

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held on **Wednesday, 10 November 2021 at 5:30 pm** in County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland

PRESENT

Councillor L Grimshaw (Chair)

MEMBERS

C Ball
D Carr
J Lang
K Parry

M Purvis
J Reid
E Simpson
A Wallace

OFFICERS

M Carle
R Grealley

S Pearson

E Richardson

M Taylor
R Wealleans

G Younger

Lead Highways Delivery Manager
Assistant Democratic Services
Officer
Senior Manager – Specialist
Services
Senior Manager Specialist Services
– Poverty Lead
Executive Director
Neighbourhood Services Area
Manager
Accommodation Lead

One member of the press was present.

01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from E. Cartie, B. Gallacher, K. Nisbet, M. Richardson, A. Watson.

02 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 15 September 2021 and Wednesday 13 October 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

03 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBER'S INTERESTS

Councillor C. Ball informed the committee that she was employed by a Youth Service organization called Bad Apples North East.

04 LOCAL TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Local Services Director and Local Services and Neighbourhood Services Divisional Manager were in attendance to provide verbal updates about any key recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work and to respond to issues raised by members.

Neighbourhood Services

R. Wealleans, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager, provided an update as follows:

Grounds Maintenance

Grass Cutting:

- Grass cutting is now under continuous review, we will keep cutting until the surface becomes too wet. The aim being to stop just before surface damage, caused by our machines, is visible.
- We have seen some challenging periods this year due to near perfect growing conditions, we had a spell of very warm then wet conditions. The teams recovered well and ended the season with the grass at the standard we would expect.
- Finished the season on cut 11 in Ashington and 14/15 in Blyth
- Core cuts were achieved in all areas, and we were short in the additional cuts for Blyth by 2/3 in some areas due to weather conditions at the start of the season and requested to carry out other work in June/July with Grass cutting stood down at the bequest of the Town Council to carry out other works for the partnership which hindered progress.

Weeds:

- We continue to react to identified areas where needed and are currently attending to various Traffic Islands and Roundabouts within the district, please let us know of any locations you would like us to attend when resources allow during the winter period.

Street Sweeping:

- We are currently working on leaf hotspot areas to prevent localised flooding.
- Please bring any areas in need of sweeping to our attention.

Winter Works

- Our winter works programme is about to start, please come forward with any requests at your earliest convenience (in some areas Cllr walkabouts and meetings have taken place – we will work through lists agreed with Cllrs during recent walkabouts).
- As always, we will carry out core works first then move onto our prioritised list of requests and make every attempt to see what we can get through.

Waste Services

- Other than a few minor vehicle breakdowns, staffing shortages and covid restrictions, Residual, Recycling and Garden waste collection services are all operating well.
- Residual waste tonnage is still above the norm by around 20/30 tonnes per collection week.
- Garden Waste collections will come to an end soon - ends November/December.
- Income from garden waste exceeded target.
- Income from commercial waste and bulk collections are exceeding targets to date due to an excellent recovery following the initial impact caused by covid restrictions.
- Teams will continue to review existing collection rounds in order to cope with ongoing housing growth as well as continued growth in take up of the garden waste service.

Additional Information

- The kerbside glass recycling scheme trial has been extended by a further 12 months to help us gather more data on volumes collected, servicing efficiency and participation rates etc.
- A small number of additional properties have been added to the scheme in each area to improve the data we are analysing.
- The scheme is operating in Bedlington, Alnwick & Lesbury, Hexham and Morpeth and residents are being asked to present the glass bin for collection monthly. The scheme is for glass bottles and jars only.
- Our NEAT teams will attend all the usual war memorial locations to bring them up to the highest standard possible for the remembrance services.
- Excellent news, Northumberland gained 11 Green Flag awards for our parks. A superb effort by all involved in a particularly difficult year.
- In this area Ridley Park and Hirst Park gained Green Flag status.

Highways Services

M Carle, Lead Highways Delivery manager provided an update as follows:

All Highways Inspectors and maintenance crews continue to work inspecting, fixing carriageway defects, making repairs and making safe category one defects across the South East area.

Gully emptier is fully deployed dealing with reported issues and cyclic maintenance.

Larger Tarmac Patching

Larger Tarmac Patching has been carried out in the following locations;

- Bohemia Terrace, Blyth
- Falston Road, Blyth
- Beadnell Road, Blyth
- Woodhorn Road, Ashington
- Wansbeck Road, Ashington

Drainage Improvements:

Drainage Improvements have been carried out in the following areas:

- A192 Woodhorn, Ashington
- North Seaton Road, Newbiggin
- Duke Street, Ashington
- Ennerdale Road, Blyth
- Park Road, Ashington

The area teams are continuously looking at and programming future works both patching and drainage improvements.

LTP - Carriageway Resurfacing

LTP Carriageway Resurfacing schemes have been carried out in the following areas:

- College Road, Ashington
- Laverock Hall Road, Blyth
- Briardene R/A, Ashington
- Maple Crescent, Blyth
- Duridge Crescent, Blyth

Footway and Carriageway LTP Resurfacing have been identified and programmed for the following areas:

- Newsham Road, Blyth
- Newcastle Road, Blyth
- Norham Road, Ashington
- Bothal Cottages, Ashington

Winter Maintenance

A Winter Services Preparedness Report has been submitted as an information item. Happy to answer any questions relating to that item at that time

The following responses were made in response to questions and comments from members:

- There were only four gully emptiers to carry out work throughout the County. These were deployed in four areas; North, West, Central and South East. A plan was being drawn up to create a programme of work which would be hierarchal.
- They were working closely with R. Wealleans team to draw up the plan. There were new tests being carried out using carbon depth analysis to record the depth and effectiveness of the cleaning.
- Changes in policy had resulted in the reduction of gully emptiers. The service had always asked for more resources when possible.
- M. Carle was going to raise concerns regarding a zebra crossing light on Newbiggin Road and ensure that the appropriate action was taken.
- It was confirmed that any revenue made from additional services such as glass recycling collection went back into a general pot and wasn't given automatically to Local Services.

05 YOUTH SERVICES PROVISION

S Pearson, Senior Manager - Specialist Services and G Younger, Accommodation Lead, were in attendance to provide Members with information on the Youth Service. A copy of the power point presentation would be filed with the signed minutes and circulated to Members after the meeting.

Northumberland Adolescent Services (NAS) was made up of services to meet the needs of all adolescents across Northumberland and included:

- Youth Service Participation & Advocacy and Prevention/Detached
- Sorted Substance Misuse Service
- Youth Justice Service, Missing & Exploitation
- 14+/18+ Teams One & Two
- Accommodation Team
- Business Administration Team

An explanation was provided on the role and function of each of the services and how they supported young people in Northumberland around three distinct strands:

- Prevention
- Participation and Advocacy
- Early Help/Missing

The provision of universal youth services were developed and delivered across Northumberland working in partnership with the Voluntary Sector and it was through data analysis and feedback from partners it was decided in which area to deploy resources.

The following comments were made in response to questions:

- Youth services employ 35 members of staff on varying contracts. Many of the staff are on part time contracts.
- It was acknowledged that the Youth provision was limited but also highlighted that it was the only provision in the North East. The provision took a targeted approach. Youth Services worked with Adolescent Services to add provision where needed.
- Referrals to the Youth Service came from an array of sources. Generally, they were referred from Care team but could have also been through front door referrals. The young person who had been referred would have been offered an advocate to speak to them if they wanted to.
- Quarterly meetings had been introduced to share information and advice with Town and Parish Councillors.
- It was advised that the Neighbourhood Police would be a good way to report any potential concerns.
- Missing from Home service had a strong procedure and systems were in place. The service was made aware daily of any missing children. Measures were in place to ensure that every young person was safeguarded to an appropriate level. Escalation of cases were done when needed.
- Information would be passed on regarding numbers of referrals from different areas and members of staff by hour.
- It was assured that there was plenty of provision for young people through the Youth Service and Local Communities.

06 NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

M. Taylor, Executive Director and E. Richardson, Senior Manager Specialist Services – Poverty Lead were in attendance to present to Members information on Northumberland Communities Together. It gave an overview of the service and future objectives. A copy of the power point presentation would be filed with the signed minutes and circulated to Members after the meeting.

Northumberland Communities Together was an inclusive community and multi-disciplinary team approach that responded to the specific and emerging needs of residents and communities by fully optimising the knowledge, capability and capacity that existed within the community and amongst local networks and partnerships.

It outlined the aims of the service which included; reducing health inequalities and protecting the most vulnerable. The process for the response hub was outlined with the differing roles within the team. It was important that personalized solutions were found for those in need.

Community engagement and enrichment was explained which involved identifying and supporting partnerships within the community. Its aim was to make the best use of the assets and expertise already available within the community and to add complementary resources to enrich them.

The community hub investment team were working to create community hubs throughout the County. The hub design would be dependent on the needs of the

community. The flagship hub was in Cramlington and members were invited to visit it.

The following comments were made in response to Member's questions:-

- Members thanked the Officers and their teams for the hard work they have undertaken during the pandemic.
- Members noted that Northumberland County Council were leading the way with discretionary funding. The Household Support Fund was not means tested and it was confirmed that every penny would be used to help the front end of the service.
- Members noted that the Community Hub investment team would be looking to establish hubs throughout the County. Hubs were to be created in local areas where there was a need. Officers welcomed ideas from Members for potential Hub locations.
- Members noted there was a contact number that was for everyone; residents, Councillors and GP's etc.

07. WORKPROGRAMME

RESOLVED members noted the updated Work Programme.

08. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED members noted the date of the next meeting was Wednesday 15th December (Planning only)

The meeting closed at 5.03 pm

Chair _____

Date _____