets; (iii) the delivery of the approved savings at Appendix B;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(iv) the use of the contingency shown at Appendix L;</li> <li>(v) the use of reserves shown at Appendix M;</li> <li>(vi) the virements requested by services within delegated limits as shown in Appendix N; and</li> <li>(vii) the details of capital project reprofiling shown at Appendix O.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group</b></p> <p><b>Blyth Market Place Improvement Works</b></p> <p><b>Cramlington Regeneration Active Travel Corridors Phase One</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cabinet approve the spend of £0.583 million (£0.193 million in 2024-25 and £0.390 million in 2025-26) to enable the completion of the Market Place improvements as part of the transformation of Blyth Town Centre. This spend will be funded from the existing Energising Blyth Acquisitions and Delivery budget in the Capital Programme; and</li> <li>b. Cabinet approve the amendment to the Capital Programme to reallocate £0.193 million in 2024-25 and £0.390 million in 2025-26 from the Energising Blyth Acquisitions and Delivery project to the Blyth Market Place Improvement Works project.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cabinet approve the spend of £0.300 million in 2024-25 to deliver active travel walking routes and the resurfacing of existing active travel corridors. This spend will be funded from the existing Cramlington Regeneration budget in the Capital Programme; and</li> <li>b. Cabinet approve the amendment to the Capital Programme to reallocate £0.300 million from the Cramlington Regeneration project to the Cramlington Regeneration Active Travel Corridors Phase One project in 2024-25.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education, SEND &amp; Skills Annual Report Academic Year 2023-24</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Cabinet consider the education achievements of our children, young people, and residents across Northumberland in 2023/24; the impact of the work undertaken to support the achievements and the priorities for 2024/25. Members noted the content and outcomes in the report and scrutinise through direct questioning at full council and FACS scrutiny, and also via direct contact with the Director;</li> <li>(b) Cabinet note the valuable support provided to all learners within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Early Years Settings and Schools</li> <li>· Special Education Needs support and service</li> <li>· Virtual School</li> <li>· Learning and Skills Service</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>(c) . School Organisation and Resources; and Cabinet note that the priorities, core functions and action areas for the Directorate are in line with the plans of the council and our statutory responsibilities going forward.</p>
<p><b>Cabinet Papers - 14 January 2025</b></p>	<p><a href="https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&amp;MId=2899">https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&amp;MId=2899</a></p>
<p><b>Budget 2025-26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025-29 Update</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the update be noted.</p>
<p><b>Budget 2025-26, Medium Term Financial Plan 2025- 29 and 30 Year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Cabinet approve the Housing Revenue Account 2025-26 budget as detailed within Appendix 1, which will reduce the balance on the HRA reserve from £24.379 million at 31 March 2025, to £16.030 million at 31 March 2026; and note the indicative budgets to 2028-29 which will reduce the balance of the HRA reserve to £12.178 million;</li> <li>1.2 Cabinet note that from 1 April 2025, social housing rent will be increased by Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1.00% as per the previously agreed Rent Standard. The budget detailed in Appendix 1 assumes that rents will rise by CPI 1.70% plus 1.00% with recoverable service charges also rising by CPI plus 1.00% for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026;</li> <li>1.3 Cabinet approve the increase of 2.70% for housing rents from 1 April 2025 in line with the Government rent standard;</li> <li>1.4 Cabinet approve the increase of 2.70% for housing service charges from 1 April 2025;</li> <li>1.5. Cabinet approve the Non-Recurrent Growth Item of £1.000 million for additional resources to tackle the backlog in the turnaround of void properties (detailed in point 6.11);</li> <li>1.6 Cabinet approve the Non-Recurrent Growth Item of £0.600 million for demolition costs of unused dwellings (detailed in point 6.11);</li> <li>1.7 Cabinet approve the Non-Recurrent Growth Item of £0.400 million for additional consumable materials (detailed in point 6.11);</li> <li>1.8 Cabinet approve the use of £0.400 million from the Rent Hardship Fund Reserve, to contribute to the additional non recurrent growth. (detailed in point 6.6);</li> <li>1.9 Cabinet approve the use of £2.003 million from the HRA Reserve to fund non-recurrent growth and to contribute to the ongoing pressure within the budget and to ensure the HRA sets a balanced budget (detailed in point 6.13);</li> <li>1.10 Cabinet approve the estimated pay inflationary increase for 2025-26 of 3.00% totalling £0.723 million, which includes the impact of increased national insurance contributions (detailed in point 6.9);</li> </ol>

	<p>1.11 Cabinet approve the Non-Pay Inflation Schedule for 2025 - 26 totaling £0.298 million (detailed in point 6.9);</p> <p>1.12 Cabinet approve the Recurrent Growth as follows:</p> <p>a) Additional Stock Condition Survey budget of £0.098 million from 2025-26 to cover cyclical costs of carrying out surveys on current properties to inform future capital expenditure (detailed in point 6.10).</p> <p>b) Additional budget of £0.100 million for electrical testing to comply with The Regulator of Social Housing (detailed in point 6.10);</p> <p>1.13 Cabinet approve the expenditure plan relating to £36.347 million which has been set aside over the 4-year period 2025-26 to 2028-29 in the HRA Capital programme to invest in Affordable Housing. Details are set out in Appendix 1;</p> <p>1.14 Cabinet approve the expenditure plan relating to £48.200 million which has been set aside over the 4-year period 2025-26 to 2028-29 in the HRA Major Repairs Programme to invest in continued improvement to the HRA housing stock. Details are set out in Appendix 1; and</p> <p>1.15 Cabinet note the indicative 30-year Housing Revenue Account business plan as detailed within Appendix 1.</p>
<p><b>BEST Next Phase of Ways of Working Developments</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet note the proposals for the next stage of implementation and that the updated Strategic Business Case with associated delivery costs and revenue savings will be brought forward for Cabinet approval as part of the budget setting process in February 2025.</p>
<p><b>Blyth Relief Road</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet:-</p> <p>a) note progress to date on the Blyth Relief Road project;</p> <p>b) approve submission of the refreshed Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport for review and approval following approval of the Council budget in February 2025;</p> <p>c) delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Regeneration to authorise submission of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority on completion of the necessary documentation;</p> <p>d) approve £0.720m of capital expenditure to enable detailed design and development of the scheme and preparation of the planning application documentation to progress during 2024/25 to be funded from the virement of £0.720m of Local Transport Plan funds for schemes that were due to be delivered in 2024/25 but which are now being re-programmed for delivery in 2025/26;</p> <p>e) approve the proposed inclusion of a £5.006m match funding allocation within the Council's proposed MTFP, to be funded from Strategic Management Reserve for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28, which will be considered by the County Council when setting its overall budget in February 2025, and for £0.650m of this funding to be used to continue progressing the scheme to 'shovel-ready' status by the end of December 2025, to maintain</p>

	<p>the overall delivery programme for this strategically important project. This will bring the Council's total contribution to the project to £8.963 million, representing 15% of the estimated scheme cost; and</p> <p>f) approves the updating of the capital programme as set out in 10.9 Table 1.</p>
<p><b>Notification of the Estimated Collection Fund Balances 2024-25 – Council Tax and Business Rates</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the declaration of a surplus on the Collection Fund for the year ending 31 March 2025 in relation to Council Tax of £2.497 million to be distributed to the Council and Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner in accordance with Council Tax regulations; the Council's share being £2.305 million;</p> <p>(b) Cabinet note the overall estimated surplus on the Collection Fund for the year ending 31 March 2025 in relation to Business Rates of £7.958 million; the Council's share being £3.979 million;</p> <p>(c) Cabinet note the distribution of the estimated Collection Fund surplus for Council Tax to the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner of £0.193 million, and the distribution of the estimated Collection Fund surplus for Business Rates of £3.979 million to the Secretary of State; and</p> <p>(d) Cabinet note the inclusion of the Council's share of the estimated Collection Fund balances distributable in 2024-25 of £2.305 million surplus and £3.979 million surplus for Council Tax and Business Rates respectively, within the Council's budget 2025-26.</p>
<p><b>Corporate Risk Management</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet agree the contents of the report in accordance with its responsibility for ensuring effective risk management throughout the organisation; and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet note that the report will be presented to the next meeting of Audit Committee as a source of assurance in its role of monitoring the effective development and operation of risk management and risk-related issues across the County Council and as part of its ongoing evaluation of the framework of governance, risk management and control within Northumberland County Council's accounting group boundary.</p>
<p><b>Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group</b></p> <p><b>Cramlington Regeneration Programme Alexandra Park Activity Trail</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that</p> <p>a) Cabinet approve the spend of £0.150 million in 2025-26 to deliver the Alexandra Park Activity Trail project. This spend will be funded from the existing</p>

	<p>Cramlington Regeneration project in the capital programme; and</p> <p>b) Cabinet approve the amendment to the capital programme to reallocate £0.150 million from the Cramlington Regeneration project to the Cramlington Regeneration Programme Alexandra Park Activity Trail project in 2025-26.</p>
<p><b>Setting the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2025-26</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the proposals for the continuing implementation of the National Funding Formula for 2025/26 as agreed previously, in line with the recommendation of the Schools Forum meeting of 27 November 2024;</p> <p>(b) Cabinet approve the transfer of up to 1% funding from the Schools' Block to the High Needs Block, in line with recommendation of the Schools Forum meeting of 27 November 2024. Note any amount above 0.5% will require the approval of the Secretary of State for Education (SOS); and</p> <p>(c) Cabinet approve the delegation of the final formula values and transfer from the Schools' Block to the High Needs Block, to the Executive Director for Children, Young People and Education in consultation with Cabinet Member for Inspiring Young People in line with the principles previously agreed at Schools Forum on 27th November 2024, once the final budget allocations are released by the Department for Education in December 2024.</p>
<p><b>Conservation Area Character Appraisals for Alnmouth, Lesbury, Warkworth, Embleton, Seahouses and North Sunderland</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the contents of the Conservation Area Character Appraisals for Alnmouth, Lesbury, Warkworth, Embleton, Seahouses and North Sunderland be noted, and Cabinet endorse their use as an evidence base and guidance to help manage change in the Conservation Areas.</p>
<p><b>Northumberland Air Quality Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet approve the Northumberland Air Quality Strategy 2025-2030 and agree to it's publication.</p>
<p><b>Data and Insights to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well in Northumberland</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:-</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approve the use of the data on the JSNAA website where applicable to inform relevant policies, strategies and programmes across the Council; and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet agree the work plan for 2025-26 to further build our intelligence about Northumberland's health and wellbeing.</p>

## CABINET FORWARD PLAN

<p><b>Northumberland Food Strategy</b></p> <p>To approve the Northumberland Food Strategy and set out the context of activity moving forward in line with Northumberland's Economic Strategy,</p>	<p>11 February 2025</p>
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Inequalities Plan, Climate Change Action Plan and the North East Environmental Stewardship, Coast and Rural Growth Investment Plan.	
<b>Energy Central Campus Phase 2: Energy Central Institute</b>  This report updates Cabinet and seeks approval of the Outline Business Case and other key decisions regarding the development and delivery of the Energy Central Campus Phase 2: Energy Central Institute project.	11 February 2025
<b>Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-2029</b>  The report presents the updated Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-2029 to Cabinet (for recommendation to County Council) following the receipt of the provisional local government settlement which is due to be announced in December 2024. The report will also include an update on the deliverability of savings.	11 February 2025
<b>Revenues and Benefits Policies 2025/26</b>  A review of Revenues and Benefits policies for 2025-26	11 February 2025
<b>Care Quality Commission Assessment of Adult Social Care</b>  Report on the conclusions of the assessment of adult social care in Northumberland by the Care Quality Commission's (CQC), following their visit in August 2024. (Cabinet date dependent on when final report is received.)	11 February 2025
<b>Corporate Fraud Policies for 2025-26</b>  To seek approval for counter-fraud policies for 2025-26.	11 February 2025
<b>Newcastle International Airport - Governance Arrangements</b>  The report will seek approval in respect of governance arrangements and related matters concerning the Council's role as shareholder in Newcastle International Airport Limited.	11 February 2025
<b>Outcome of the Tender for James Calvert Spence College</b>  To give Cabinet an update on the outcomes of the tender process for the construction of a new school building for James Calvert Spence College and seek the delegated approved to award the construction contract.	11 February 2025
<b>School Admission Arrangements</b>  To inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation on School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and the home to schools transport policy. Approval (determination) of the admission arrangements and Home to School Transport Policy is also sought.	11 February 2025
<b>Summary of New Capital Proposals considered by Officer Capital Strategy Group</b>  This report summarises proposed amendments to the Capital Programme considered by the Capital Strategy Group on 19 December 2024.	11 February 2025
<b>Financial Performance 2024-25 – Position at End of December 2024</b>  Financial position as at December 2024 and an updated year end forecast for the council budget for 2024-25.	11 March 2025
<b>Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2026-36</b>	8 April 2025

<p>The Northumberland ROWIP is a statutory document setting out how the County Council will identify, prioritise and plan improvements across the PROW network for the next ten years. It sets out nine policies and associated actions that will form our strategy for the next ten years to be delivered through rolling three-year Delivery Plans.</p>	
<p><b>Richard Stannard House</b></p> <p>This report updates cabinet and seeks approval of the outline business case and other key decisions outlining the delivery of Richard Stannard House</p>	8 April 2025