

Northumberland County Council  
Communities and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2024-2025

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## **1. Terms of reference:**

- (1) To maintain an overview of the Management Agreements in place between the County Council and Active Northumberland, Woodhorn Museum Charitable Trust and Northumberland Tourism.
- (2) To monitor, review and make recommendations about:
  - Development Planning
  - Neighbourhood Planning
  - Conservation
  - Housing
  - Climate Change
  - Countryside, Biodiversity and Landscape Quality
  - Waste Management and Energy Use
  - Public and Community Transport Network and Travel to School
  - Highway Maintenance, Streetscape and the Local Environment
  - Local and Neighbourhood services
  - Crime, Community Safety, and Fear of Crime, including CONTEST, Prevent and Channel
  - Antisocial Behaviour and Domestic Violence
  - Fire and Rescue
  - Emergency Services and Emergency Planning
  - Customer Services
  - Provision of Cultural and Leisure Facilities
  - Improving Quality of Life through Access to Culture and Leisure;
  - Supporting Economic Growth in the Arts, Culture and Leisure Sectors

## **2. Issues to be Timetabled/Considered**

This will include work that the OSC can be more proactive in early stage development work in formulating new policies and strategies; to investigate matters of interest and concern to the wider community, and to keep under review the performance and financial position of the Council. Issues identified by the Committee for inclusion on the work programme are:

- Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans – development of the programme
- Northumberland Road Safety Strategy – use of members scheme funds and costings.

- Northumberland Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- New Section 106 system
- Housing Policy Statement

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**2 April 2025**

**Woodland and Tree Strategy**

To consider progress in finalising the Strategy.

**Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

To provide an update on progress.

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Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
1.	12 June 2024	<b>Great Northumberland Forest Programme Update</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that members noted the update.	No further action at this stage.
2.	12 June 2024	<b>Highways Maintenance</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that members received the presentation.	A further report will be presented to the next meeting.
3.	24 July 2024	<b>Highways Maintenance Drainage Operations</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet be asked to consider increasing the capacity for gully cleansing and road sweeping as outlined above and feedback on this recommendation be provided to the Committee in advance of the Administration setting the forthcoming budget.</li> <li>• A log be kept of landowner enforcement actions taken and be reported to this Committee.</li> <li>• The Leader be asked to contact all new MPs to ask them to honour the promised £184m over 10 years to highway maintenance and this be linked to RPI/CPI.</li> <li>• Information on how flooding incidents were reported and logged should be made available to the Committee.</li> <li>• Suitable equipment should be provided by the Council to volunteer groups set up to assist with gully cleansing activities.</li> <li>• Recommendations from the BEST review into highway inspections be reported to this Committee.</li> </ul>	Cabinet considered the recommendations on 8 October 2024. The Leader agreed to write to MPs as requested. A further update will be presented to the Committee confirming other actions and a report dealing with the BEST recommendations on Highways Inspections will also be added to the work programme when ready.
4.	25 September 2024	<b>Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Annual Performance Report 2024/25</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the contents of the NFRS Annual Performance Report be noted and its review continue to be included in the work programme on an annual basis.	The OSC will receive further reports including inspection outcomes as appropriate.

5.	25 September 2024	<b>Update on Library Service Redesign and Development</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that: (a) The contents of the report be noted. (b) The progress and achievements of the service be noted. (c) The service priorities for 2024/25 and 2025/26, be noted. These included a review of the Library Service and the development of a new Library Strategy to reflect the government guidance due to be published.	The OSC will continue to monitor the service as appropriate.
6.	25 September 2024	<b>Provision of Museum Services in Northumberland</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee: (a) Noted the presentation. (b) Supported the process that had been undertaken. They were of the opinion that it was important that accessibility to the county's heritage and cultural provision be improved for all Northumberland's residents. (c) Recommend that the Council progress with the Trade Unions engagement as outlined.	The Cabinet accepted the OSC's report on this matter at the meeting on 8 October 2024.
7.	30 October 2024	<b>Places for People Leisure Introduction</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the presentation be noted.	A further presentation on whole year operations be presented to the OSC in 2025/26.
8.	27 November 2024	<b>Highway Drainage Maintenance Action Plan</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the Communities and Place OSC: a) Thanked the administration for the additional funds that had been provided for the highway's drainage programme of work in 2024/25. b) Acknowledged the work that had been undertaken by officers since the meetings in June and July on the Highways issues. c) Receive an update on the position with regard to the emptying of the gully wagons in due course.	Further reports be presented to the Committee as appropriate.

			<p>d) Inform Cabinet that they supported the budget request in 2025/26 for more resource for preventative maintenance.</p> <p>e) Receive the update on the work undertaken on trees to date and that a further report be received in due course.</p>	
9.	27 November 2024	<b>S106 Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023-2024</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <p>a) The report and S106 Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2023-2024, be noted.</p> <p>b) A link to the Council's webpage regarding Sport &amp; Play be circulated to members of the Communities &amp; Place OSC following the meeting.</p>	This report continue to be presented annually.
10.	29 January 2025	<b>BEST Review of Regulation and Enforcement Activities</b>	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <p>a) A Communications Plan and / or training session be held for elected county councillors and Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>b) The implementation be reviewed in 12 months.</p> <p>c) Workforce report includes the Council's approach to ensure the optimum balance between staff working at home or in an office environment.</p>	A further update will be requested in 12 months.
11.	29 January 2025	<b>Common Allocation Policy Review</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported a review of the Common Allocation Policy and that full engagement with the process be obtained by the Registered Social Landlords.	The Committee may seek further updates on the completion of the review.