

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

At a meeting of the **Cabinet** held at County Hall, Morpeth on Thursday 18 November 2021 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillor G. Sanderson
(Leader of the Council, in the Chair)

CABINET MEMBERS

Horncastle, C.	Riddle, J.
Pattison, W.	Watson, J.G.
Ploszaj, W.	Wearmouth, R.
Renner Thompson, G.	

OTHER MEMBERS

Scott, P.	Seymour, C.
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Hadfield, K.	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Hunter, P.	Senior Service Director
Johnston, N.	Climate Change Programme Manager
Lally, D.	Chief Executive
McEvoy-Carr, C.	Executive Director of Children's Services and Adult Social Care
Morgan, L.	Director of Public Health
O'Farrell, R.	Interim Executive Director of Regeneration
Roll, J.	Head of Democratic and Electoral Services
Taylor, M.	Director of Business Development and Communities
Willis, J.	Interim Executive Director of Finance and S151 Officer

Ch.'s Initials.....

56. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Flux and Stewart.

57. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S151 OFFICER

Budget 2022-23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022-2025

The report provided an update on the development of the 2022-23 Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period 2022 to 2025. This report also detailed budget proposals for 2022-23 to meet the budget gap, as a basis for budget consultation, prior to the receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23 in December 2021 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

The report was introduced by Councillor Wearmouth and the S151 Officer took members through the key points. The Leader highlighted the points from CSEG OSC.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the revisions to the assumptions within the 2022-23 Budget be noted;
- (b) the budget balancing measures for 2022-23 totalling £9.704 million be approved as a basis for budget consultation, prior to the receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23;
- (c) it be noted that further work is required to refine the Medium-Term Financial Plan and that there are still budget balancing measures required to be identified over the term of the Medium-Term Financial Plan;
- (d) the budget consultation strategy be noted; and
- (e) the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC be noted.

58. REPORT OF THE INTERIM SENIOR SERVICE DIRECTOR

Corporate Plan Refresh 2021-24

The report presented the Council's Corporate Plan for 2021-2024. The Plan built on the progress from the previous Corporate Plan and presented a refreshed vision, aims and priorities. This refresh took account of the changing social and economic context as a result of the Covid Pandemic and

the Council's priorities for leading recovery across the County in the coming months and years. The priorities in the Corporate Plan will be delivered through the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, Service Planning and Performance Frameworks (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

The report was introduced by the Leader. He advised members about a proposal to set up a conference in the new year to bring together partners who worked on Northumberland Communities Together to see what more could be done to help those parts of the County which most needed it.

He thanked Phil Hunter for the work he had done. Mr Hunter commented that the document was very useful for setting the strategic framework for officers to take into service planning, performance management and appraisals. It was a high level statement of priorities but was plugged into the organisation in a very detailed way, and was useful in providing a framework for conversations with the Council's partners.

The Leader referred to the report from CSEG OSC which had supported the report and agreed that helping the most vulnerable residents in the county and local community initiatives should be among the Council's priorities.

Councillor Wearmouth welcomed the Plan which he felt identified the Council's priorities clearly and concisely. He drew members' attention to the excellent performance of the Northumberland economy. In October, unemployment in Northumberland had been 4.3% compared to 5% in North of Tyne, 5.3% in the North East and 4.9 % in England. These figures were testament to how well the Council had navigated through the pandemic and to the programmes the Administration had had in place to ensure that people could get a job. The future was very bright for Northumberland.

In response to a question from Councillor Watson, Mr Hunter advised that following some further graphics work, the document would be shared with the public and partners.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the refreshed Corporate Plan 2021-24 to set strategic policy direction across the Council's Services and functions be agreed; and
- (b) the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC be noted.

59. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2) - Grant Funding

The report sought authorisation for the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Round 2 of £2.2m grant funding – for both receipt and spend of capital funding, and subsequent inclusion in the Council’s Capital Programme (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix C, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

The Leader thanked the Climate Change Team for their work in making climate change an integral part of everything that was done. Communities now needed to work with the Council to ensure that change was embedded. He noted that CSEG OSC had welcomed the report.

Councillor Horncastle asked how it would be possible to incentivise low income families to obtain Energy Performance Certificates. Mr Johnston advised that households who did not have them, but which it was felt would qualify, would be targeted to ensure that they got them as part of the grant funding.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet approve both receipt and spend of capital funding of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Round 2 of £2.2m grant funding, and subsequent inclusion in the Council’s Capital Programme; and
- (b) the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC be noted.

60. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S151 OFFICER

Northumberland Lottery Annual Update

The report provided the annual update on the performance of the Northumberland Lottery which was launched on 25 April 2020 following approval by Cabinet on 6 August 2019 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix D, along with the report of the CSEG OSC circulated at the meeting).

Councillor Wearmouth presented the report highlighting the key issues for members.

The Leader reported that this had been welcomed by Scrutiny and thanked staff for their work. He suggested that more could be done to promote the initiative so that communities could benefit even more from it.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet note progress to date;

- (b) Cabinet agree to support the continuation of the Lottery and appropriate marketing activities to further promote the scheme; and
- (c) the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC be noted.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....