



North Tyneside Council

Cabinet

10 September 2021

Monday, 20 September 2021 Room 0.02, Ground Floor, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, NE27 0BY **commencing at 6.00pm**. (Due to Covid precautions anyone wishing to attend should first notify Democratic Services - see below).

Agenda Item	Page(s)
1. Apologies for Absence	
To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.	
2. To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted	
You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.	
You are also invited to disclose any dispensation in relation to any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.	
Please complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.	
3. Minutes	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2021 (previously circulated)	

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and receive information about it. Please email democraticsupport@northtyneside.gov.uk or call (0191) 643 5358 if you wish to attend or require further information.

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Agenda Item	Page(s)
<p>4. Report of the Young Mayor</p> <p>To receive a verbal report on the latest activities of the Young Mayor and Young Cabinet.</p>	
<p>5. North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Programme</p> <p>To consider a closure report for the Authority's Covid-19 Recovery Programme detailing what has been achieved and how the Programme objectives have been met</p>	5 - 90
<p>6. Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up and Recovery and Renewal Challenge Findings</p> <p>To consider a report on feedback and key reflections from the Local Government Association team following their remote visit in June 2021 to review progress of the six corporate peer challenge recommendations and to carry out a Covid-19 recovery and renewal challenge.</p>	91 - 106
<p>7. 2021/22 Financial Management Report to 31 July 2021</p> <p>To receive the second budget monitoring report for the current financial year which reflects the latest indication of the potential revenue and capital position of the Authority at 31 March 2022.</p>	107 - 166
<p>8. 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Associated Engagement Strategy</p> <p>To consider a report outlining the process to be adopted for the Authority's Financial Planning and Budget process for 2022/23 as part of the proposed framework for the four years 2022/23 to 2025/26</p>	167 - 230
<p>9. Ambition for Education - Update</p> <p>To consider a report outlining the key strategic challenges currently facing the education system in North Tyneside, the work already underway and the further work required to tackle these challenges in partnership with educational leaders.</p>	231 - 254
<p>10. Bus Partnership</p> <p>To seek approval for the creation by the North East Joint Transport Committee of an Enhanced Bus Partnership for the region in accordance with the National Bus Strategy.</p>	255 - 262

Agenda Item	Page(s)
<p>11. North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2021-2025</p> <p>To consider a report on the outcome of a consultation exercise on a revised Tenancy Strategy for North Tyneside and to seek approval for a Tenancy Strategy 2021-2025.</p>	263 - 292
<p>12. Complaints Service Report 2020-21</p> <p>To consider a report on complaints related activity for the year 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.</p>	293 - 326
<p>13. Exclusion Resolution</p> <p>This is to give further notice in accordance with paragraphs 5(4) and 5(5) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 of the intention to consider item 14 below in private.</p> <p>Cabinet is requested to consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>Resolved that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and having applied a public interest test as defined in Part 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.</p> <p>Reasons for taking the item in private: it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).</p>	
<p>14. Havelock Place Extra Care Scheme, Backworth</p> <p>To consider a report setting out a proposal for the Local Authority to utilise its registered provider status to support the opening of a new extra care scheme at Havelock Place, Backworth.</p>	327 - 342
<p>15. Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 18 October 2021 at 6.00pm.</p>	

Circulation overleaf ...

Circulated to Members of Cabinet: -

N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)
Councillor C Johnson (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor C Burdis
Councillor K Clark
Councillor S Cox
Councillor S Day
Councillor P Earley
Councillor S Graham
Councillor A McMullen
Councillor M Rankin

**Young and Older People's Representatives and Partners of
North Tyneside Council.**

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: North Tyneside Covid-19 Recovery Programme

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor	Cabinet Member(s): Norma Redfearn CBE
Report from Service Area: Corporate Strategy and Customer Service	
Responsible Officer: Jacqueline Laughton, Assistant Chief Executive	Tel: (0191) 643 5724
Wards affected: All	

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Authority's Covid-19 Recovery Framework and associated work Programme, was agreed by Cabinet on 29 June 2020 and was based upon the strategic objectives from the Our North Tyneside Plan. It created a structured approach to recovery from the pandemic, with 3 clear phases of: restart; transition and rebuild and grow. The programme ran from June 2020 to July 2021. The purpose of this report is to close this Recovery Programme, in line with the timescales originally agreed by Cabinet

The Programme has been directed throughout, by the Elected Mayor and Cabinet with delivery overseen by an officer level Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG).

Appendix 1 of this report, is a closure report for the Programme detailing what has been achieved and how the Programme objectives have been met. All Programme workstreams have been successfully closed.

Since the start of the pandemic, 20,509 positive cases of the virus have been detected in North Tyneside; sadly, 481 people in the Borough have died. Local outbreak control arrangements with the NHS and other partners, have successfully managed the testing, track and trace and vaccination work for the Borough. North Tyneside has some of the highest compliance rates and take up for testing and vaccination, across the country.

The Authority has ensured support for those residents and authority employees who were classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. Open spaces and areas of natural beauty have continued to be maintained to provide a much needed outlet for maintaining personal wellbeing. Many local businesses have found new and innovative ways to continue trading during the pandemic and have been supported with an extensive range of advice and support from the Authority. Rapid and transformational service changes have taken place and the Authority will seek to keep these as part of its ongoing customer service programme. The Local Government Association recently described the Authority's response to the pandemic as 'commendable'.

This report signals the end of the Authority's emergency response to the pandemic. How the Authority and its partners address the longer-term effects from the pandemic, will be taken forward through a new Our North Tyneside Plan and the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board through a new Health and Wellbeing strategy to tackle health and socio-economic inequalities.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) note the North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Programme, End of Programme Report, Appendix 1; and
- (2) agree the closure of the North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Programme.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days-notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 16 July 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report is directly concerned with the delivery of the entire Our North Tyneside Plan.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

a) Recovery Framework and Programme

The North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Framework and associated Programme, established a structured approach to recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, with 3 clear phases: of restart (June 2020 – September 2020); transition (October 2020 – March 2021) and rebuild and grow (April 2021 – July 2021). It was built upon the strategic objectives from the Our North Tyneside Plan themes, of Our People, Our Places, Our Economy, and an additional theme of Our Organisation was also incorporated.

The recovery framework outlined 12 objectives aligned to the Our North Tyneside plan:

Our people

- To provide calm and resilient leadership – both within the Authority and across the Borough as a whole – mitigating the deep impacts of the pandemic on the Authority, communities, and the local economy.
- To protect the vulnerable as a priority.
- To restore hope and confidence in the future amongst communities and creating a platform for social recovery.
- To contain the spread of infection.
- To protect the safety of staff, residents and visitors.
- To address the impacts of the pandemic from an equalities point of view in relation to protected characteristics, health, wellbeing, education and income.

Our places

- To ensure Covid-secure open spaces and town centres to support confidence and to keep North Tyneside a great place to live, work and visit.

Our economy

- To support local businesses to enable economic recovery and growth.

Our organisation

- To ensure clear democratic oversight is in place.
- To follow national Government guidance in all that the Authority does and link in with relevant plans and initiatives at a regional level.
- To reflect the current context in North Tyneside – through evidence-based decision making with the ability to react and respond to opportunities and challenges.
- To evaluate and learn lessons as the Authority moves forward (“better never stops”)

Cabinet received an update on the progress made by the Programme, on 22 February 2021.

b) Recovery Coordinating Group

The Programme has been managed by the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG), reporting to the Elected Mayor, Lead Members, Cabinet, and the Authority’s Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

c) End of Phase Reviews

End of phase reviews were conducted at the end of phase’s 1 and 2 of the Programme, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including workstream leads, RCG members, Trades Union representatives, SLT, Elected Members and the Elected Mayor. End of phase reviews determined whether the Programme had achieved its objectives to date and was ready to proceed to the next phase.

d) Local Outbreak Control

Local Authorities have an ongoing statutory responsibility to have Local Outbreak Management Plans (LOMPs) in place for responding to emergencies in their areas, as part of their existing duty for safeguarding and protecting the health of their population. Authorities were initially tasked by Government, to produce specific plans by end of June 2020, in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The North Tyneside LOMP was most recently updated in March 2021. Its planned activity has been integral to the successful delivery of the North Tyneside Covid-19 Recovery Programme objectives and joint working between the Local Outbreak Management team and Recovery Programme teams, has been evident throughout the Programme

e) Local Government Association Recovery and Renewal Panel

On 22 May 2021, Cabinet agreed that the Local Government Association (LGA) would undertake a Recovery and Renewal Panel remote visit with North Tyneside Council, from 29 and 30 June 2021. Recovery and Renewal Panel visits are designed to help Local Authorities reflect and consider their approaches to recovery from the Covid-19

pandemic. Cabinet will be considering the feedback from the panel at its meeting on 20 September

1.5.2 End of Programme Report

Appendix 1 of this report is the final assessment of the Authority's Covid-19 Recovery Programme. This Appendix is the concluding assessment of the Programme's achievements and learning and signals the decommissioning of its resources and infrastructure. Section 4 of this end of programme closure report, Appendix 1, captures a detailed record of deliverables and achievements. An overview of this is set out below.

Multiple agencies have supported the approach of surveillance, infection prevent and control, contact tracing and epidemiology, to provide a whole system public health approach and action at scale. Regional and local structures, including political leadership, have ensured the consistent management of outbreak control. Intensive and tailored monitoring and support for high-risk settings including care homes, underserved groups, the vulnerable and those needing to self-isolate, has provided effective management of the virus within communities.

Since the start of the pandemic, 20,509 positive cases of the virus have been detected in the Borough and sadly, 481 people have died from the virus.

The North Tyneside Covid-19 Vaccination Board has operationalised the Authority's vaccination programme. Strong partnership working with the primary care network (PCN) sites ensured the early and rapid implementation of a localised vaccine offer. The Authority now ranks within the top quartile of local authorities nationally and within the top three regional authorities for vaccine roll out. As of 5 August, 74% of the resident population had received both doses of the vaccine.

Based on an understanding of the population's demographics and socio-economic circumstances, the Authority will continue to address poorer vaccine uptake within certain communities to help tackle enduring impact of transmission rates.

a) People

The Authority has mitigated the impact of the pandemic across the life course and sought to protect the most vulnerable residents. A collective effort with the voluntary sector, ensured the rapid mobilisation of a Local Support System that made over 19,000 welfare calls to provide regular support and contact and help to tackle loneliness and isolation. Those in need were provided with food, medicines and essential information to help navigate the pandemic. North Tyneside's approach to support for the vulnerable, was hailed as best practice by the Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Government.

North Tyneside students were able to continue their education at home with the provision of over 3,500 devices and 130 4G internet packages. The Authority minimised the number of those 'not in education, employment or training' by engaging with over 2,000 students leaving year 11 and year 13 to confirm their destinations after full time education. Digital projects, including the VODA Digital Champion Volunteers and the digital outbreak project has supported residents become digitally skilled and helped reduce the impact of isolation.

The Authority has supported those experiencing financial hardship with a flexible approach to the allocation of discretionary Covid-19 funding. Over 1,242 residents have received financial support when self-isolating and over £250,000 of emergency

assistance grant monies ensured food and essential supplies were received by those in need. Over 1,000 new applications for free school meals were processed, with 186,000 packed lunches, 25,000 hampers and over 7,000 holiday vouchers issued to support those families in need.

The North Tyneside Marshals, public space messaging boards and digital signs were utilised to provide strong public messaging and support confidence within communities. The Covid-19 correspondence team was developed to provide residents with high quality and consistent replies to enquiries. The Elected Mayor's Spirit of North Tyneside campaign recognised and celebrated the amazing collective effort of the Authority's staff, communities, voluntary and partner organisations.

The spread of the virus was contained by a multiagency approach to outbreak management. The Authority supported NHS and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues, to ensure effective track and trace arrangements were in place and work with local primary care networks ensured residents had access to local vaccination.

The Authority introduced processes and control measures across all Authority buildings and provided individualised support to all 45 North Tyneside care homes to protect staff, residents and visitors. In accordance with JVCI guidance, 1,349 employees were offered priority vaccination in line with their job role.

The Health and Wellbeing Board will work to address the impact of the pandemic on health and socio-economic inequalities with findings incorporated into a new health and wellbeing strategy and reflected within the priorities of the refreshed Our North Tyneside plan, which is due to be considered by Council at its meeting on 20 September.

b) Places

The Authority ensured North Tyneside remained a great place to live, work and visit with the continued delivery of essential Authority services from the outset of the pandemic and throughout. Refuse collection, highway maintenance, street cleaning and the reablement service, adapted their service delivery to ensure the service's continued effective and safe operation.

The Authority established an enforcement hub and the enforcement team worked with Northumbria Police to ensure businesses implemented safe and secure processes when restrictions started to ease.

20 North Tyneside Marshals were employed to provide a visible presence in high footfall areas, to respond to resident concerns and reinforce key public health messages.

Traffic management schemes were introduced along the coastal strip and within town centres to help support town centre businesses, encourage cycling and walking and maintain social distancing.

d) Economy

Working in partnership with the Business Forum, the Authority supported local businesses and helped stimulate economic growth with the distribution of 11 different Covid-19 grants, amounting to £65m of funding, distributed to over 4,000 North Tyneside businesses. A bespoke business consultancy programme was launched assisting over 200 businesses with specialist support and expertise.

A town centre recovery plan was developed to ensure the safe reopening of town centre businesses. The Authority closely monitored commercial unit vacancy rate to understand impact within town centres and supported local businesses launching the 'Buy Local' campaign and provided free advertising in the Our North Tyneside magazine. Hospitality businesses were supported with the provision of temporary pavement licences to allow the extension or introduction of outdoor food and drink amenities.

The Authority's back to work service helped tackle unemployment supporting the completion of 1,940 job applications and CVs, 392 enrolments in training course, 402 individuals gaining interviews and 370 residents securing employment.

e) Organisation

The Authority ensured clear democratic oversight remained in place throughout the pandemic, by delivering 69 virtual Cabinet, Council and other Committee meetings. Mayoral, local and PCC elections were held in May 2021 in a covid secure way.

The Authority recognised the importance of capturing and reacting to frequent changes in Government guidance and established processes to dissect and share guidance ensuring efficient action. National legislation and guidance were translated for a range of audiences to help communicate key public health messages.

In response to the launch of the Government's roadmap to recovery, the Authority established a roadmap action plan to track Authority actions and document the reopening and extended offer of service teams.

Throughout the pandemic, over 100 data dashboards, were produced to ensure the Authority remained informed and was able to respond to data and direct resources through evidence based decision making.

The Authority consulted with stakeholders throughout and in particular at the end of each phase of the Covid-19 Recovery Programme. Feedback from this engagement was used to inform and shape the Programme as it progressed.

The creation of a skills exchange ensured the continued operation of key council services and provided capacity to support the clinically extremely vulnerable people across the Borough with the redeployment of 267 employees.

f) Programme Closure

Section 5 of Appendix 1, details the learning from the Programme and how this will continue to shape the ongoing ambition and work of the Authority.

The closure of the Programme signals an end to the emergency response of the Authority and a return to a business as usual state, with a focus on building a better and thriving North Tyneside. There is a refresh of the Our North Tyneside Plan underway and this will reflect the ongoing priorities for North Tyneside from the pandemic.

Work has begun to understand the impact of the pandemic on health and socio economic inequalities and this will be used to refresh the Borough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy to tackle inequalities.

Work to both commemorate loss and celebrate the response to the pandemic across the Borough will continue as part of the Elected Mayor's Spirit of North Tyneside scheme.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet.

Option 1

(i) To note the Authority's Covid-19 Programme closure report in Appendix 1 and agree the closure of the Programme

Option 2

(i) To note the Authority's Covid-19 Programme closure report in Appendix 1 and not agree the closure of the Programme

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The end of Programme closure report has assessed the delivery of the Programme's objectives and where necessary, confirmed where ongoing support is in place, to ensure change continues to be embedded. The overall performance of the Programme and its management processes have been evaluated and lessons learned compiled, so that they may benefit any post Programme activity or future recovery programmes. Programme information has been reviewed and updated, including risks and finance. The disbanding of the temporary organisation of the Programme is explained in Appendix 1, along with the arrangements for any additional, post Programme activities.

1.8 Appendices:

North Tyneside Covid-19 Recovery Programme, End of Programme Report.

1.9 Contact officers:

Jackie Laughton Assistant Chief Executive, tel. (0191) 643 5728

Haley Hudson Customer Service and Digital Manager, tel. (0191) 643 7008

Colin MacDonald Senior Manager, Technical and Regulatory Services, tel.(0191) 643 6620

Carol Girvan Recovery Programme Manager, tel. (0191) 643 8946

David Dunford, Senior Business Partner, Finance, tel. (0191) 643 7027

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

(1) Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up and Recovery and Renewal Remote Visit Findings report to Cabinet 20 September 2021

- (2) [North Tyneside COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan](#) published on 12 March 2021
- (3) [North Tyneside Council Customer Service Programme](#) report to Cabinet 22 February 2021
- (4) [North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Framework](#) report to Cabinet 29 June 2020

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no further financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Within the financial years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, the Authority has managed over £107m of Government grants to support local businesses, residents, care homes and schools with financial support and additional Covid-19 related services throughout the pandemic. Details of both the income and expenditure relating to Covid-19 grants has been documented in all Financial Management reports to Cabinet, since the start of the pandemic.

2.2 Human resources

The priorities and work of two RCG subgroups, focused on Covid-secure workplaces and the wellbeing and support of Authority teams, have been combined, as part of the Programme closure process. This new Group will continue its work, post closure of the Programme, until at least December 2021. The Group will report at least monthly to the Authority's SLT.

Programme resources that will be released or retained following the completion of the Programme are detailed in section 10.7 of Appendix 1.

2.3 Legal

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

2.4 Consultation/community engagement

Throughout the Programme, views from stakeholders have been captured and used to help inform and shape the plans for subsequent phases. Engagement with key Programme stakeholders is outlined within section 1.5.7 of this report.

2.4.1 Internal Consultation

Consultation on the recommendation to close the Authority's Covid-19 Recovery Programme, has been carried out with RCG, the Authority's Senior Leadership Team and Lead Members.

Elected Members were provided with an online survey at the end of phase 1 and phase 2 of the Programme, providing feedback on the Programme's work and eliciting views about the effect of the pandemic on the communities they serve. This information was used to shape the plans of the subsequent Programme phase.

Authority teams have taken part in 3 pulse surveys, to assess the ongoing impact of the pandemic and also to seek feedback on a range of operational issues.

Trade Union representatives have supported their members from the outset of the pandemic and in addition to the existing pre pandemic engagement routes, additional meetings with Trade Union representatives and the Chief Executive and RCG Chairs, have taken place at least monthly.

2.4.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Residents were consulted during phase 1 of the Programme, through the Big Community Conversation in August 2020. The comments were incorporated into the 2020 State of the Area event and provided valuable insight for the public confidence and town centres workstreams in phase 2. The Authority's resident's panel also gave feedback in a bespoke survey about the Programme and shared experiences and views that were used to inform phase 3 plans.

Partners at both local and regional levels have been integral to the Programme throughout.

2.5 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.6 Equalities and diversity

In undertaking the process for Covid-19 Recovery Programme the Authority aimed to secure compliance with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty under that Act.

Equality Impact Assessments were carried out by each workstream undertaking an alternative approach to service delivery to remove or minimise any disadvantage for people with protected characteristics.

2.7 Risk management

The Covid-19 strategic and workstream risks have been reported to and reviewed by RCG on a monthly basis throughout the Programme. The risk log for the duration of the Programme, has been maintained by the Authority's Risk Manager with the log held centrally by the Authority's risk management team.

During the third and final phase of the Programme, there were 38 workstream risks open - 14 rated as high, 10 medium and 14 low. Most were linked to the final step in the Government's roadmap and as part of the Programme closure process, have been subsequently reviewed and closed.

There are 14 risks that remain open all of which will be transferred to relevant service areas for management as part of business as usual. The risks will be managed, in conjunction with the Authority's risk management team and as part of the Authority's risk management framework. A list of the remaining open risks and post Programme responsibilities can be found in Annex H, of Appendix 1, to this report.

2.8 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.9 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director(s)
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Assistant Chief Executive



North Tyneside Covid-19 Recovery Programme End of Programme Report





Elected Mayor, Norma Redfearn CBE

The past 18 months during the Covid-19 emergency have been very difficult times for us all, even more so for some of our most vulnerable residents. We have all been put in unfamiliar circumstances and at times, it hasn't been easy.

Words such as unprecedented, profound, life changing and many more, have all become commonplace in the narratives of the Covid-19 pandemic.

No report or commentary about the pandemic would be fitting without recognising loss. North Tyneside has seen 20,509 positive cases of the virus since March and 482, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, friends and colleagues, have sadly lost their lives.

I join the rest of the Borough in extending my deepest sympathy to their families, friends and communities.

Thankfully, the pandemic's legacy is not solely focused on disruption or loss and this report is testament to that fact. Our teams, communities, businesses, residents and partners have all united in their response to the pandemic; demonstrating a resilience and determination to care for and protect each other, our economy, and our Borough. Some of the rapid and transformational changes to the way in which services are delivered, have been hugely positive and welcomed by many. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to everyone involved.

The Local Government Association recently described North Tyneside's response to the pandemic and its recovery from it as 'commendable', and this is shown in the achievements and support that have been provided to our residents, Borough and economy, set out in this report.

Local outbreak control arrangements have been at the heart of the success of the recovery programme, mobilising the very best of our teams, NHS and community and voluntary sector. These arrangements have always played a pivotal role of protecting public health in North Tyneside and will continue to do so. Our resident and community response to vaccination take-up and personal responsibility to testing, stands out regionally and nationally.

Whilst we know we must all continue to live alongside the virus, this report signals the end of the Authority's 18-month emergency response to the pandemic and an ambition to building a thriving and even better North Tyneside for all.



Executive Summary

Welcome to the closing report for North Tyneside Council's Covid-19 Recovery Programme (the Programme).

The Authority's Recovery Programme created an early structured approach to longer term recovery, with 3 clear stages, built upon the strategic objectives from the Our North Tyneside Plan. It was agreed by Cabinet in June 2020 and has governed the Authority's management of, and recovery from the pandemic.

The Programme has been directed throughout by the Elected Mayor, Lead Members, and senior officers. The Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) has operationalised and enacted those directives, in partnership with Elected Members, our teams, communities, Trades Unions and partners.

This report looks back at the original Programme objectives agreed by Cabinet in June 2020 and asks - did we achieve what we set out to do and what have we learned for the future, to build a better North Tyneside?

As well as formal closure, and a product of the Programme, this report is a commemoration of the Authority's collective experiences and a celebration of the unprecedented achievements of many. Here are just a few of those achievements.

People

The protection of people who were deemed clinically or clinically extremely vulnerable has been one of the primary aims of the Programme.

We have continued to support over 16,000 vulnerable residents, many of whom needed to shield, responding at pace to stand up a local support system which carried out over 12,000 welfare calls to help combat anxiety and loneliness.

Our response has been described as best practice by the Ministry for Housing, Culture and Local Government. The monumental volunteering effort coordinated with and delivered by our partners across the community voluntary sector, has been truly unprecedented. We saw a huge number of new volunteers come forward to get involved in schemes such as the Good Neighbour Project, supporting those needing to shield and the Community Health Champion scheme, ensuring key health messages were shared within our communities.

RCG and Local Outbreak Control teams have worked together to support the NHS to deliver an impressive Programme of testing, track and trace and vaccination. Over 90% of North Tyneside residents have now received their first vaccination and over 70% are now fully vaccinated. North Tyneside's vaccine uptake rate is impressive and one of the highest in the region.

Our teams have worked with people who had no permanent home, providing temporary accommodation and ensuring they were safe and had access to essential hygiene supplies.

We made sure those most in need of financial support received it, providing bespoke welfare assistance, with the distribution of discretionary payments, emergency food and essential household items. We paid over £80K to residents who needed to isolate.

All social care customers continued to receive a tailored response to their care needs in a way that prioritised their health, safety, and wellbeing.

The 45 local care homes were given intensive and individualised support to ensure consistent standards of safety for their residents and staff, including the



provision and use of personal protective equipment.

The pandemic has revolutionised, at pace, the use of digital technology but not everyone was able to benefit from this. Several streams of work were undertaken to address digital exclusion, including digital skills and literacy and the rapid deployment of over 3,500 laptops and tablets and 130 internet packages to children and families. VODA deployed their digital champions to provide support to residents, helping them set up an email account and register for online shopping.

We processed over 1,000 applications for free school meals and made sure those entitled to free school meals, received vouchers to support our most vulnerable families with food costs over the school holidays.

Place

All essential services to maintain the safety of residents and protect the natural beauty of the Borough, continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic, including refuse collection, highways, housing repairs and street cleansing.

The household waste and recycling centre now has an online appointment booking system. This has reduced queueing times, resulting in a better customer experience and fewer emissions.

Consistent signage has been maintained in the Authority's public spaces, such as play parks and beaches, to ensure adherence to their use in a Covid-19-secure way.

The Elected Mayor's Spirit of North Tyneside saw a Borough wide celebration in 2020, for exceptional customer and community service; over 150 nominations were received.

Bereavement services have continued to support families and friends, with Covid-secure funeral services.

An enforcement hub was immediately set up at the start of the pandemic and has dealt with hundreds of customer complaints and supported local businesses to comply with Covid-19-secure measures.

Temporary traffic management schemes were introduced in three town centres, one district centre and the coastal strip, to maintain social distancing measures in line with Government guidance.

Economy

Over 300 adult learners and apprentices were provided with online lessons and resources for 22 different distance courses.

Businesses in North Tyneside received bespoke support with over 200 businesses accessing our newly established consultancy service. We provided advice and guidance to businesses on how to reopen and operate safely via social media and distributed over 1,600 newsletters to businesses.

We made sure financial support reached those who needed it quickly; we processed and distributed £65m through 11 Covid-19 business grants, to over 4,000 businesses.

A town centre recovery plan for the reopening of the four town centres was developed to safely reopen and support our high streets.

Match funding was secured through the North of Tyne Capacity Fund, which enabled the voluntary and community sector to continue to deliver their employability project through Covid-19.

Organisation

We have continually tracked and monitored data throughout the Programme and produced over 100 dashboards to understand and respond to key issues such as, outbreaks, compliance with



and work absence. We ensured national guidance was implemented and aligned our response to provide a coordinated approach with our regional partners.

We helped instil confidence amongst our businesses, residents and teams and ensured our public open spaces, council workplaces and public buildings, were open and operating in a Covid-secure way. We provided strong messaging on social media, in addition to public signage in areas of high footfall. Covid-19 risk assessments were carried out across all council buildings, determining a maximum capacity level to ensure the safety of visitors and colleagues at each site.

Democratic functions have continued throughout the Programme, moving from remote council and committee meetings, back to in person meetings in phase 3 of the Programme. In May 2021, we delivered a Covid-secure election, managing a huge increase in the number of postal vote applications, we delivered the results of not one, but three franchises.

The IT helpdesk supported colleagues to continue providing services to customers from home, by answering over 400 calls a day and resolving queries with a quick turnaround.

A skills exchange was created, to ensure any staff member unable to carry out their substantive role, could be redeployed into areas with high or new demand. Over 300 staff have been redeployed into different roles, since the start of the pandemic.

Over two thirds of the organisation are in a workplace or community setting, delivering services. Following the most recent Government guidance, we are delivering a phased return over the Summer, ready for September 2021, for those colleagues still being asked to work from home.

Safe, healthy, and happy workplaces are pre pandemic organisational workforce priorities, that remain steadfast. In addition,

pre-pandemic priorities for ensuring the best possible accommodation for our teams, will continue to be delivered. We'll work to understand the risk and impact from all respiratory illness and ensure that our teams work in buildings and venues that promote their wellbeing and support them to deliver services in line with the Customer Promise.

Building a better North Tyneside

We know that we must all continue to live alongside the virus. The successful completion of the Covid-19 Recovery Programme signals an end to our emergency response and a return to a business-as-usual state, with a focus on building a better North Tyneside – creating the conditions for a Borough that continues to thrive.

There is a refresh of the Our North Tyneside Plan underway and this will reflect the ongoing priorities for North Tyneside from the pandemic. Linked to that, is the work already started to understand the impact of the pandemic on socio economic inequalities. We'll be doing more on this over the Summer by speaking to residents, Members and partners and it will be used to refresh the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy with the North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board.

Thank you

No report will ever be able to fully capture every individual, organisational and community response to this pandemic. The Recovery Coordinating Group would like to thank every person who has contributed to the success of the Programme.



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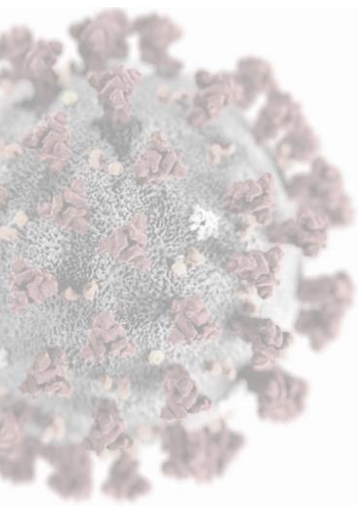
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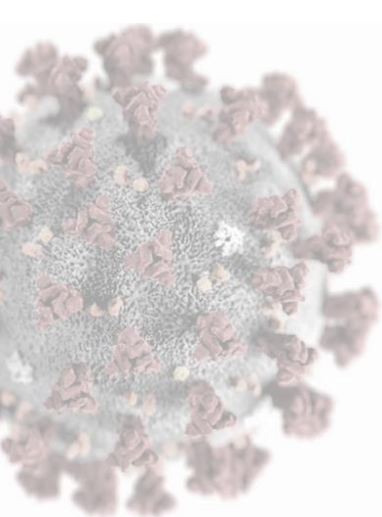


1. Purpose

- The purpose of this report is to successfully close North Tyneside Council's Covid-19 Recovery Programme.
- The report is the final assessment of the Programme's deliverables and denotes the decommissioning of its resources and infrastructure.
- The report will assess the delivery of the Programme's objectives and where necessary, confirm where ongoing support is in place, to ensure change continues to be embedded.
- The overall performance of the Programme and its management processes have been evaluated and lessons learned compiled, so that they may benefit any post Programme activity or future programmes.
- Programme information has been reviewed and updated, including risks and finance.
- The disbanding of the temporary organisation of the Programme is explained, along with the arrangements for remaining groups to complete any additional post programme activities.

Local Authorities have an ongoing statutory responsibility to have Local Outbreak Management Plans (LOMPs) in place for responding to emergencies in their areas, as part of their existing duty for safeguarding and protecting the health of their population. Authorities were initially tasked by Government, to produce specific plans by end of June 2020, in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The North Tyneside LOMP was most recently published in March 2021. Its planned activity has been integral to the successful delivery of the North Tyneside Covid-19 Recovery Programme objectives and joint working between the Local Outbreak Management team and Programme teams, has been evident throughout the Programme. However, the LOMP and Covid-19 Recovery Programme are independent entities, albeit each underpinning the work of the other. The LOMP and its governance structure are important considerations in post Programme arrangements, covered later in this report, but they are not evaluated as part of the Programme closure process.





2. Introduction

The North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Framework and associated Programme established a structured approach to recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, with 3 clear phases: of restart; transition and rebuild and grow. It was built upon the strategic objectives from the Our North Tyneside Plan themes, of Our People, Our Places, Our Economy, and an additional theme of Our Organisation was also incorporated.

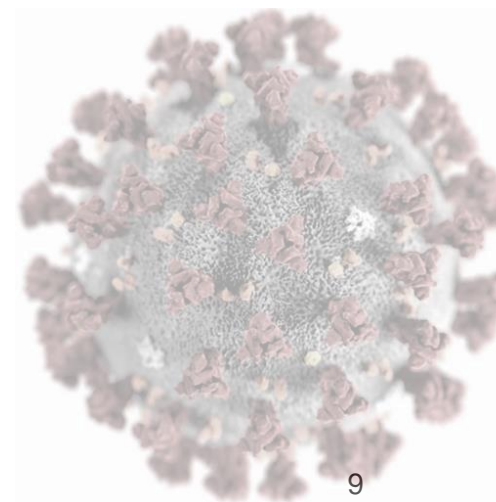
The Programme was agreed by Cabinet on 29 June 2020.

The Programme established 31 workstreams that would ensure the Authority was able to:

- allow the continued delivery of front-line services in a Covid-19 safe way,
- ensure the workforce was protected,
- reshape public spaces,
- support schools and childcare providers to operate safely,
- assess the impact on businesses, and
- monitor the social impact on communities.

The Programme has been directed throughout by the Elected Mayor, Lead Members, and senior officers. The RCG has operationalised and enacted those directives, in partnership with Elected Members, our teams, communities, Trades Unions and partners. Annex I describes the governance arrangements over the course of the Programme.

Cabinet received an update of progress of the Programme on 22 February 2021, from the first two phases.





3. Programme Approach

3.1 Programme objectives

The Programme agreed by Cabinet in June 2020, had 12 objectives and the subsequent Programme plan and tools used, were designed to track, and assess progress of these objectives.

3.2 Programme planning assumptions

The Programme agreed by Cabinet, defined a set of planning assumptions aligned to the Government's Covid-19 Recovery strategy, May 2020.

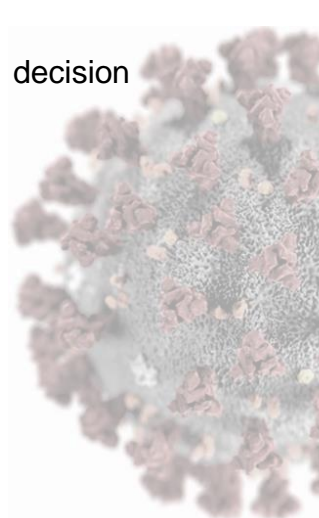
At each end of phase review, RCG assessed and where necessary, amended the planning assumptions to ensure they reflected the most up to date Government legislation and guidance.

3.3 Recovery Coordinating Group

The Programme has been managed by the RCG, reporting to the Elected Mayor, Lead Members, Cabinet, and the Authority's Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

RCG has:

- coordinated and monitored the Programme plan and its workstreams,
- provided a robust reporting process from RCG to SLT and Cabinet on workstream progress; and escalated issues where necessary
- ensured the analysis of risk at workstream Programme and strategic levels
- monitored financial impact of Covid-19 recovery
- considered the allocation of Covid-19 grants and provided documented decision making
- consulted with stakeholders and provided relevant recovery information
- ensured robust end of stage evaluation processes
- ensured the Programme reflected regional recovery priorities
- provided guidance and assurance to workstream activity
- identified and agreed resources to facilitate workstream progress
- developed Programme planning assumptions at each phase





- kept oversight of and considered the interpretation and application of Government guidance for the Programme

RCG has been supported by a dedicated support team, fulfilling a Programme Support Office role.

RCG membership has been flexed and adapted during the Programme. Shifting as part of the end of phase 2 review March 2021, from SLT membership and some senior Tier 3 officers, to solely Tier 3 officers, for the third and final phase. This change in membership reflected the priorities from the Government's Covid-19 Response - Roadmap out of Lockdown, Spring 2021. It also meant that the focus of the Authority's Director team could shift, to assessing the longer-term impact of the pandemic over the next 4 years.

Council partners, Capita and EQUANS (formerly Engie), have continued as members of RCG throughout the Programme.

3.4 Programme plan and workstreams

A programme plan has structured the Programme's objectives across 31 workstreams, each given its own senior officer lead(s) and Lead Cabinet Member(s).

From the outset, and throughout the Programme's 3 phases, the support team has met at least monthly with workstream leads to monitor and review progress.

Monthly progress reports were used to determine the potential for workstream completion or workstream progression to the next phase. Workstream review documents were agreed by workstream lead(s) and responsible Cabinet Members, before being incorporated into each end of phase report. All final workstream review documents are enclosed as Annex F.

3.5 End of phase reviews

End of phase reviews were conducted at the end of phase 1 and phase 2, involving a comprehensive range of Programme stakeholders, including workstream leads, RCG members, Trades Union representatives, SLT, Elected Members and the Elected Mayor. End of phase reviews ensured RCG were able to:

- scrutinise the end of phase findings including stakeholder feedback, a summary of key achievements, lessons learned and best practice,
- discuss completion of milestones and agree the recommended closure of workstreams,
- agree the delivery confidence assessment for progression to the next recovery phase,
- give consideration to the current national and local outbreak control position, and
- refresh the Programme planning assumptions to ensure their relevance to that specific point in time.



3.6 Engagement and involvement

Throughout the Programme, views from stakeholders have been captured and used to help inform and shape the plans for subsequent phases.

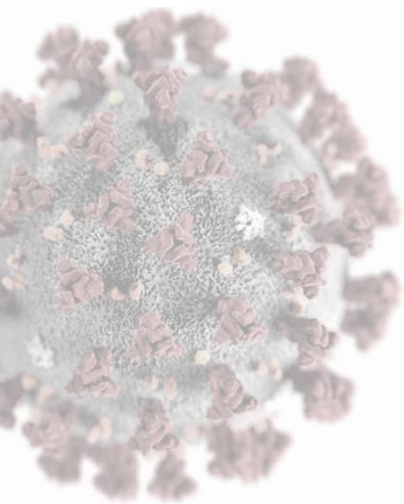
Elected Members completed an online survey at the end of phase 1 and phase 2, providing feedback on the recovery Programme and impact of the pandemic on the communities they serve.

Residents were consulted during phase 1 through the Big Community Conversation in August 2020. The comments were incorporated into the 2020 State of the Area event and provided valuable insight for the public confidence and town centres workstreams in phase 2. The Authority's resident's panel also gave feedback in a bespoke survey about the Programme and shared experiences and views that were used to inform phase 3.

Our teams have taken part in 3 pulse surveys, in addition to the robust health and wellbeing support framework, put in place at the start of the pandemic.

Trade Union representatives have supported their members from the outset of the pandemic and in addition to the existing, pre pandemic TU engagement routes, additional recovery meetings with RCG Chairs and the Chief Executive have taken place monthly.

Partners at both local and regional levels have been a key ingredient of success for the Programme, to meet its objectives and ensure work in North Tyneside, was contributing to wider efforts.





4. Delivery of Programme Objectives

In line with the Our North Tyneside Plan, the Programme was designed to meet 12 objectives, also set out in Annex B. This section of the report describes the key deliverables in meeting those objectives.

4.1 Our people

Objective - To provide calm and resilient leadership – both within the Authority and across the Borough as a whole – mitigating the deep impacts of the pandemic on the Authority, communities, and the local economy.

- **A digital outreach project** was launched in September 2020 and will run for 3 years with a coordinated approach to providing basic digital skills for residents within community settings. Participation levels are expected to increase from July 2021 in line with easing of Government restrictions.
- **Digital Champion Volunteers sponsored by VODA**, have supported residents to use digital devices, remain independent and feel more connected to their friends and family. In only two weeks a resident was taught how to text messages, use email to register accounts on websites, attach documents to emails and carry out online shopping.
- New e-learning packages were developed providing advice on **nutrition for children** to help our young people stay healthy.
- **Remote interventions for weight management** were developed for families, teenagers, and adults, providing 1-2-1 advice and support.
- A weekly timetable of **online fitness classes** were successfully launched targeted at hard to reach groups, to keep residents active.
- An online **Summer of Cycling campaign** was launched to encourage outdoor activity.
- To keep children active Covid-secure **school delivery programmes** were reintroduced including Bikeability training and Hoops for Health.
- **Connexion’s advisers facilitated interactions with over 2,000 students** leaving year 11 and year 13, to confirm their destinations in September 2020 and minimise levels of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET). We saw only a slight increase in ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ (NEET) levels.
- **Virtual family time sessions** were established so families could still spend quality time together during lockdown. This was a temporary measure, and the Authority was

“ I loved the Active North Tyneside online fitness class, it’s great when you’re working from home and sat down most of the day ”

Lynda via Facebook



legally required to return to a face to a face family offer as soon as possible, in line with Government guidance and restrictions.

- **Online courses to enable adult learning and apprenticeship courses** were delivered virtually. 22 different distance learning courses were provided including - teaching, childcare, counselling, employability, English, and maths. The Employment and Skills team supported over 300 learners in 2020-21 to ensure they continued their courses.
- During the period December 2020 to the end of April 2021, **£845,000 of Covid-19 Winter Grant** funding was used to cover costs of food and warmth for vulnerable residents including funding food vouchers, replacement household goods, clothing, food, hot meals, and utility bills.
- Those who were financially impacted by the **need to isolate** were supported with the distribution of Government funding with 'main scheme' and discretionary payments made to 1,242 residents.
- The Schools Improvement Service **supported the provision of a remote learning offer** by identifying those students without access to online devices or data packages and ensuring the appropriate kit was rolled out to those families who needed it.

Objective - To protect the vulnerable as a priority.

- **A Local Support System (LSS)** was developed which **redeployed 85 employees** and made over **19,000 welfare calls to our vulnerable residents** who had to shield. The service not only assisted with signposting residents to other support services but helped reduce anxiety and combat loneliness.

The LSS took a proactive approach to making welfare calls, contacting everyone on the clinically extremely vulnerable list, who could possibly need support.

By June 2021, the local support system concluded its work, having transferred all remaining residents in need of ongoing support, to **other support mechanisms**.

- **A full review of those classed as 'vulnerable'** was undertaken at various points during the pandemic to ensure those needing support, received it. North Tyneside Council's **support for the vulnerable** was hailed as **best practice** by the Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Government.
- Working with voluntary and community sector organisations and the clinical commissioning group, we produced **a series of magazines, entitled 'Navigating or Living Well'**, providing information and advice to residents. Over 28,000 copies were delivered to residents on the shielding list, assisting residents access services both during and beyond the pandemic.
- **Community health champions were established by VODA** with the recruitment of 150+ North Tyneside residents to ensure up to date, trusted health messages were shared with people they knew. The health champions worked with communities to



provide effective messaging and facilitate feedback ensuring we stayed up to date with what people were feeling and thinking as we moved through the pandemic.

- At the start of the pandemic, **our residents without a permanent home were provided with emergency bed and breakfast accommodation** to ensure they were safe and had access to essential hygiene supplies.
- Children of those families in greatest need received free school meals, with **over 1,000 new applications for free school meals processed** due to an increase in Universal Credit claimants.
- **185,798 packed lunches were prepared for North Tyneside pupils** and 5,734 for out of Borough schools. **25,559 schools' hampers** were delivered to pupils entitled to free school meals.
- **87 schools were provided with a hybrid school meal offer** for vulnerable students or the students of critical workers, ensuring all pupils were offered a meal who needed one.
- Home to school transport was reconfigured so that **736 children and young people travelled to school safely** within their school bubbles.
- **135 pupils were supported where families chose to home educate.** An increase of 72 pupils from before the pandemic.



VODA Good Neighbour volunteer, Sherill, went above and beyond supporting Sylvia who needed to shield but wanted to bring some colour to her time inside. Sherill searched high and low to find the right 'pink' hair dye which she dropped off with Sylvia's weekly shopping delivery.

- **The school improvement team provided extensive home learning resources** and deployed the Department for Education 'laptops for schools' project, so children could continue their education from home. A combination of schemes provided **3,500 devices and 130 4G internet packages** to students and residents in North Tyneside.
- **VODA coordinated a collective organisational and volunteering effort** to ensure everyone from the council, to Age UK, to roundtable, were involved. This provided a rapid and unprecedented volunteering effort within our communities with many new volunteers now keen to continue volunteering.
- **The VODA Good Neighbours Project** was part funded by the Authority to provide support to residents that were vulnerable and shielding. 430 Good Neighbour volunteers supported 3,200+ residents with access to food and medication. The project delivered 1,440 food parcels and collected 756 prescriptions throughout its course.



- **Customer services set up a dedicated Covid-19 line** to support residents who were required to shield or self-isolate and signposted them to additional support.
- Volunteers from the customer services team, supported the voluntary sector prepare **300 Christmas food parcels** for those who were shielding.
- The Engie Income Management Team **developed a system to enable residents to pre-pay for their shopping** and processed £80,614.31 of payments enabling vulnerable residents to stay safe and self-isolate.
- **Food and essential supplies were provided to our most vulnerable residents** with the use of £256,179.61 of local Authority emergency assistance grant.
- The volunteer team supported our vulnerable young people who were required to shield by working with students from Newcastle University to create **isolation activity packs for children** unable to return to school.
- Our Engagement Team administered a meal voucher scheme to provide vouchers during the school holidays for those children entitled to free school meals. **7,021 vouchers were issued by the summer term 2021**, providing support to those families in greatest need.

“ For us as a school, and for our families, being able to access council services over the holidays to sort out any queries or problems with the free meal voucher scheme was invaluable ”

Ele Dobson
Greenfields Primary School
Wideopen

Objective - To restore hope and confidence in the future amongst communities and creating a platform for social recovery.

- Our communication plan ensured **strong public messaging** on social media, visual messaging boards and signage in areas of high footfall and worked with regional partners to develop a regional marketing campaign.
- **North Tyneside Marshals** were deployed to help allay our residents' concerns about adherence to Government guidance, with 20 Marshals operating in areas of high footfall reinforcing key public health messaging.
- The **Customer First** team was established to manage the **increase in Covid-19 enquiries** from the public and council Members. The team had specialist knowledge of the council's approach to managing the pandemic and were able to provide efficient and bespoke responses to resident enquiries.
- The **Spirit of North Tyneside campaign** was designed in partnership with VODA to showcase the amazing contributions of local people in keeping their neighbours and communities safe during the pandemic. 129 nominations were received with short films released daily in December 2020 highlighting our **amazing collective effort**.



Objective - To contain the spread of infection.

- Working with partner organisations, the community and voluntary sector, clinical commissioning group, safeguarding team and political leaders we **established a multiagency approach to outbreak management** in the form of The North Tyneside Outbreak Control Group and Covid-19 Health Protection Board.
- Working with our NHS and clinical commissioning group colleagues, we **establish vaccination hubs in 3 of the Borough's localities** ensuring our residents had local access to vaccinations.
- Provided support to our NHS and clinical commissioning group colleagues to **extend their community vaccination offer**. By 31 July 2021, 281,771 adult residents had received their first vaccine dose and 125,334 had received their second dose vaccines, amounting to over 70% of North Tyneside adult residents receiving both vaccine doses. As the result of the collaborative work, North Tyneside's vaccine uptake rate is one of the highest in the region.
- Our Public Health and Schools Improvement team worked with schools to **establish an in school and subsequent home testing Programme** within a 4-week period, undertaking risk assessments and recruiting additional staff to ensure secondary schools were ready to undertake testing after the Easter 2021 holiday period.
- Our Public Health team and redeployed staff from Leisure and Cultural Services **established an asymptomatic testing site** to provide regular asymptomatic testing for critical workers who needed to leave home to undertake their work. Almost 13,000 tests were carried out with 49 positive cases identified.
- Supported partner colleagues in establishing **2 full time and 2 weekend community symptomatic testing sites**, providing access to walk in and pre booked testing.
- Supported by the VODA community health champions, a testing centre was established at the Islamic Cultural Centre to **provide community testing provision for areas of the community most at risk of infection**.
- Our HR team established the **Skills Exchange, categorising the skills of 1,354 council, 232 partner and 40 school-based employees** displaced as the result of the closure of their usual place or work or service. This enabled the efficient redeployment of 267 staff to key priority areas including - the local support system, rapid community testing site, North Tyneside Marshals, beach watch scheme, vaccination Programme and the Our Places subgroup team.



People were ready to step up and offer support as we worked to minimise the spread and keep on top of the virus – including Whitley Bay Islamic Cultural Centre and Masjid, who we supported to create and host a pop-up testing and vaccine clinic.



- Our Prevent and Protect team developed webinars and specialist training sessions to **understand and combat vaccine hesitancy** amongst care staff and help increase vaccination uptake to keep our residents in need of care, safe.

Objective - To protect the safety of staff, residents, and visitors.

“North Tyneside Council, as Covid hit and we went into lockdown, were singularly the most important people to me and the home”

Lucy Craig
Craig Healthcare

- Our Adult Social Care team undertook robust risk assessments and provided individualised support to ensure **all social care customers continued to receive a tailored response** to their care needs.
- Our Prevent and Protect team helped keep our care home residents safe by **providing intensive individualised support across all 45 North Tyneside care homes.**

- Various streams of **guidance around how to undertake ‘safe teaching’** was developed to ensure our teaching staff were able to return to the classroom safely.
- In line with JCVI vaccination guidance, **1,349 council colleagues** were offered priority vaccination due to their job role.
- **Online health and safety masterclasses** were offered to local voluntary and community sector organisations ensuring their safe use of PPE and the safe operation of CVS buildings.
- During the emergency response period a **‘workplace and public buildings recovery standard’** was produced to help building managers ensure a consistent approach to standards across all council buildings.
- A **building based Covid-19 risk assessment template** was developed for use across all council buildings in addition to a **task based Covid-19 risk assessment template.**
- Our HR team developed a **Covid-19 risk assessment template and Covid-19 1:1 process** to help managers provide individual support to their team members.
- **Workplace protocols and manager briefing** sessions were developed for managers, partners, and Elected Members.
- **83 buildings and 25 outdoor sites were made Covid-secure** including the physical installation of measures and relevant signage including:
 - 536 screens,
 - 196 barriers to maintain social distancing,
 - 50 pull up banners in reception areas,
 - 16,428 packs of wet wipes,



- 153 number discs for swimming lockers and changing rooms,
- 19,200 individual waste bags for desks,
- 994 sanitiser units installed, and
- 12,458 printed Covid-19 related signage.

- **Covid-secure capacity plans** were drafted to ensure the safe operational use of buildings, support the safe operation of the 2021 election, postal vote opening and count sessions and provided plans for the return of cabinet and full council meetings from May 2021.
- A **desk booking system** was developed and rolled out to monitor the number of staff working in office buildings and ensure capacity was not exceeded.
- The **Health and Safety Executive** carried out spot checks and premise inspections, with positive feedback received and no further action required.
- **Investigations of Covid-19 outbreaks in buildings** were carried out with subsequent review of risk assessments, control measures and roll out of additional measures where RCG deemed necessary.

Objective - To address the impacts of the pandemic from an equalities point of view in relation to protected characteristics, health, well-being education and income.

- As part of the phase 2 Programme review process, the recovery team met with a range of council service experts and partner organisations including the CCG, Citizen's Advice and Patient Link to undertake a **point in time assessment and gain an insight** into what was being **heard and felt** by front line workers in relation to **inequalities**.
- A report entitled Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was produced on health and socio-economic **inequalities in North Tyneside**, assessing the direct and indirect impacts the pandemic and provided an analysis on the impact of equalities across the life course including - deprivation and income, geography and surroundings, people with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups.
- A **new Health and Wellbeing Strategy** will be drafted by November 2021, to tackle health and socio-economic inequalities.
- A **refreshed Our North Tyneside Council plan** was produced outlining the council's vision to build back better and deliver – a thriving, family friendly, caring, secure and green North Tyneside.
- The Parks Sports Centre and Hadrian Leisure Centre **facilitated NHS blood donation clinics and diabetic eye screening clinics** throughout the early period of the pandemic.

4.2 Our places

Objective - To ensure Covid-secure open spaces and town centres to support confidence and to keep North Tyneside a great place to live, work and visit.



- **Footfall sensors in town centres and visitor locations** were introduced, providing real-time data and allow us to deploy additional resources where necessary.
- **Traffic management schemes** were introduced to strike the right balance between pedestrians, cyclists and drivers whilst still maintaining social distancing measures.
- The **Snowman and the Snowdog Trail** provided a socially distanced activity, safely attracting 60,000 people into our town centres.
- **Tennis court bookings** increased by 450% in the first 4 months of re-opening - the highest usage of the courts we have ever seen.
- In response to the launch of the Government's roadmap to recovery, an Our Places subgroup was established to proactively **manage the impact of easing Covid restrictions** within our public spaces. An action plan was produced to ensure we provided **Covid-secure and accessible open spaces** and support public confidence to keep North Tyneside a great place to live work and visit.
- **95 leisure staff** undertook **litter picking** duties within the community, keeping our Borough clean and attractive to visitors during periods of service closure.



The day job had to continue, and our colleagues worked tirelessly to provide essential services through difficult times. Residents were patient, supportive and appreciative of all of our colleagues who were out and about keeping the borough moving. One street showed its appreciation for our refuse teams with a ten minute round of applause as they collected the bins.

4.3 Our economy

Objective - To support local businesses to enable economic recovery and growth

- The Buy Local campaign was launched to **promote local businesses** and help stimulate trade in our town centres.
- **2,396 visitors** were welcomed back to the **Whitley Bay mini golf and footgolf** and since the facility reopened.
- **Commercial unit vacancy rate monitoring** was increased in frequency to allow a better understanding of the impact within our town centres.
- Since reopening, our 5 **indoor leisure sites** have attracted 305,135 customer visits, 31,775 customers attended a **group exercise class**, 92,048 visits have been made to our **Contours gyms**, with 87,313 visits to our **swimming pools**.
- **Businesses were supported to reopen safely** through the roadmap stages by providing information via North Tyneside Business Forum's website, social media, and emailed newsletters to 1,600 members.

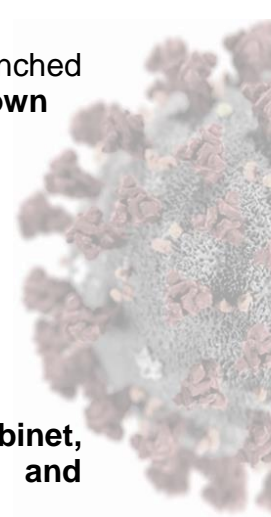


- A **town centre recovery plan** for the reopening of the 4 town centres was developed to safely reopen and support our high streets.
- **Temporary pavement licences** were processed to support the reopening of hospitality businesses serving outdoor food and drink.
- In July 2020, the **back to work service** was established and supported customers through over 10,000 interventions, providing early support to help our businesses safeguard jobs.



Thanks to our Business Recovery Programme, hundreds of businesses have received vital support in the most challenging circumstances. One of these was QFit Gym, in Dudley, where owner Dave was worried about how the gym would recover after lockdown. He has since been able to keep hold of all his staff, plan for the future and is even looking to add to his team.

- The back to work service **supported those in unemployment** with the completion of 1,940 job applications and CVs, 392 enrolments to training courses, 402 individuals gaining interviews and 370 residents securing employment.
- **11 Covid-19 business grants** were managed with £65m of funding was paid out to over 4,000 North Tyneside businesses.
- A **bespoke business consultancy programme** was launched, which assisted over 200 businesses.
- 2 business incubator programmes were launched to provide **expert support to digital and town centre businesses**.



4.4 Our organisation

Objective - To ensure clear democratic oversight is in place

- The democratic process of the council continued with the provision of **69 Cabinet, Council and other Committee meetings which were held virtually and livestreamed**.
- A **Covid-secure election** was delivered, with more than 400 staff, counting almost 200,000 votes across 3 franchises, culminating in the re-election of Mayor Redfearn, the re-election of Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness, and the election or re-election of 23 Ward Councillors.
- **The 2021 Annual Council meeting** was delivered successfully, with the appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council, the appointment of Councillors to all Committees, and received details of the Elected Mayor's new Cabinet and portfolios.



Objective - To follow national Government guidance in all that the Authority does and link in with relevant plans and initiatives at a regional level.

- RCG **tracked the Government roadmap to recovery** and established a council wide roadmap action plan to track actions and document the reopening of services to ensure each step was understood and approached in a consistent way.
- On a daily basis, **changes to Government guidance** were dissected and shared with the relevant services to ensure current guidance was captured, communicated, and actioned efficiently.
- The Cabinet set out a **phased, long term approach to recovery** starting with three distinct phases linked to the Government's Covid-19 Recovery Strategy, as well as the regional economic recovery framework. The Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) has delivered a recovery Programme under the headings of restart, transition, rebuild and grow, with specific timelines and delivery targets.

“ I don't think we could have done our job without the help of North Tyneside Council ”

Inspector Nicola Seymour
Northumbria Police

- **National legislation and guidance was translated for a range of audiences** to help communicate expectation and how to implement changes.

Objective - To reflect the current context in North Tyneside – through evidence-based decision making with the ability to react and respond to opportunities and challenges

- A **skills exchange was created**, to ensure any staff member, unable to carry out their substantive role, could be redeployed into areas with high or new demand. As part of the Skills Exchange, 1,354 council, 232 partner and 40 school-based employees were skills assessed and 267 staff were redeployed to priority areas.
- Over the pandemic, over **100 dashboards** have been produced to support Covid-19 decision making groups as well as keeping the public informed via social media.
- In partnership with our neighbouring Authorities, a **regional ‘Thank You’ campaign** was delivered to help influence behaviours around safety measures and encourage vaccination.
- The **Recovery Coordinating Group met over 100 times** to react and respond to opportunities and challenges throughout the pandemic.

Objective - To evaluate and learn lessons as the Authority moves forward (“better never stops”)



- **Three pulse surveys** have been carried out, to monitor the impact of restrictions and the pandemic on individuals and their teams. Results have directly shaped the Programme and the Authority's approach to supporting the wellbeing of the workforce.

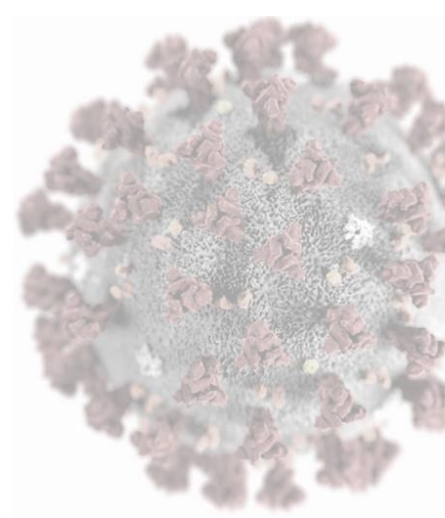


One of our repair men made a friend. While repairing a window, he the house's youngest resident entertained while he got the job done. Providing some smiles to our residents through a difficult time.

- In the summer of 2020, **106 phone conversations took place with residents as part of the Big Community Conversation.** Conversations were around 40 minutes each and gathered feedback on how the Authority had performed and identified any emerging concerns residents had.

- At the start of the pandemic, all **face-to-face customer services were switched to telephone or email.** An additional 20,000 contacts were handled in the Contact Centre in 2020 compared to 2019.

- **Face to face services customer services reopened in May 2021.** A total of 421 appointments were made in the first month, with positive customer feedback received on the efficiencies of the appointment system.





5. Key Learning and Best Practice

Key learning and best practice have been gathered for use in future programmes and to support the continued transition of the Authority's services from emergency response, to business as usual.

Key learning and best practice has been assessed at 3 levels:

- programme management
- programme delivery, and
- workstream delivery insights.

5.1 Programme management

Purpose and aim; the Programme was built upon a set of clear strategic objectives, agreed by Cabinet and this steered the work of the Programme throughout. The objectives were based on the existing Council Plan themes, providing a clear, consistent, and familiar anchor for the Programme, particularly when external factors were less controllable. This shared understanding helped communicate the purpose of the Programme with a wide range of stakeholders and supported the end of phase review process.

Starting early; recovery planning was started quickly at the outset of the pandemic and was a result of well-rehearsed, local, and regional emergency response planning and arrangements.

Programme structure and phasing; the Programme was deliberately structured to move the Authority and Borough through 3 distinct phases of recovery. End of phase reviews have been undertaken, providing an opportunity to formally assess progress with a wide range of stakeholders; check deliverables against Programme objectives and where necessary, refine planning assumptions.

Programme support team; was a dedicated resource that organised the planning and execution of the Programme plan, monitored and recorded workstream progress, tracked risk, monitored overall progress, liaised with stakeholders, and lead both end of stage and end of Programme reviews.

National guidance and information; the Programme support team established a centralised point to review and disseminate legislation from Public Health England and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, ensuring the Programme was responsive to the most up to date Government information and guidance.

Programme communication; a single point of communication was established at the outset of the Programme within the Authority's communication and marketing team. This controlled consistency of facts and messages with all stakeholders, both internal and external to the Authority and ensured links with regional and national pandemic response teams.



- Where possible, existing, and well tested communication methods with residents, Cabinet, Elected Members, Trades Unions representatives, senior leaders and our teams were utilised – this minimised additional stress on resources and helped create consistency and stability.
- New communication mechanisms for Programme reporting included weekly written and verbal reporting to Lead Members, regular pulse surveys with all team members as well as weekly Chief Executive bulletins.

Decision making; typical programme tools were used to record key RCG meetings and activity and over 100 information dashboards have been developed and utilised, since the pandemic was announced.

An additional information and decision support tool was developed in phase 3 of the Programme, to help Lead Members and SLT, assess local progress on the Government's Roadmap out of Lockdown, introduced in March 2021.

Programme documentation; the documents and products that have been produced throughout the Programme, have been collated and stored in a resource hub, for future benefit and use by other programmes.

5.2 Programme delivery

- Programme communication to stakeholders, recognised the diverse requirements of each group. A wide range of channels including digital, video, social media, local press, council website, council newsletter and street signage, were used to keep all stakeholders up to date with national and, regional and local messaging. Targeted messaging for specific groups such as young people or specific communities, was particularly successful in responding to areas with high infection rates and / or low vaccine take up. Translation of key information into specific languages, ensured no groups were excluded but was also able to target clusters of high infection rates and low vaccine take-up.
- Key messaging about the pandemic was agreed with LA7 and sometimes LA12 partners. This provided residents and our teams with clear and consistent information, in relation to infection control, the vaccination programme and availability of local council services. It also helped combat some of the misinformation about the virus and the Government's response on social media.
- The Programme objectives, planning assumptions and their review at each end of phase, supported RCG and the Authority and its partners in key decision making.
- Many of the Programme's deliverables would have been impossible to achieve without the strong foundation and maturity of existing relationships with the local community and voluntary sector and other public sector partners in the NHS and fire and rescue. The successful management and containment of the virus, impressive vaccination rollout and commended local support hub, are all testament to these relationships.



- The Good Neighbour project, delivered in partnership with VODA, provided a trusted and well-established mechanism, to manage, expand and rapidly deploy the network of volunteers to support vulnerable people.
- Work to support local businesses both financially and with compliance to national restrictions, has undoubtedly helped support the recovery of the local economy and protect people from the harmful impact of the virus. The bolstering of enforcement resources and the calming presence of North Tyneside Marshals have created a trusted and calming physical presence throughout the Borough.
- In preparation for the easing of the national restrictions, we developed a re-opening plan for our town centres which included management of public spaces/parks, evening economy, street cleansing, transport, and community safety activity.
- Reopening is more difficult than closing. The 3-phase approach to the Programme, has proved particularly successful in managing the reopening of council services and businesses. The structured approach to the Programme, has provided sufficient time and planning for this work to be undertaken.
- All council services have seen an increase in the number of enquiries from residents about their services and the impact of national restrictions. This increase and its impact on the ability of services to continue to support residents, was quickly recognised at the end of phase 1 review. In response, a central correspondence team was established in January 2021, providing much needed additional capacity, and diverting traffic away from front line service delivery.
- In phase 3 of the Programme, RCG coordinated the approval process for the use of discretionary central Government grants. This provided strategic oversight and coordination of grant spend, avoided duplication and ultimately targeted use of the money, in delivering Programme objectives.

5.3 Workstream delivery insights

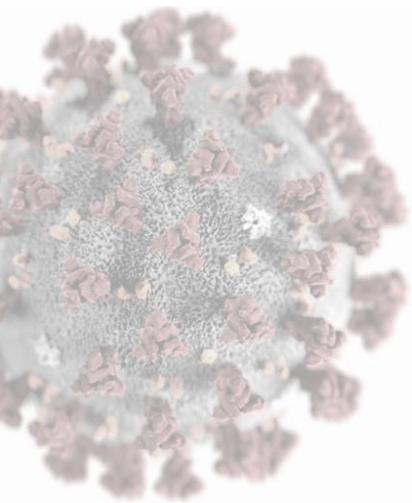
The critical need to safeguard and protect and enforced Government restrictions, has without doubt created significant challenges for many of our services and those of our partners in this Programme. This has however created many positives which the Authority and its partners will consider as they move to the post pandemic normal. These include but are not exclusive to:

- an environment for rapid and positive service transformation,
- increased collaborative problem-solving and even closer partnership working across Authority teams and its partners,
- sharpened agility and pace in decision-making,
- heightened sense of community with an increase in volunteering activity, being recognised through the Elected Mayor's 'Spirit of North Tyneside',



- a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, and
- produced a cleaner environment.

A full list of lessons learned, and best practice identified throughout the Programme by workstream leads, can be found in Annex D. This has and will continue to shape the delivery of Authority services, for its residents and with its partners.



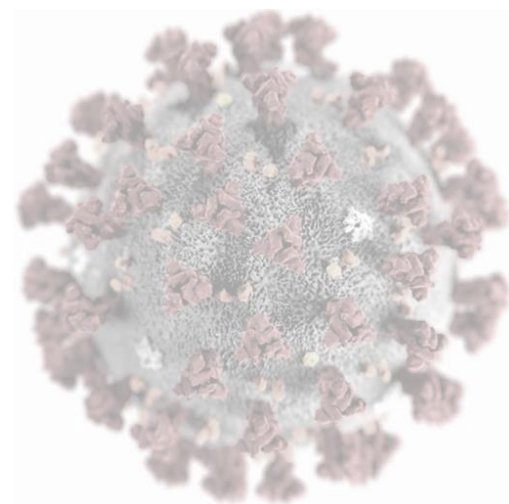


6. Programme Products

A comprehensive list of Programme products can be found in Annex C.

The key products and tools are detailed below.

- **The key decision log** provided a chronological record of all key decisions that were made by RCG with supporting files containing the decision-making information, reports, and key decision request forms.
- **The key decision request form** was used to ensure services requesting RCG approval for a decision were providing the correct supporting evidence.
- **The action log** documented key actions from RCG meetings that would be reviewed and updated at the beginning of each meeting.
- **Grant claim forms** were created to track and evidence spending of Covid-19 related grant monies the Authority had received.
- A **workstream review template** was developed at the end of phase 1 as part of the Programme end of phase review process. The template supported the review the progress for each workstream, documenting progress on milestones and assessing their readiness to proceed to the next phase. The template was reviewed and amended for use as part of the phase 2 and phase 3 review processes.
- The **Programme plan** specified the milestones for each workstream. The plan was used by the Programme support team to monitor workstream progress of these milestones and record monthly updates from workstream leads.
- A **Programme hub** has been created and launched on the Authority's workforce training and development platform, Learning Pool. This collates all documentation from the Programme for use in future programmes and projects.





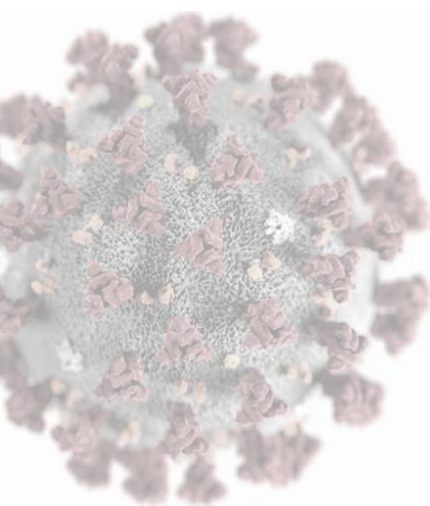
7. Risk Management

The Covid-19 strategic and workstream risks have been reported to and reviewed by RCG on a monthly basis throughout the Programme. The risk log for the duration of the Programme, has been maintained by the Authority's Risk Manager with the log held centrally by the Authority's risk management team.

During the third and final phase of the Programme, there were 38 workstream risks open - 14 rated as high, 10 medium and 14 low. Most were linked to the final step in the Government's roadmap and as part of the Programme closure process, have been subsequently reviewed and closed.

There are 14 risks that remain open all of which will be transferred to relevant service areas for management as part of business as usual. The risks will be managed, in conjunction with the Authority's risk management team and as part of the Authority's risk management framework.

A full list of the remaining risks and post Programme responsibilities, can be found in Annex H.





8. Finance

The Authority has played a key role in supporting businesses, residents, care homes and schools with financial support and additional Covid-19 related services throughout the Pandemic with over £107m of grants being managed. The Authority has also suffered financial impacts due to loss of income because of closures and restrictions on facilities it operates and additional costs resulting from Covid-19 in relation to its 'business as usual' activities.

Grants received have been categorised into the following 5 areas:

1. Support to council services

The Authority's services have been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. These services were supported in 2020/21 by just under £16m of Local Authority Support Grant and just under £6m of compensation for losses incurred against income due from sales, fees, and charges. Services such as catering (including school meals), sport & leisure and adults social care were the most impacted. The tables in Annex G show how the grant received has been used to support services across the Authority.

2. Support to residents

The Authority was awarded just under £12m to support its residents during the pandemic. This ranged from ensuring our most vulnerable were protected, individuals that needed to self-isolate still had access to the services they required and ensuring residents could visit our coastline and other attractions safely, when guidelines allowed, through the employment of North Tyneside Marshals and other such safety measures.

The Authority was awarded just under £6m for Contain Outbreak Management, with funding being provided in instalments over the last half of the financial year. £5m of this grant has been carried forward into 2021/22 and the Authority's Recovery Coordinating Group, in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team have plans in place to spend the remaining balance in 2021/22, to ensure the containment of any outbreaks as we continue to see an easing of restrictions.

“We were able to meet the needs of people facing financial hardship due to the pandemic, via a number of grants, in the form of payments, vouchers, food parcels and help with utility bills.”

Andrea Robson
Gateway Team



3. Support to businesses

The Authority has managed over £66m of grant funding aimed at supporting businesses across the Borough. During 2020/21, £55m of grant funding was awarded and paid out to over 5,500 businesses within North Tyneside. A further £11m is expected to be paid to businesses in 2021/22.

“I just wanted to express our most sincere thanks. The restart grant will make a huge difference and help us to continue to give the young people of North Tyneside good quality experiences. I know you all work so hard to provide these grants and I wanted you to know that it is much appreciated”

Craig Wakeman
Wallsend Sea Cadets

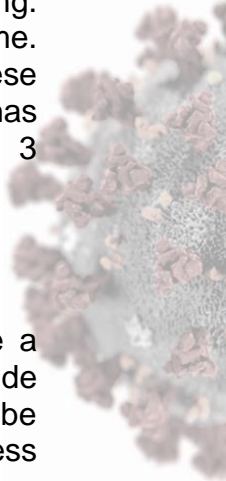
4. Support to care homes

The Authority was awarded over £5m to support the care homes within the Borough. The majority of this funding was passed over directly to the care homes. The remaining funding has been used to support the Authority’s adult social care services for infection control and testing activities.

5. Support to schools

Over £2m of grant funding was passed over to our maintained schools during 2020/21. This funding helped secure equipment necessary for children to continue to learn from home when schools were closed and supported schools to be able to offer a Covid-safe environment when government guidance allowed children to return to school.

The Authority has received a range of grants from Government to fund this additional activity and the financial impact on the Authority’s normal services. Annex G outlines the grants received, spend in year and the outcomes related to each grant.



9. Post Programme Arrangements

9.1 Programme workstreams

All Programme workstreams have now closed, with no outstanding milestones remaining. There were 6 remaining workstreams open in the final week of phase 3 of the Programme. A progress review on the delivery of the phase 3 milestones for each of these workstreams has been carried out as part of the Programme closure process. It has concluded that all open workstreams have delivered all milestones. The phase 3 workstream progress reviews can be seen in Annex F.

9.2 Communications

A representative from the communication and marketing team will continue to be a member of the North Tyneside Outbreak Control Board. They will also continue to provide key links with regional recovery activity. Any pertinent and relevant information will be disseminated by standard organisational internal communication, social media, and press releases.

9.3 Government guidance

The Programme support team will continue to monitor all Government bulletins and information received and will continue to record and distribute key details as required. This process will remain in place until the end of October 2021.

9.4 Lead Member Briefing (LMB) and RCG dashboard

The final weekly report from RCG to Lead Members was carried out on 23 August and the final written Lead Member briefing, was circulated on Friday 30 July 2021. To ensure the Elected Mayor and Lead Members are able to continue to successfully lead the impact from the pandemic in the Borough:

- the dashboard of key performance indicators, developed by RCG, will continue to be shared with the Elected Mayor and Lead Members weekly, and
- a senior representative from the Outbreak Control Board, will attend LMB monthly, to report the latest information.

9.5 Reporting to leadership forum

Programme reporting to the Leadership Forum will conclude in September 2021, with a summary presentation and sharing of a celebration and achievement video for our teams.

9.6 Commemoration and celebration

The RCG subgroup, established to oversee the work of both commemorating and celebrating the impact from and response to the pandemic, will continue to operate until



at least December 2021. The Chairs of the Group will report directly to SLT, with relevant updates to the Elected Mayor, Lead Members and where needed, Cabinet.

9.7 Safe, happy, and healthy workplaces

The priorities and work of the 2 subgroups focused on Covid-secure workplaces and venues and the wellbeing and support of our teams, have been combined, as part of the Programme closure process. The Group will continue its work, post closure of the Programme, until at least December 2021. The membership and priorities of the Group have been refreshed. The Group will ensure;

- Government guidance issued on 14 July, in relation to working safely, is implemented appropriately and in line with Government guidance for a phased approach during the Summer, ready for September 2021,
- Living with a respiratory illness, including Covid, will be considered as a workplace risk, and appropriate support and actions will be developed to ensure we support all of our teams and customers, and
- Space and ventilation considerations for our teams in workplaces, will be built upon the work we began just before the pandemic, in response to the Health and Wellbeing Survey where office-based staff were really clear about personal workspace and access to their own desk.

The Chairs of the Group will report directly to SLT with relevant updates to the Elected Mayor, Lead Members and Elected Members and Trades Union representatives.

9.8 Outbreak control

Local Outbreak Control arrangements will remain in place to respond to the ongoing management of outbreaks. This includes delivery of the LOMP.

9.9 Business continuity

During the final phase of the Programme, it was necessary for RCG to consider pressures brought about by the number of people in our teams required to self-isolate and the impact this had on the delivery of council services. Service areas business continuity plans were reassessed and continue to be managed.

9.10 Step 4 delivery plans

RCG tracked the council's response to the Government roadmap to recovery using a roadmap action plan, detailing individual service areas responses for each roadmap step. Population of this action plan concluded with the Programme and contains 'point in time' reporting reflective of service area plans as of 31 July 2021. Service area plans will be monitored by the relevant service area senior manager.



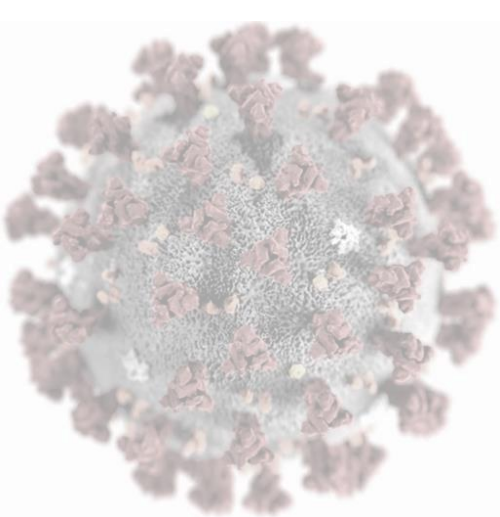
9.11 Contain grant funding

The allocation of any remaining Contain funding will be overseen by David Dunford as finance officer responsible for Contain and as a previous RCG member with continued ratification by the Director of Resources.

9.12 Building a better North Tyneside

We know that we must all continue to live alongside the virus. The successful completion of the Covid-19 Recovery Programme signals an end to our emergency response and a return to a business-as-usual state, with a focus on building a better North Tyneside – creating the conditions for a Borough that continues to thrive.

There is a refresh of the Our North Tyneside Plan underway and this will reflect the ongoing priorities for North Tyneside from the pandemic. Linked to that, is the work already started to understand the impact of the pandemic on socio-economic inequalities. We'll be doing more on this over the summer by speaking to residents, Members and partners and it will be used to refresh the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy with the North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board.





10. Closure

The Programme was created to provide a phased approach to recovery over 3 clear phases, with delivery of all Programme strategic objectives by the end of July 2021.

10.1 Programme workstream milestones

As outlined in the methodology section of this report, a review was undertaken at the end of each phase to assess workstream progress and determine a confidence assessment for progression to the next phase. At the end of phase 1 and phase 2, the Programme was allocated a green / amber assessment as the majority of workstream milestones had been delivered. By the end of phase 3 and on conclusion of the Programme, all remaining phase 3 workstream milestones had been achieved and closed off as complete, with no outstanding actions remaining.

10.2 Programme objectives

Evidence to support successful delivery of the Programme objectives is outlined in section 4 of the report and provides a summary of the work delivered by the Programme workstreams. These key Programme achievements are also captured visually by the Recovery Programme celebration video.

10.3 Lessons learned

Over the course of the Programme our teams have had to do things differently, including adapting services and drawing on relationships with partner organisations. From these experiences, we've been able to identify learning, look to assess where services have been delivered differently, and now look to embed areas of best practice and help services redesign to enable us to build back better.

10.4 Risks

All open risks have been transferred to the relevant service area Director and will be managed in conjunction with the Authority's risk management team and as part of the Authority's risk management framework. A full list of the remaining risks and the services who will be responsible for them, can be seen in Annex H.

10.5 Finance

Since March 2020, the council has managed 27 grants, totalling £66m. With the help of these grants, the council has been able to provide support to our workforce, residents, businesses, care homes and schools.

10.6 Post programme

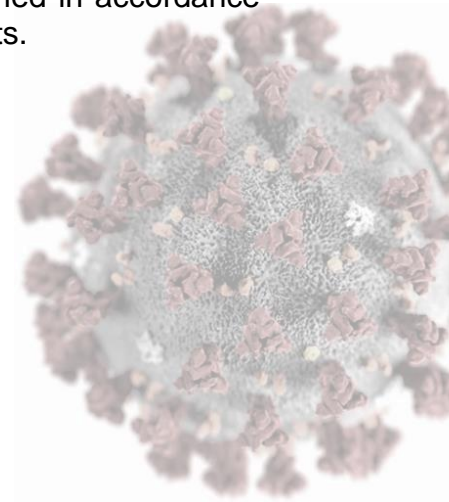
Post Programme activity has been identified in section 9.



10.7 Resources

The following provides a summary of the resources that will be released or retained following the completion of the Programme.

- The Programme support team will continue to support sub-groups established by RCG including the Commemoration and Celebration group. As outlined in the previous section, the Programme team will continue to notify relevant service leads and Directors of changes in Government guidance and legislation daily until the end of October 2021.
- The correspondence team will remain in post until January 2022 to provide continued support on Covid-19 related enquiries and pre complaints.
- Over the team's operation, there has been considerable positive feedback about the unique offer the team has provided to residents and customers. To build on this, a formal review will be undertaken to evaluate the benefits of the team and its approach and look at how this informs the Authority's Customer Service Programme.
- The Local Support System was stood down in June 2021 in line with the Government's advice to end shielding for the clinically extremely vulnerable. All seconded staff were returned to their substantive posts.
- Additional IT equipment within schools will continue to be maintained, so pupils can learn remotely if required to self-isolate.
- To enable key Council and committee meetings to be held in person, in a safe way, a new PA system was acquired for use at the Parks Sports Centre. This equipment will be retained and can be transported to other buildings for use during large meetings.
- Physical safety measures in workplaces and venues will be retained in accordance with Government guidance and individual building risk assessments.





Annex A – Programme Reporting and Documentation

Programme:	North Tyneside Council Covid-19 Recovery Framework
Date:	31 July 2021
Version Number:	0.04
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO):	Haley Hudson Customer Service and Digital Strategy Manager Colin MacDonald Senior Manager of Technical & Regulatory Services
Review Team Leader:	Carol Girvan Programme Manager
Review Team Members:	Melissa Nilson Programme Coordinator Stacey Watts Programme Coordinator
Date Agreed by RCG:	5 August 2021
Date Agreed by SLT:	11 August 2021
Date Agreed by Lead Members:	23 August 2021
Final Report Distribution:	1 September 2021
Previous Review:	End of phase 1 assurance review End of phase 2 assurance review
Current Review:	End of Programme assurance review



Annex B – Programme Objectives

Below provides an overview of workstreams and their associated objectives:

Workstream	Objective
Adult Social Care	Evaluating the impact on people and care homes and protecting the most vulnerable residents from infection.
Children’s Services	Evaluating the impact on children, young people, and families; re-stating service delivery.
Schools and Childcare	Working with schools and early years providers to delivery phased reopening plans; develop the Education Strategy for the borough.
Shielding the Vulnerable	Continue to operate the local support arrangements.
Community and Voluntary Sector	Working across the sector to build back better, developing new opportunities including an increase in volunteers and use of technology.
Public Confidence	Working through the Safer North Tyneside Partnership (SNT) to reshape its annual work plan for 2020/21.
Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings	Providing Covid-secure Authority workplaces and all public buildings.
Culture, Sport and Leisure	Considering the reinstatement of all services and facilities in a Covid-secure way.
Inclusive Economy Strategy	Ensuring everyone shares the benefits of growth during the recovery.
Business Support	Supporting local businesses to recover and grow.
Transport	Supporting the work to restart businesses and to enable town centres and open spaces to be Covid-secure.
Supply Chain	Ensuring that the Authority’s supply chain can recover and grow.
Environment and Skills	Restarting services to support people to be able to access opportunities and develop skills.
Town Centres	Ensuring a coordinated recovery for town centres.
Political Recovery and Democratic Oversight	Enabling full Member engagement and meetings at all levels; ensuring readiness for future electoral events held under Covid-19 restrictions.



HR and Organisational Development	Ensuring the Authority team continue to be safe, paid, healthy, happy, and capable.
Digital Connectivity	Ensuring that the Authority's digital infrastructure is sufficiently robust to support increased demand for online services.



Annex C – Products

Product & Description	Owner
Programme products	
Dashboard	RCG
Key decision log	RCG
Key decision request form	RCG
Covid-19 grant claim form	RCG
Programme plan	RCG
Terms of Reference	RCG
Action log	RCG
Daily briefing log	RCG
Workstream highlight reports	RCG
End of Phase 1 review report	RCG
End of Phase 2 review report	RCG
End of Programme assessment report	RCG
Workstream products	
Phase 1	
Standard operating procedures, risk assessments and assurance tool for care homes and day service providers	Adult Social Care
Visual guidance for care homes and day service providers	Adult Social Care
Investigation around reasons why North Tyneside did not see a drop in demand during lock down as experience by other authorities	Children's Services
Family Time guidance	Children's Services
Staff / Manager guidance on visits.	Children's Services
Investigation around why other local authorities have seen a significant increase in the children coming into care, while NTC have not.	Children's Services



Guidance documents around planning for pupils transitioning to other schools	Schools and Childcare
Support documents were compiled around delivery of a curriculum in a remote way	Schools and Childcare
Guidance and resource packs were rolled out to all schools providing advice on supporting children with mental health issues.	Schools and Childcare
Extensive and comprehensive record keeping and the completion of 'contact 1' and 'contact 2' forms, each individually registered, has produced a comprehensive array of information	Shielding the Vulnerable
Development sessions including community buildings / risk assessments and Covid-secure working practice, working with the Community and Voluntary Sector, all videoed and available to watch on VODA's website	Community and Voluntary Sector
Application process for the hardship fund	Welfare and Benefit Support
Scheme in place for Food & Essential Supplies Grant	Welfare and Benefit Support
New initiatives with Foodbank	Welfare and Benefit Support
Revised annual work plan for the Safer North Tyneside Partnership	Public Confidence
Building Risk Assessments	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
Building Occupancy Plans	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
Corporate workplace signage	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
NTC Recovery standard	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
NTC Minimum standard suite of documents	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
Premises Checklist	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.



Installation of appropriate screens and hand sanitiser units	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
Health and Safety audit of Covid-secure measures in each building	Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings.
New signage in key open spaces and town centres	Covid-secure Public Spaces
Amended delivery Programme for Housing and spend profile was submitted through IPB	Housing and Construction
Monitoring report on backlog of repairs, rent arrears, lettings, and homelessness	Housing and Construction
Staggered work time procedures	Highways
Increased welfare facilities	Highways
Separate field worker risk assessments. Capita have a pandemic planning group issuing guidance	Highways
‘Good Friday’ packs containing posters and guidance were hand delivered to every fish and chip shop in the Borough to provide advice and how to reopen safely and manage queues.	Regulatory Services
Information packs and letters were also delivered to a range of other businesses	Regulatory Services
Inclusive Economy Strategy	Inclusive Economy
Business Rates leaflets signposting support for businesses in arrears.	Business Support
A Covid-19 Business Support page was added to the council’s website	Business Support
A Covid-19 Business Support page was added to the Business Forums website.	Business Support
Permanent traffic management equipment which will minimise the need to hire in the future	Transport
Pavement licensing scheme	Transport
Increased stock of PPE	Supply Chain
Review of Contract Standing Orders	Supply Chain
Additional suppliers for contingency arrangements	Supply Chain



The Back to Work service was established in July 2020.	Employment and Skills
The Digital Outreach Project established in August 2020.	Employment and Skills
Internal guidance documents produced for staff	Employment and Skills
A thorough risk assessment process to look at premises, tasks, and individuals.	Employment and Skills
Internal guidance documents produced around 'Guidance to Building and Desk Management' for return to staff at their office base at Norham High School.	Employment and Skills
Revised Medium Term Plan	Finance
Methodology for review of income cost pressures	Finance
Several progress reports for IT Board which incorporated IT response time during recovery	Digital Connectivity
Bespoke reports of a regular basis to the recover leads of SLT	Digital Connectivity
Skills Exchange – a skills survey of over 1000 staff were compiled, and a matching system developed with the performance team redeployed over 250 staff.	HR and Organisational Development
Review and review of a large portfolio of procedure and guidance documentation	HR and Organisational Development
Learning Pool support pages on wellbeing, remote working and 'Care workers Emergency Induction for new starters and redeployees.	HR and Organisational Development
Online training packages for those previously delivered face to face	HR and Organisational Development
Mental Health and Wellbeing plan	HR and Organisational Development
Pulse Survey	HR and Organisational Development
Generic HR advice inbox.	HR and Organisational Development
Phase 2	
Webinars with Public Health	Adult Social Care



Regular comms with care homes	Adult Social Care
Regular support to care homes	Adult Social Care
Monitoring data on service demand	Children's Services
Service risk assessments	Children's Services
Operational checklists	Schools and Childcare
Outbreak control action plan	Schools and Childcare
Resources to support remote learning.	Schools and Childcare
New area on school improvement website.	Schools and Childcare
Navigating North Tyneside with COVID-19	Shielding the Vulnerable
'Form 3' to capture data.	Shielding the Vulnerable
Mobilisation plan	Shielding the Vulnerable
Short video clips on key public health messages	Shielding the Vulnerable
Navigating North Tyneside in Self-Isolation booklet	Shielding the Vulnerable
Living Well in North Tyneside booklet	Shielding the Vulnerable
Spirit of North Tyneside video clips showcasing the range of activity undertaken by VCS organisations during the pandemic.	Shielding the Vulnerable
Comms plan	Public Confidence
Report from the State of the Area event 2020/21	Public Confidence
Delivery of Safer North Tyneside Partnership work plan commitments	Public Confidence
Building Capacity Plan final sign off proforma	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
Proforma for amendments to the Building Capacity Plans	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
Review of workplace signage	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
Review of NTC Recovery standard	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
COVID-19 assurance inspections and re-inspections	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces



Establishment of local vaccination centres	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
Establishment of Community Rapid Testing Centre	Covid-secure Public Buildings and Workplaces
Online booking system expanded for additional leisure services.	Culture, Sport and Leisure
Inclusive Economy Strategy	Inclusive Economy Strategy
Webinars	Business Support
Business Recovery Programme	Business Support
Retail and digital incubators	Business Support
Road reallocation scheme plans	Transport
Consultation plan (PlaceChangers tool)	Transport
Scheme estimates	Transport
Updated webpages	Supply Chain
E-learning modules	Supply Chain
DPS contract and specification	Supply Chain
Guidance documents: 'Working Safely', 'Teaching Safely'	Employment and Skills
Adult Learning Contingency Plan	Employment and Skills
Draft Town Centre Recovery Plans	Town Centres
North Shields Masterplan	Town Centres
Public consultation on North Shields	Town Centres
Masterplan via PlaceChangers	Town Centres
Delivery of Masterplan and other projects identified in Our Ambition across the Borough.	Town Centres
Election plans	Political Recovery and Democratic Oversight
Health and Wellbeing plan	HR and Organisational Development



'Looking after yourself this winter' campaign	HR and Organisational Development
Pulse Survey (November and February)	HR and Organisational Development
'Every mind matters' campaign	HR and Organisational Development
SLT Future Working presentation	HR and Organisational Development
Updated guidance, procedures, and policies.	HR and Organisational Development
Updated policies.	Digital Connectivity
Additional kit which suits the current needs of the authority	Digital Connectivity
Collaborative approach to working online/from home	Digital Connectivity
Phase 3	
All buildings maintained Covid-secure status.	Covid-secure Workplaces and Public Buildings
Signage reviewed and refreshed.	Covid-secure Workplaces and Public Buildings
Health and Safety audits completed	Covid-secure Workplaces and Public Buildings.
Updated 'Teaching Safely' guidance	Employment and Skills
Updated 'Working Safely' guidance	Employment and Skills
Premises risk assessment	Employment and Skills
Task risk assessments	Employment and Skills
Navigating Life in North Tyneside v2	Shielding the Vulnerable



Annex D – Best Practice and Lessons Learned

Adult Social Care	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	Strong links with public health team and the service / commissioning team to support providers generally and with specific queries.
Lessons Learned	Staff undertook recovery work in addition to their usual day jobs and as such, the success of the work relied on good will.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Joint working with the Trust and CCG has worked well to support on infection control, monitoring outbreaks and the vaccination Programme.
Lessons Learned	The team found that when all services are working towards a common goal during the pandemic, there has been less obstacles and quicker decision making which has enabled teams to work at pace.
Children's Services	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	Microsoft TEAMS is working well as a tool and staff feel supported and well supervised with clarity in direction and guidance.
Lessons Learned	There wasn't as many vulnerable children going back to school in June/July as expected. A review will be carried out to determine why this was the case.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Conducting risk assessments for all family time offers. Monitoring service demand on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. A member of the public health team attends SMT meeting.
Lessons Learned	Undertaking research into effective networks and hope to be able to publish this in April 2021.
Schools and Childcare	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	A cross departmental working group was established which drew together expertise from across council services and partner organisations and provided a single support offer for schools. Steering/reference groups were established for head teachers providing weekly meetings and a collaborate approach across primary, secondary, and special school settings. Webinars sessions for head teachers provided open access to service specialists providing advice and responding to questions around safeguarding and HR.
Lessons Learned	Sign off the Education Strategy is dependent upon engagement with school and therefore, capacity within schools to properly evaluate the document.



Phase 2	
Best Practice	The work to support remote learning demonstrated collaboration between Newcastle University Research team, Regional HMI colleagues and North Tyneside schools.
Lessons Learned	After the initial lockdown, there was a rise in behavioural incidents in both primary and secondary, but with a greater rise seen in secondary. This is putting pressure on support and pastoral services, which fall outside of 'bubbles'.
Health and Wellbeing	
Phase 1	
Best Practice	Workstream leads have praised the Public Health team for their continued advice, support, and guidance.
Lessons Learned	There appears to be a lack of clarity from other workstreams in how to apply a consistent public health approach to COVID-19 based on national guidance. All workstreams will incorporate a key objective linked to Public Health in their workstream plans.
Shielding the Vulnerable	
Phase 1	
Best Practice	<p>Drawing on the good relationship with VODA allowed for the fast formation of the supply hubs and implementation of the good neighbour scheme allowing the delivery of a level of service not offered by other local authorities. Moving VODA into Quadrant from the outset allowed for more intense learning and information sharing to an extent that would have not possible via Teams.</p> <p>The use of 81 members of redeployed Council staff over the life span of the LSS allowed teams to be established quickly and without additional staffing costs.</p> <p>Cross departmental work with the Income Management Team allowed for the introduction of a petty cash dispensing system necessary to overcome issues around volunteers undertaking shopping.</p> <p>The establishment of peer groups provided support to redeployees conducting calls and working from home. The peer groups facilitated information sharing within silos and within peer groups and allowed best practice to be shared across local support hubs.</p>
Lessons Learned	The involvement and use of other third sector partners such as the Food Bank could have been used earlier, more effectively in areas such as the provision of food boxes.
Phase 2	
Best Practice	<p>The mobilisation plan allowed the LSS to be stood back up quickly in the event of a change in government guidance.</p> <p>Providing a guidance booklet that is easily accessible by residents signposting key support services.</p>



	Partnership working with local organisations.
Lessons Learned	Providing training to redeployed staff is time consuming. Depending on the time frame of increased demand, the benefits may not always be worth the time taken.
<i>Phase 3</i>	
Best Practice	Support vaccine uptake in the Borough. Working collaboratively with internal and external support services Cash payments which has been given as a case study to MHCLG
Lessons Learned	The importance of taking time to help with the readjustment post shielding.
Community and Voluntary Sector	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The CVS working group was brought together from existing relationships and got the best people around the table to develop the action plans.
Lessons Learned	An action plan has been established to respond to the overwhelming number of new volunteers who have offered their help during the COVID-19 recovery phase.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	The production and distribution of information booklets for North Tyneside residents. VODA undertook a recruitment exercise to hire a BAME specialist. Establishment of and work carried out by the Community Health Champions.
Lessons Learned	Resources reenforcing key public messages that volunteers can access is beneficial. Partnership working with VODA and other local organisations.
Welfare and Benefit Support	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The strong existing relationships with external partners such as the Foodbank, DWP, Citizen's Advice etc were central to successfully delivering all the milestones in such a timely and effective way.
Lessons Learned	Due to the sensitivity around debt recovery during a pandemic, it was agreed to take a softer approach, taking into consideration the end of the furlough scheme. This is an ongoing piece of work which will be monitored through the Mayor's Task Group.
Public Confidence	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The Mayor and Cabinet provided clear direction in the Covid-19-19 Recovery Framework for the Borough approved by Cabinet on 29 June 2020.



	Members of the SNT partnership understand the strategic priorities set by the Recovery Framework. This has been used as the basis for reshaping the annual work plan in order to deliver the priorities set within the community safety strategy in an environment where we will be living with coronavirus for some time to come.
Lessons Learned	The organisations forming the SNT partnership were still in the early stages of recovery from the pandemic themselves and this provided a clear challenge in concluding the workplan. Nevertheless, this was completed in a timely manner.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	
Covid-secure Workplace and Public Buildings	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	Grouping buildings into service areas and having one person oversee the work provided a consistent and cohesive approach. The Our Place workstreams held a weekly subgroup to discuss progress and ensured continual sharing of information.
Lessons Learned	Communication with other workstreams could have been stronger to allow quicker decision making.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Introducing a proforma for amendments to the Building Capacity Plans. Regular interaction as required with Building Managers and Senior Service Managers. Collaboration with colleagues from other NTC service and from CAPITA partnership.
Lessons Learned	Needed a flexible approach as resources were required to support the establishment of both the vaccination centres and rapid testing centre within a very short timescale. This work required a whole team approach to ensure facilities were operational, in line with national and local guidance.
<i>Phase 3</i>	
Best Practice	Working collaboratively with colleagues in the Future Ways of Working group to ensure a blended approach that combines both places and people. Regular interaction with relevant building managers and senior service managers. Joined up approach with Health and Safety colleagues.
Lessons Learned	Sharing of information



	<p>Communication</p> <p>Being supported by 'specialist' colleagues i.e., public health.</p>
Culture, Sport and Leisure	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>The majority of the 250 staff that formed the redeployment group were from the sport, culture, and leisure teams. The staff adapted incredibly well and were retrained and deployed to support front line and local support services. The skills and experience of these frontline, customer facing staff aligned well to the requirements of the redeployment Programme.</p> <p>The use of a detailed overarching plan with sub workstreams oversaw the successful and consistent approach to the reopening of customer first centres, events, and tourism.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>There was a feeling amongst staff in the service area, that communication focused on Quadrant staff and the reopening of back office buildings.</p>
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	<p>Working collaboratively with colleagues from other services including HR and Town Centres Recovery.</p> <p>Reacting quickly to emerging and changing Government legislation and guidance.</p> <p>Supported essential services, testing sites and the vaccine Programme.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>Online exercise classes worked well.</p> <p>Online booking system for leisure services.</p> <p>Click and collect service in CFC's and branch libraries has been well received by customers.</p>
<i>Phase 3</i>	
Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	
Environmental Operations	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>The ability to access the redeployment pool (Skills Exchange) helped prop up the Waste Collection and Bereavement Services office team in the first instance.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>A more flexible approach to working arrangements moving forward will allow for a fundamental review of how services are delivered. An example needing to be explored is the reduction in the number of business mileage claims.</p>



In view of the need for most teams within the workstream to continue to operate from the outset, it was felt that guidance from government and the organisation was provided retrospectively in relation to those teams who continued to operate throughout the lockdown.

The later reopening of other service areas was perceived by those services who had operated throughout the lockdown, to have been given greater consideration and importance. Consideration should be given to how this could be managed differently, should the organisation be in a similar situation in the future.

Covid-secure Public Spaces

Phase 1

Best Practice	<p>The workstream utilised volunteer redeployees from the HR Skills Exchange to retrain as beach wardens before the employment of a full complement of seasonal staff.</p> <p>The workstream partnership approach involving representation from the Police, Coast Guard, Public Protection, Community Protection Team and Communication Team provided a well-rounded perspective and approach to the reopening of each site.</p>
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Lessons Learned	The Police had indicated a wish to be involved and consulted in other workstream areas and at higher strategic level.
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Housing and Construction

Phase 1

Best Practice	<p>Our ability to work with Government Guidelines, turn these into safe operating procedures and consult with Trade Union colleagues and our frontline trade colleagues to get works stood back up when it was safe to do so. The effort and planning required to do this across a very large service area should not be underestimated.</p> <p>As a Workstream, there was a work plan created that provided visible ownership and accountability to individuals/teams. This allowed the group to carry out a regular joint review of progress across multiple areas of work.</p>
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Lessons Learned	A review of paper-based processes has been carried out with plans in place to process tenancy transfer inspections, store modernisation and timesheet submission electronically. In order to reduce the number of operatives within the depot, anew process has been implemented to allow materials to be delivered direct to site.
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Highways

Phase 1

Best Practice	The Network Management service continued to operate throughout with the successful transition from office to home working.
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Lessons Learned	Working across workstreams can be difficult as there is a lack of clarity on who should be taking the lead.
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Regulatory Services



<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The team were very quick to react and set up the enforcement hub delivered by the Trading Standards team.
Lessons Learned	The Regulatory Services teams adapted well to working from home and KPIs have remained on target.
Inclusive Economy Strategy	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The members of the workstream have all worked very well together and strong relationships have been formed with colleagues across the Council.
Lessons Learned	As the workstream requires input from a number of other workstreams, SMART milestones have been defined for Phase 2 to enable the team to provide clear progress updates.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	
Business Support	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The teams existing strong relationships with strategic partners was vital in sharing important information and advice across the Borough's businesses.
Lessons Learned	The team noted that sharing communication externally through the Business Forum further boosted the community spirit amongst the Forum's members.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	The webinars the team have developed have been successful. The team will continue to provide webinars for businesses.
Lessons Learned	The Business Recovery Programme has been well received. Working together with NoTCA a joint Programme will be delivered in 2021/22.
<i>Phase 3</i>	
Best Practice	Twice weekly home testing for learners Consulting with managers, staff, unions and building managers to complete risk assessments. Reviewing guidance in line with DfE, ESFA and DHSC guidance and advice.
Lessons Learned	
Transport	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	Work is being carried out with Nexus to advocate and implement alternative travel arrangements to manage the likely increase in car-based school trips which the schools return in September.



Lessons Learned	When implementing the coastal and town centre traffic management schemes there was a considerable challenge in terms of engagement with residents (non-statutory consultees). The schemes were introduced at pace which meant limited opportunity for consultation with residents increasing opposition to some of the schemes.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Inter-departmental design work.
Lessons Learned	Consultation will be prior to the commencement of the schemes.
Supply Chain	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>A good relationship with the Business Support Team has been established and this will be maintained going forward.</p> <p>The review of contract standing orders went well and as such, the service has implemented a plan to continually review on a 12-18 month basis.</p> <p>The use of a new system has allowed information to be accessed much more readily and has been a vital tool in analysis. Previously, BMS and spreadsheets were used, and the new system has streamlined the process.</p>
Lessons Learned	Having a centralised approach of going through Procurement to obtain PPE has worked well. It has provided a clear understanding of the needs of the Local Authority, certainly that provisions are enough for all service areas and a consistent approach in the standards of PPE.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	<p>Working collaboratively with other teams.</p> <p>A consistent approach to procurement.</p>
Lessons Learned	Business engagement has worked well and will be incorporated into future working practices.
Employment and Skills	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	The North of Tyne funded Back to Work Service provided essential support to businesses to safeguard jobs and provided early intervention between the team and those made unemployed.
Lessons Learned	Move to online learning has provided an alternative arrangement for apprentice support, currently delivered via online learning and there is a possibility to further explore this possibility post Covid-19.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Regularly reviewed Government guidance and reacted swiftly where appropriate.
Lessons Learned	Blended approach to adult learning moving forward.
<i>Phase 3</i>	



Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	
Town Centres	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>Within a matter of days of introducing changes to the centre road network, Council Officers were on site listening to the feedback from residents and businesses and changes were promptly made reflecting the feedback.</p> <p>The Public Health team were consulted on the Town Centre Recovery Plan and were able to link the plan with the Council's existing Local Outbreak Plan.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>Despite the urgency to make physical changes to the town centre road network, the team felt it would have been useful to carry out a short consultation with residents and businesses first to understand their views and concerns.</p> <p>The team have observed some businesses that have flourished due to their ability to provide outside seating and in response, the team are working on pavement licences to allow other businesses to temporarily provide an outdoor seating area for their customers. The introduction of pavement licences is dependent on the continuation of the highway's road network schemes.</p> <p>It has been noted that more people are visiting and shopping locally, rather than travelling into the city centre. The team is hopeful this will continue and that town centre businesses will not only survive but thrive.</p>
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	The Town Centre Task Group is working well, receiving positive feedback from Chambers and the Business Forum.
Lessons Learned	There has been challenges around preparing the town centre recovery plans at a time when the town centres are in lockdown.
<i>Phase 3</i>	
Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	
Political Recovery and Democratic Oversight	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>Technology was used to ensure all statutory Council meetings were delivered from the outset. Members adapted to using new technology very quickly receiving good support from IT.</p> <p>A live streaming tool was used to enable members of the public to view Cabinet and Committee meetings from home.</p>



Lessons Learned	It was noted that there would be a wide range of benefits, particularly environmental, if meetings were to permanently be held virtually.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	
Lessons Learned	Standing up the SLT Election Planning Group earlier would have been beneficial.
Finance	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	In the early stages of Phase 1 the impact of Covid-19 on service delivery was unknown, and it was challenging to estimate the impact with accuracy. Finance officers utilised their own knowledge of the services they support to be able to produce estimates of the impact of Covid-19.
Lessons Learned	<p>The added complexity of the impact of Covid-19 has in some cases made it more challenging when completing government returns and internal reporting requirements.</p> <p>Staff have adjusted well to a new way of working. However, there have been disadvantages of not being able to meet with service officers face to face and to be able to refine the methodology and estimates for the impact for individual services.</p> <p>The pace of changes to reporting requirements has been unprecedented and finance have worked flexibly to be able to meet those challenges.</p>
HR and Organisational Development	
<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>The Human Resources and Organisational Development Recovery Action Group was formed incorporating representation from Trade Unions., Adult Social Care, Children’s Services and Leisure and Tourism to provide a coproduction approach to the objectives of the group.</p> <p>The Skills Exchange has managed the redeployment of 250 people at the peak of the pandemic.</p>
Lessons Learned	Having a collaborative approach with other services, particularly as part of the membership of the Human Resources and Organisational Development Recovery Action Group has meant wider involvement and ensure service specific considerations have been considered with higher quality products as a result.
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	Working closely with other LA’s, regularly collecting best practice examples across the region and other organisations.
Lessons Learned	Working well with other services across the organisation.
Digital Connectivity	



<i>Phase 1</i>	
Best Practice	<p>While the helpdesk team coped very well in dealing with the increasing in calls, other IT colleagues stepped in to help answer the phones to manage the demand.</p> <p>The team reviewed their business continuity plan at the start of lockdown, which helped them in proactively finding solutions to problems that might arise over the coming months.</p> <p>Daily meetings with all IT managers were arranged to update each other on any issues arising. Due to the success of these meetings, they will continue as a tool for sharing knowledge.</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>Due to a power outage caused by Virgin Media on the 30-31 July, the Council had limited access to almost all systems. The team are now finding solutions to prevent this from happening again and ensuring back up services are fit for purpose. The IT procurement team are in the process of costing up solutions, with the intention to begin implementing these solutions from December 2020.</p>
<i>Phase 2</i>	
Best Practice	<p>Partnership working between Engie and NTC.</p> <p>Provision of online collaboration (TEAMS).</p>
Lessons Learned	<p>Following a customer testing positive for COVID-19, the process of greeting customers was changed.</p>



Annex E – List of Interviewees

The following stakeholders were interviewed during the end of Programme review:

Name	Organisation and role
<p>Workstream leads: Felicity Shoesmith</p> <p>Iain Betham Steve Bishop, Paul Youlden Mark Barrett Sean Collier John Sparkes</p>	<p>North Tyneside Council Community and Voluntary Sector; Shielding the Vulnerable Covid-secure public buildings and workplaces Culture, Sport and Leisure Employment and Skills Business Support Town Centres</p>
Vicky Soulsby	Risk Management, North Tyneside Council
David Dunford	Programme Finance, North Tyneside Council
RCG members	North Tyneside Council
North Tyneside staff	Via Pulse Surveys
North Tyneside Elected Members	Member Survey in Phase 1 and 2
Trade Union representatives	Unison, GMB, Unite
<p>Service Leads: Vicki Nixon</p> <p>Pam Colby</p> <p>Bryn Roberts James Moore</p> <p>Mike Truran Mick Nicholson Sarah Heslop Suzanne Duncan</p> <p>David Dunford Iain Betham</p> <p>Paul Youlden Steve Bishop</p>	<p>North Tyneside Council Participation and Advocacy, North Tyneside Council Policy, Performance and Research, North Tyneside Council Law and Governance, North Tyneside Council Communications and Marketing, North Tyneside Council I.T, Engie Customer Services, Engie Procurement, North Tyneside Council HR and Organisational Development, North Tyneside Council Finance, North Tyneside Council Strategic Investment and Property, North Tyneside Council Sport and Leisure, North Tyneside Council Cultural Services, North Tyneside Council</p>



Annex F – Evidence Log

The following documents were used to compile this report, determine overall delivery of the Programme and the end of Programme recommendations.

Document	Description and Location
Workstream scoping documents	https://teams.microsoft.com/Workstream%2520Reviews
Workstream review reports	https://teams.microsoft.com/Workstream%2520Reviews
Workstream and strategic risk register	https://teams.microsoft.com/Workstream and Strategic Risk Highlight report https://teams.microsoft.com/Workstream Risks July2021
Dashboards	https://teams.microsoft.com/Dashboard
Pulse survey results	https://teams.microsoft.com/November Pulse Survey
Member surveys	https://teams.microsoft.com/Stakeholder%2520Engagement



Annex G – Financial Summary: Covid-19 Grants

Supporting our Businesses

Grant	Value Awarded 20/21 £m	Value Spent 01.04.20-31.03.21 £m	Value C/Fwd 31.03.21 £m	Value Spent/Committed 2021/22 £m
Business Support	34.481	34.481	0.000	0.000
Business Support Top-Up	9.153	5.846	3.307	3.307
Local Restrictions Support 'Closed'	13.663	9.003	4.660	4.660
Local Restrictions Support 'Open'	1.033	1.033	0.000	0.000
Additional Restrictions Grant	6.082	3.344	2.738	2.738
Christmas Support 'Wet-Pubs'	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000
Capacity Fund	1.500	0.864	0.636	0.636
Travel Demand Management	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000
Total	66.072	54.731	11.341	11.341

Supporting Our Residents

Grant	Value Awarded 20/21 £m	Value Spent 01.04.20-31.03.21 £m	Value C/Fwd 31.03.21 £m	Value Spent/Committed 2021/22 £m
Test & Trace Support Grant	1.140	0.358*	0.782	0.782
Hardship Fund	2.023	1.733	0.290	0.290
Emergency Assistance Grant	0.256	0.176	0.080	0.015
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	5.953	0.651	5.302	5.302



Grant	Value Awarded 20/21 £m	Value Spent 01.04.20-31.03.21 £m	Value C/Fwd 31.03.21 £m	Value Spent/Committed 2021/22 £m
Test & Trace Support Payments	0.902	0.464	0.438	0.438
Compliance & Enforcement	0.108	0.108	0.000	0.000
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	0.470	0.167	0.303	0.018
Rough Sleepers Additional Grant	0.006	0.006	0.000	0.000
Winter Grant	0.832	0.832	0.000	0.000
Rapid Testing in the Community	0.121	0.121	0.000	0.000
Total	11.811	4.616	7.195	6.845

Supporting Our Care Homes

Grant	Value Awarded 20/21 £m	Value Spent 01.04.20-31.03.21 £m	Value C/Fwd 31.03.21 £m	Value Spent/Committed 2021/22 £m
Infection Control 1 & 2	4.412	4.412	0.000	0.000
Workforce Capacity Grant	0.516	0.516	0.000	0.000
Rapid Testing – Care Homes	0.543	0.543	0.000	0.000
Total	5.471	5.471	0.000	0.000



Supporting Our Schools

Grant	Value Awarded 20/21 £m	Value Spent 01.04.20-31.03.21 £m	Value C/Fwd 31.03.21 £m	Value Spent/Committed 2021/22 £m
Digital Inclusion	0.076	0.076	0.000	0.000
Schools Catch-up Premium	1.232	1.232	0.000	0.000
Mental Health in Schools	0.027	0.027	0.000	0.000
Additional Home to School Transport	0.383	0.383	0.000	0.000
Mass Testing for Schools	0.233	0.000	0.233	0.233
Schools Fund 1 & 2	0.313	0.313	0.000	0.000
Total	2.264	2.031	0.233	0.233

Supporting Our Council Services

Service Area/Category	Main Grant £m	Sales, Fees & Charges £m	Other Specific Covid Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Commissioning & Asset Management				
Free School Meals	2.319	0.948	0.072	3.339
Volunteer Scheme	0.071	0.000	0.042	0.113
Redeployed Employees	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.015
Building Compliance	0.101	0.000	0.023	0.124
Property/Asset Management	0.096	0.000	0.140	0.236
PPE	0.066	0.000	0.000	0.066
Cleaning	0.175	0.000	0.045	0.220
Catering	0.112	0.205	0.000	0.317



Service Area/Category	Main Grant £m	Sales, Fees & Charges £m	Other Specific Covid Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Procurement	0.003	0.001	0.000	0.004
Absence from Schools	0.012	0.000	0.000	0.012
Car Parking – QE	0.025	0.072	0.000	0.097
Sub Total	2.980	1.226	0.337	4.543
Environment, Housing & Leisure				
Homelessness	0.060	0.000	0.064	0.124
Environmental Services	(0.226)	0.000	0.000	(0.226)
Waste Management	0.228	0.000	0.058	0.286
Cultural Services	0.030	0.046	0.000	0.076
Sport & Leisure	1.239	2.977	0.000	4.216
Highways & Transport	0.718	0.684	0.000	1.402
Planning & Development	0.050	0.204	0.007	0.261
Security	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.015
Street Lighting	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.005
Sub Total	2.104	3.911	0.144	6.159
Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding				
CYPL – Front Door & Safe and Support	(0.349)	0.000	0.000	(0.349)
CYPL – Residential	1.585	(0.006)	0.000	1.579
CYPL – Placement Costs	0.669	0.006	0.000	0.675
CYPL – Adoption Services	0.063	0.038	0.144	0.245
CYPL – School Improvement	0.122	0.351	0.000	0.473



Service Area/Category	Main Grant £m	Sales, Fees & Charges £m	Other Specific Covid Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Adults Social Care	3.384	0.000	7.240	10.624
PH – Vaccinations	0.000	0.000	0.021	0.021
Sub Total	5.474	0.389	7.405	13.268
Corporate Strategy				
Corporate Strategy Management	0.074	0.000	0.146*	0.220
Policy, Performance and Research	0.051	0.000	0.000	0.051
Marketing & Communication	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.121
Sub Total	0.246	0.000	0.146	0.392
Law & Governance				
Information Governance	0.001	0.051	0.000	0.052
Legal	0.000	0.046	0.000	0.046
Registrars	0.061	0.134	0.000	0.195
Coroner	0.051	0.000	0.000	0.051
Sub Total	0.113	0.231	0.000	0.344
Regeneration & Economic Development				
Regeneration	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.055
Sub Total	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.055
Resources & Central Items				
ICT	0.145	0.000	0.000	0.145
Human Resources	0.007	0.000	0.000	0.007
Finance	0.094	0.000	0.011	0.105



Service Area/Category	Main Grant £m	Sales, Fees & Charges £m	Other Specific Covid Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services	0.644	0.000	0.000	0.644
Bad Debts	0.405	0.000	0.000	0.405
Cross Cutting	0.281	0.000	0.000	0.281
GF Recharge From HPC	0.918	0.000	0.000	0.918
Capital	0.485	0.000	0.000	0.485
Sub Total	2.979	0.000	0.011	2.990
Grand Total	13.951	5.757	8.043	27.751
Local Authority Support Grant	(15.636)	0.000	0.000	(15.636)
Sales, Fees & Charges	0.000	(5.757)	0.000	(5.757)
Allocated to specific Covid grants	0.000	0.000	(8.043)	(8.043)
Unallocated to Reserve	(1.685)	0.000	0.000	(1.685)

*Includes £73,790 relating to staffing costs of RCG support.



Annex H – Risks

The Covid-19 strategic and workstream risks have been reported and reviewed on a monthly basis to RCG throughout the pandemic. Following the implementation of step 4 in the Government’s Roadmap from 19 July 2021, it has been agreed that RCG will stand down.

Although RCG will no longer meet some of the remaining risks will require further management, this report provides details of those risks that will close following the lifting of restrictions and those risks that will transfer to Business as Usual (BAU) for ongoing management as part of the Authority’s normal risk management process.

1. Strategic Risk

There was only one strategic risk reported to RCG and following discussions with the risk owner it was agreed that the risk would close. Full details of the risk and its controls are documented in Appendix 1.

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No	Risk Detail	Prev. Risk Score	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Reason for Closure
1.	<p>Capture of Government Guidance and Legislation: There is a risk that we may not be able to fully capture the entire range and volume of constantly changing Covid-19 Government guidance and legislation.</p>	D3 (G) →	Risk to close	D3 (G)	<p>As the risk was raised to ensure that any guidance during the pandemic would not be overlooked or actioned the risk is no longer relevant and can close, this is in line with the closure of the recovery programme and conclusions of RCG. Responsibility for actioning any future guidance, will lie with responsible service areas.</p> <p>Following RCG standing down this risk will close</p>



2. Workstream Risks

The Risk Management Team has met with the risk owners to agree the ongoing management of the workstream risks i.e., whether the risks would close or transfer to BAU to be managed as part of the Authority's normal risk management process.

2.1 Risks to Close Following RCG Standing Down.

Following discussions with the risk owners of the workstream risks it was agreed that the following risks would close. Full details of the risk and its controls are documented in Appendix 2.

Our People

Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Workstream	Reason for Closure
1.	Maintaining Social Order: There is a risk that the longer the current lockdown restrictions remain in place there may be some public disorder.	B2 (R) →	Risk to Close	Public Confidence & Feelings of Safety	This risk was raised to manage restrictions and is no longer relevant. A review will be undertaken to establish if further risks will need to be raised to be managed as part of business as usual. Following the announcement that all restrictions will be lifted on 19 July, this risk will close

Our Economy

Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Workstream	Reason for Closure
2.	Economic Impact on the Borough: There is a risk that due to the various impacts from Covid-19 (e.g., length of lockdown, Government advice re minimising social interaction	B1 (R) →	Risk to Close	Inclusion Economic Strategy	Vacancy levels of each town centre continue to be monitored monthly. North Shields is experiencing the highest vacancy rate in the town centre which is above national average. This along with any long-term impact for Covid will be managed as part of the Authority's existing corporate risks regarding the economy of the Borough.



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Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Workstream	Reason for Closure
	within the workplace and staff shortages due to the illness as well as caring responsibilities) some businesses within the Borough may face significant financial losses which could force businesses to fold, with an adverse impact on the economy of the Borough.				Following RCG standing down this risk will close.
3.	Social Distancing: There is a risk that social distancing measures may not be in place on the public highway.	B1 (R) →	Risk to Close	Town Centres	As there will be no further requirements to enforce Social Distancing, this risk is no longer relevant. Following the announcement that all restrictions will be lifted on 19 July, this risk will close.
4.	Shops and Businesses may not have Appropriate Social Distancing in Place: There is a risk that individual shops and businesses may not have the appropriate SD measures in place inside their premises.	C2 (R) ↓	Risk to Close	Town Centres	As there will be no further requirements to enforce Social Distancing, this risk is no longer relevant. Following the announcement that all restrictions will be lifted on 19 July, this risk will close.
5.	Viability of Food and Drink Operations: There is a risk that food and drink operations may not be viable if social distancing measures remain in place at 2m.	B2 (R) →	Risk to Close	Town Centres	As there will be no further requirements to enforce Social Distancing, this risk is no longer relevant. Following the lifting of restrictions on 19 July this risk will close as 2m restrictions will no longer be required.



Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Workstream	Reason for Closure
6.	Resurgence of Covid-19: There is a risk that businesses may be adversely impacted if there is a resurgence of the virus resulting in an extension of lockdown.	C1 (R) →	Risk to Close	Business Support	Although the infection rate continues to rise in the Borough restrictions will be lifted from the 19 July in line with the Government Roadmap therefore the risk can close. Following RCG standing down this risk will close.
7.	Capacity to Meet Increased Demand for NEET and Unemployed: There is a risk that there may not be the Capacity and resources to meet increased demand for NEET and Unemployed.	D3 (G) →	Risk to Close	Employability, Skills and Learning	Following RCG standing down this risk will close and be managed as part of the existing strategic risk regarding NEET and Participation.

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Our Organisation

Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Workstream	Reason for Closure
8.	Network Capacity: There is a risk that there may be insufficient bandwidth within network capacity to meet the increased demand for alternative working arrangements.	C3 (B) →	Risk to Close	Digital Connectivity	Separate connectivity issues relating to DR are being managed as part of the DR risk. The current arrangements have maintained connectivity throughout the pandemic therefore the risk can close



2.2 Risks to Transfer to Business as Usual in the event of RCG Standing Down.

Following discussions with workstream risk owners, it was agreed that the following risks will transfer to BAU for ongoing management as part of the Authority's normal risk management process. Full details of the risk and its controls are documented in Appendix 2.

Our People

Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Ongoing Risk Management	Service Area
9.	Covid-19 cases and Self-Isolation Impact on Service Provider Delivery: There is a risk that due to increase in Covid-19 cases and staff isolation, providers may not have sufficient capacity to pick up new packages of care for people leaving hospital or for general community packages. There may also be difficulties in delivering existing packages if the trend continues.	n/a	B2 (R) (new risk)	D3 (G)	Adult Social Care Capacity and Operational Model	In the event of RCG standing down the risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Commissioning Services
10.	External Care Market: There is a risk to that the external care market may not cope with increasing demand in response to hospital discharge.	D2 (B) →	D2 (B) →	D2 (B)	Adult Social Care Capacity and Operational Model	In the event of RCG standing down the risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Commissioning Services
11.	Pupil Achievement: There is a risk that there may be significant ongoing impact on educational outcomes from the	A1 (R) →	A1 (R) →	B2 (R)	Children, Young People & Schools	In the event of RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Education, Skills & Employment



Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Ongoing Risk Management	Service Area
	closure of schools/cancellation of key exams during lockdown.						
12.	Safeguarding Impact from Education Disruption: There is a risk that safeguarding issues may increase considerable now children are attending school.	B3 (B) →	B3 (B) →	C3 (B)	Children, Young People & Schools	In the event of RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Education, Skills & Employment

Our Places

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Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Ongoing Risk Management	Service Area
13.	Covid-19 Outbreak in Buildings: There is a risk that there may be a Covid-19 outbreak in a building resulting in the need to close.	C2 (R) →	C2 (R) →	D3 (G)	Covid Secure Workplace / Public Buildings	In the event of RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Public Health

Our Economy

Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Ongoing Risk Management	Service Area
14.	Footfall Reduced in Town Centres: There is a risk that footfall within our town centres may be reduced due to overall visitor confidence and attracting people back into our centres.	A2 (R) →	A2 (R) →	D2 (B)	Town Centres	In the event of RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management	Business and Enterprise



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Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Ongoing Risk Management	Service Area
15.	Opportunities for School Leavers (years 11-13): There is a risk that school leavers (year 11 - 13) within North Tyneside may be disadvantaged due to the dual impact that Covid-19 will have on both education and employment opportunities.	D3 (G) →	D3 (G) →	D3 (G)	Employability, Skills and Learning	Following RCG standing down, this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	Employment and Skills
16.	Funding for Employment and Skills Service: There is a risk that funding for the Employment and Skills service may not be available or there may be reductions in grant funding.	D3 (G) →	D3 (G) →	E4 (G)	Employability, Skills and Learning	Following RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management. It is expected it will close once the extension of funding until March 2022 has been confirmed.	Employment and Skills
17.	Impact from Resurgence of Virus on Face to Face Meetings: There is a risk that if there is a resurgence of the virus and extension of lockdown that face to face meetings may be impacted.	C3 (B) →	C3 (B) →	D4 (G)	Employability, Skills and Learning	Following RGC standing down, this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management with the potential for closure following the return to classroom in September.	Employment and Skills
18.	Staff Incapacitated or Self Isolating due to Covid-19: There is risk that staff may be unavailable to deliver services due to incapacity or self-isolating.	D3 (G) →	D3 (G) →	E4 (G)	Employability, Skills and Learning	Due to the prevalent number of Covid-19 cases in the region, this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management following RCG standing down.	Employment and Skills



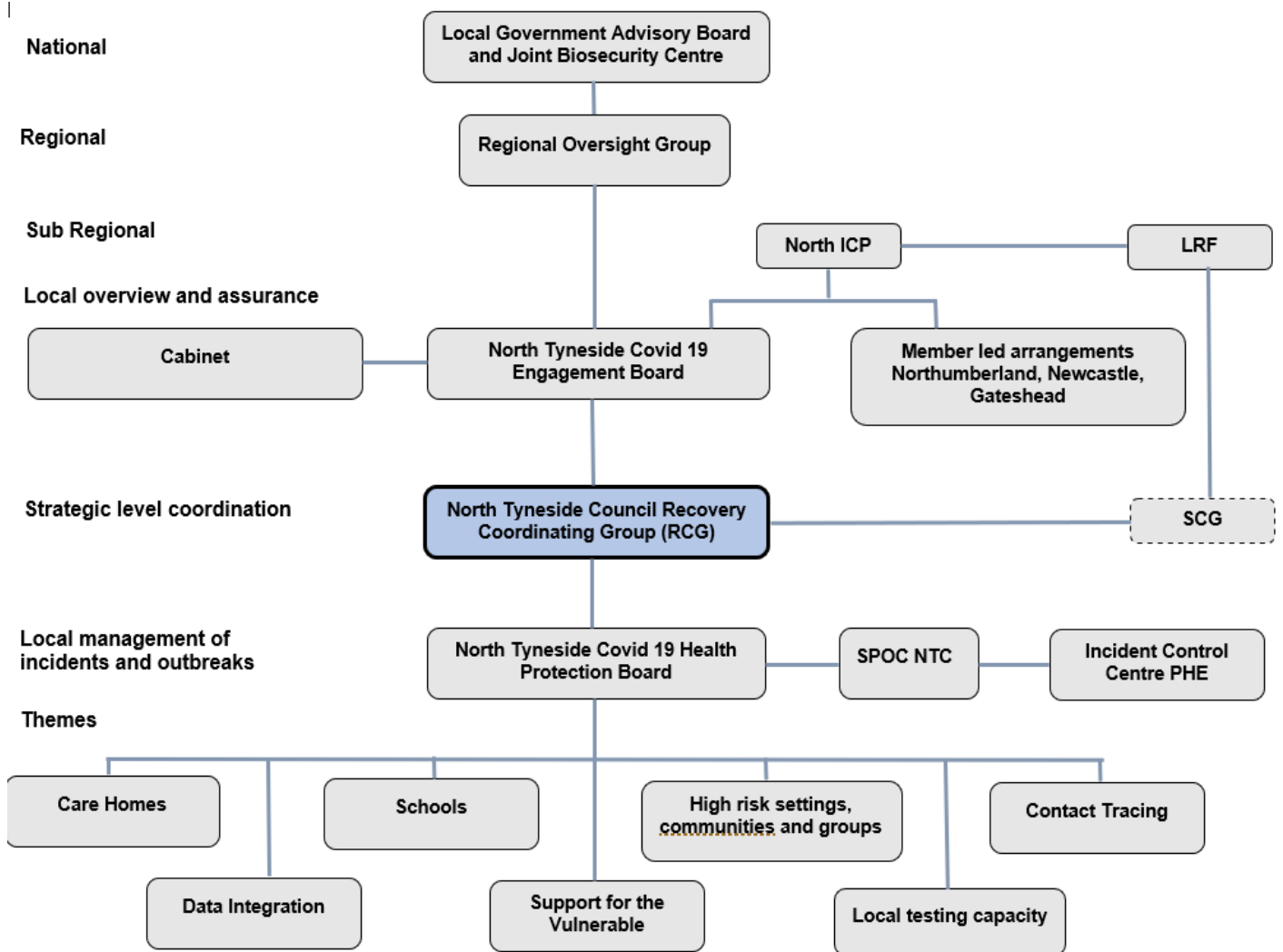
Our Organisation

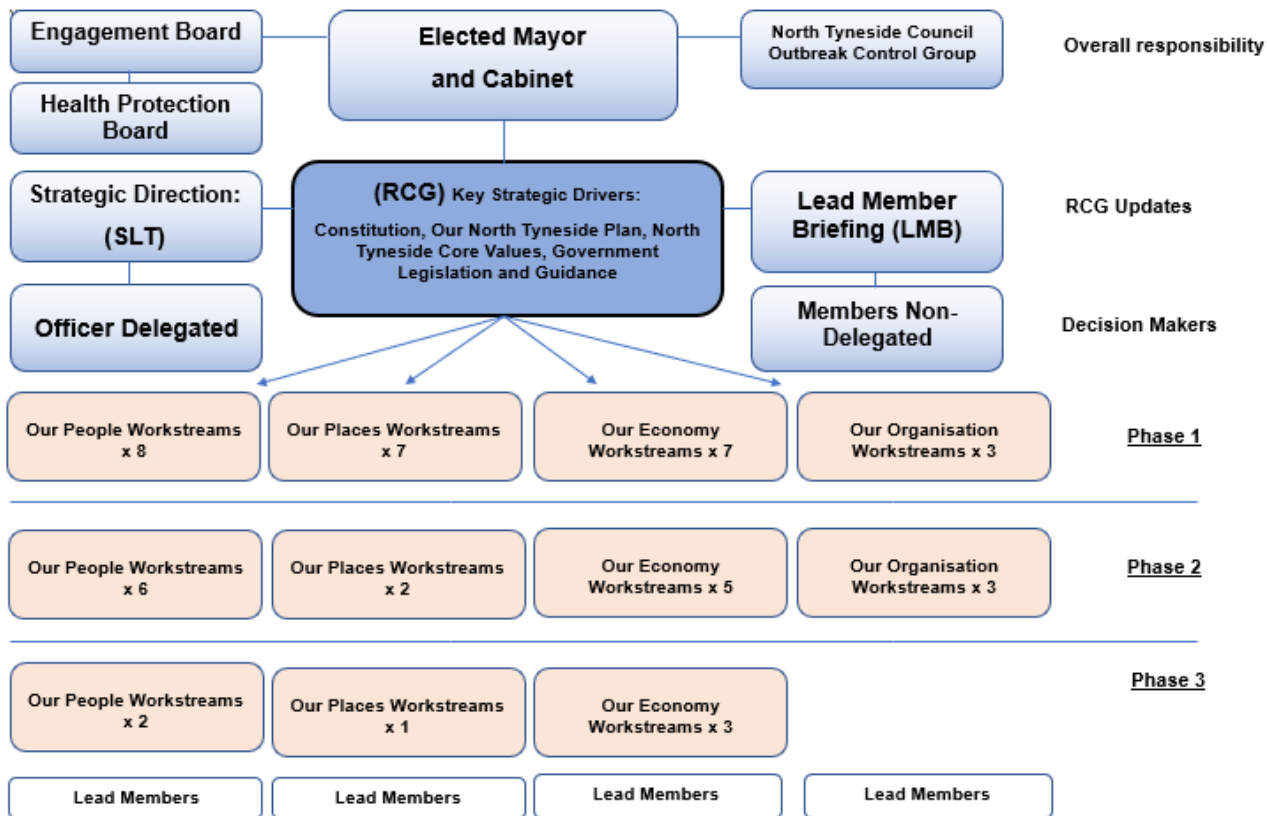
Risk No	Risk Detail	Prev Score	Risk Score	Target Score	Workstream	Action	Ongoing Risk Management
19.	Keeping Staff and Members Safe: There is a risk that due to the nature of some of the services we deliver as an Authority our staff and Members may be subjected to increased exposure to Covid 19:	C2 (R) →	B2 (R) ↑	D3 (B)	Future Working / Return to the Workplace Workstream	In the event of the RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing review and management.	Human Resources
20.	Service Delivery: There is a risk that due to government directive, staff shortages from illness, self-isolation, or caring responsibilities that some business critical services may be impacted.	D2 (B) →	B2 (R) ↑	D2 (B)	Future Working / Return to the Workplace Workstream	In the event of the RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing review and management.	Human Resources
21.	Employee Engagement and Culture Shift: There is a risk that employee engagement and culture shift is not able to happen effectively due to a large proportion of the workforce working remotely.	D2 (B) →	D2 (B) →	D3 (G)	Future Working / Return to the Workplace Workstream	In the event of the RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing review and management.	Human Resources
22.	Insufficient ICT Equipment when Staff Return to the Workplace: There is a risk that once staff begin to return to their workplace there may be insufficient ICT equipment to meet the demands associated with mixed working.	A2 (R) →	B3 (B) ↓	D4 (G)	Digital Connectivity	In the event of RCG standing down this risk will transfer to BAU for ongoing management.	ICT

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Annex I – RCG Governance Structure







North Tyneside Council

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   **NTCouncilTeam**

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up and Recovery and Renewal Challenge Findings

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor	Cabinet Member(s): Norma Redfearn
Report from Service Area:	Corporate Strategy and Customer Service
Responsible Officer:	Jacqueline Laughton, Assistant Chief Executive (Tel: (0191) 6435724)
Wards affected:	All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

As part of the national sector-led improvement programme, the Authority took part in a Local Government Association (LGA) corporate peer challenge from 18 – 21 June 2019. The Peer Team made six recommendations for the Authority’s future planning in a written report. Cabinet have received two updates on the progress made with the six LGA recommendations on 14 October 2019 and 24 May 2021.

Cabinet also agreed on 24 May 2021, to a follow up remote visit by the LGA from 29 – 30 June 2021. This remote visit was to review the progress of the six corporate peer challenge recommendations and to carry out a Covid-19 recovery and renewal challenge. Appended to this report is the feedback and key reflections report from the LGA team following their visit.

The feedback and key reflections from the LGA team are extremely positive and supportive of the Authority’s plans for the Borough to recover and renew from the challenges faced by the Covid pandemic

The LGA was impressed that the Authority had successfully delivered against the action plan it had produced in response to the six corporate peer review challenge recommendations, during the very challenging times caused by the pandemic.

Feedback from the LGA described ‘great political and managerial leadership that balances passion and compassion’. The LGA report cited clear evidence of the organisation’s values beginning to embed and noted how long standing, positive relationships with many partners, had enabled agile and innovative decision making during the pandemic.

The LGA noted the work to analyse and understand the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic on local communities and how this will inform a refreshed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Borough, through the Health and Well Being Board.

The Authority's plans for Covid-19 recovery were found to be impressive, with a clear focus on people and customers.

The following four recommendations have been made by the LGA team, to support the Authority's ongoing work on recovery and renewal:

- complete work to strengthen the workforce and organisational development client function
- finalise all strategic plans, with buy-in from all stakeholders
- identify and consider further investment opportunities and integrated pathways with health partners, and
- continue to play into the regional and sub-regional space, to bring in tangible benefits to the residents of North Tyneside.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) note the LGA feedback key reflections in Appendix 1
- (2) note the four recommendations from the LGA, as set out in section 1.5.2 of this report and ensure that these are built into the ongoing work to deliver the Our North Tyneside Plan and the Organisational Business Plan.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 16 July 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report is directly concerned with the delivery of the entire Our North Tyneside Plan.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

a. Corporate Peer Challenge 18 – 21 June 2019

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected members and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team in 2019 reflected the Authority's requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected based on their relevant experience and expertise.

The Peer Team were very positive about the Borough, the organisation and its partners. They saw North Tyneside as an attractive and vibrant place with members, staff, partners and residents all passionate about the Borough.

The Peer Team felt the Authority was effective, well led and well managed, providing good quality services and with a very positive culture. They identified successful regeneration across the Borough recognised by partners and residents.

Their recommendations focussed on four important areas; how the organisation tells its story, explains its plans and aligns its enabling services against those plans; ensuring regeneration work is inclusive; making sure a four-year medium term financial plan is in place to deliver the priorities of the Mayor and Cabinet and maximising participation and influence in the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

The Peer Team presented feedback on 21 June 2019 to Cabinet Members and the Senior Leadership Team. The Peer Team made six recommendations for the Authority's future planning in a written report.

The Peer Team written report, and resulting action plan from the Authority, was reviewed and agreed by Cabinet, at its meeting on 14 October 2019 and the final action plan update was subsequently noted by Cabinet at its meeting on 24 May 2021.

b. North Tyneside Council's Covid-19 Recovery Framework

The Authority's Covid-19 recovery framework was agreed by Cabinet on 29 June 2020 and set out an 18-month programme of work to move the Authority and Borough, through three phases of recovery from June 2020 to July 2021.

At its meeting on 20 September 2021, Cabinet will consider a report to successfully conclude and close the Covid-19 Recovery Programme.

c. Local Government Association Recovery and Renewal Challenge

When Covid-19 national lockdown measures began in March 2020, the LGA suspended the physical delivery of peer challenge work, including their peer challenge programmes. To continue to support councils during this period, the LGA have refocused their offer, adopting a new approach to the peer support offer, focusing on supporting the recovery and renewal of local government and communities. All work is undertaken remotely.

d. LGA Recovery and Renewal Panel Visit 29 – 30 June 2021

The purpose of the review was to:

- consider the Authority's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- review the current priorities for the Borough, as a result of COVID-19, and
- consider the longer term impact of the pandemic, on the ambitions of the Authority for the Borough.

The remote review took place over two days, 29 – 30 June 2021, and involved remote meetings with a range of council leaders, partners and teams, as set out in the report to Cabinet on 24 May 2021.

The LGA team members were -

- Jim Taylor (Former Chief Executive - Salford City Council)
- Mayor Ros Jones (Elected Mayor & Leader - Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council)
- Amy Harhoff (Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth – Durham County Council), and
- Satvinder Rana (Programme Manager - LGA)

- Rachel Stevens (Programme Support Officer – LGA).

1.5.2 Feedback and Key Findings from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up and Recovery and Renewal Remote Visit

a. LGA Feedback and Key Findings

Feedback and key findings from the LGA are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report. The feedback and key reflections are extremely positive and supportive of the Authority's recovery and ambition for the Borough.

The LGA found that the Authority had successfully delivered against the action plan it had produced in response to the six recommendations from the corporate peer challenge in 2019, namely:

- crystallise the 'we listen, we care' narrative into a coherent strategy and implementation plan and develop council-wide strategic capacity;
- from the existing positive culture, articulate and communicate clear key values for the organisation;
- realign the corporate enablers to better develop and deliver service reform with a particular focus on digital enablement;
- develop an inclusive economic strategy for North Tyneside having regard for commercial opportunity, sectorial strengths, skills provision and social inclusion;
- through a whole council approach, deliver a four-year medium term financial plan to meet the challenge which will enable the council to deliver its priorities; and
- maximise North Tyneside's influence and participation in the new Combined Authority with particular emphasis on joint development of priorities.

Feedback from the LGA described 'great political and managerial leadership that balances passion and compassion'. The LGA saw clear evidence of the organisation's values beginning to embed and noted how long standing, positive relationships with many partners, had enabled agile and innovative decision making, during the pandemic.

In addition, the LGA stated:

- frontline staff appreciated visibility and support of senior leadership, particularly during the pandemic
- the Authority had moved immensely on strengthening the client function, developing the digital strategy, and putting in place a robust Medium Term Financial Plan which wraps around all the strategic plans, although the workforce and organisational development client function was less developed
- great OFSTED and Youth Justice results, and
- great progress made on creating space within the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and having positive relationships with strategic partners.

The LGA noted the work to analyse and understand the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic on local communities and how this will inform a refreshed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Borough through the Health and Well Being Board.

The Authority's plans for Covid-19 recovery were found to be impressive and challenging, with a clear focus on people and customers.

b. LGA Recommendations

The LGA stated that North Tyneside Council is on a successful transformation journey that is now beginning to reap rewards for the organisation and the Borough's residents. To keep this journey on track and accelerate it further, the LGA recommended four areas.

1. Complete the work to strengthen the workforce/human resources/organisational development client function; and build on the good practice developed during the pandemic to connect, empower, and support the workforce, making creative use of technologies to engage with staff and residents, and support agility and pace in decision making.
2. Finalise strategic plans, secure buy-in from all stakeholders, and start demonstrating the impact its ambitions and customer promise are making across the Borough.
3. Identify and consider the opportunities that may be available to:
 - attract inward investment and government funding through a shared and compelling local economic and growth narrative
 - support local investment interventions through commercial activity, where appropriate, and
 - work closely with NHS partners to develop more integrated pathways to health and care services for residents.
4. Continue to play in the regional and sub-regional space to bring in tangible benefits to the residents of North Tyneside.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

(i) To note the feedback, key findings and four recommendations from the LGA, as set out in section 1.5.2 of this report and ensure that these are built into the ongoing work to deliver the Our North Tyneside Plan and the Organisational Business Plan.

Option 2

(i) To note the feedback, key findings and four recommendations from the LGA, as set out in section 1.5.2 of this report and not build these into the ongoing work to deliver the Our North Tyneside Plan and the Organisational Business Plan.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

- the recommendations made by the LGA, are based on detailed discussions with the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and the Authority's Chief Executive and senior leadership team during the course of the LGA's remote corporate peer challenge follow up and recovery and renewal remote visit on 29 and 30 June 2021
- the recommendations reflect the feedback and key findings from the LGA.

1.8 Appendices:

- Local Government Association Remote Peer Support and Recovery & Renewal Panel – Feedback and Key Reflections

1.9 Contact officers:

'Jacqueline Laughton, Assistant Chief Executive, tel. (0191) 6435724'

'Haley Hudson, Manager Customer Service and Digital, tel. (0191) 6437008'

'David Dunford, Acting Senior Business Partner, tel. (0191) 643 7027'

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) Report to Cabinet – Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge - Report and Action Plan 14 October 2019
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1226/Local%20Government%20Association%20Corporate%20Peer%20Challenge%20Report%20and%20Action%20Plan.pdf>
- (2) Report to Cabinet – Covid-19 A Framework for Recovery in North Tyneside 29 June 2020 <https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s4039/Covid-19%20-%20A%20Framework%20for%20Recovery%20in%20North%20Tyneside.pdf>
- (3) Report to Cabinet - Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up and Recovery and Renewal Remote Visit 24 May 2021
[North Tyneside Council](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

2.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The corporate peer challenge in June 2019 involved extensive engagement during the on-site exercise outlined in the report to Cabinet on 14 October 2019.

The follow up visit from the peer challenge and proposed recovery and renewal challenge, planned for 29 – 30 June 2021, involved a schedule of meetings with Members, officers and partners, as set out in the report to Cabinet on 24 May 2021.

2.4.1 External Consultation

The corporate peer challenge in June 2019 included focus group meetings with residents, some of the Authority's housing tenants, as well as partners. A copy of the report to Cabinet on 24 May 2021, was shared with those residents and tenants, who took part in the June 2019 Peer Challenge.

Feedback and key findings from the LGA in this report, will be used to shape and influence future planning, including the refresh of the current Our North Tyneside Plan. The Authority is currently seeking views from residents and partners to help shape the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's refreshed vision for the Borough – aimed at building a better North Tyneside. The draft plan features five themes aimed at creating a North Tyneside that is thriving, family-friendly, caring, secure and green. The consultation questionnaire asks for views on these five themes and was open until 15 August 2021.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X

North Tyneside Council

LGA Remote Peer Support and
Recovery & Renewal Panel

Feedback and Key Reflections

29th - 30th June 2021

Introduction

When the Covid-19 pandemic emerged and lockdown began in March 2020, the LGA suspended the physical delivery of all peer challenge work including the core offer of a corporate peer challenge.

To continue to support councils during this unprecedented period, the LGA rapidly refocused their support and adopted a new remote approach, focusing on supporting the recovery and renewal of local government and its communities. This new approach does not replace the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge offer.

On 29th and 30th June 2021 North Tyneside Council undertook an LGA Remote Peer Support and Recovery & Renewal Panel. The Peer Team focussed on:

1. The progress the Council made against the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge delivered by the LGA in June 2019
2. The Council's recovery and renewal ambitions going forward against its changed context post Covid-19, its role in supporting local economic recovery, and its capacity to deliver

The Peer Team included the following participants:

- **Jim Taylor** (Former Chief Executive - Salford City Council)
- **Mayor Ros Jones** (Elected Mayor & Leader - Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council)
- **Amy Harhoff** (Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth – Durham County Council)
- **Satvinder Rana** (Programme Manager - LGA)

Background

North Tyneside Council received an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge during 18th – 21st June 2019. Feedback from the Peer Challenge concluded that:

North Tyneside Council has intervened strategically and tactically to make the most of the natural assets of the local area. The Council's leadership role in place-shaping is based on a deep understanding of the local context and Members, staff, partners and residents are all passionate about North Tyneside. People could see both the physical transformation of the area and the benefits of the impact the Council's interventions are having on their quality of life. However, there is now an opportunity for step-change in tackling the impact of pockets of deprivation across the Borough through an inclusive economic strategy.

This report provides a written summary of the key observations made by the peer team during their follow up remote peer support to North Tyneside Council, addresses the key issues of the recommendations made in June 2019, and provides some key reflections on the Council's renewal and recovery ambitions going forward post Covid-19.

Feedback and Key Reflections

Progress against the Corporate Peer Challenge of 2019 – Feedback

The Peer Team's headline message for the Council is "Well Done North Tyneside! You have done a great job in the last couple of years". The Peer Team was very impressed with the progress the Council has made during some unprecedented and very challenging times. The amount of 'business as usual' as well as coping with a pandemic, including temporary national attention for a surge in COVID-19, is commendable. Achieving an 'Outstanding' OFSTED inspection for Children Services and the expected positive Youth Justice results during this time was no small achievement.

The Council has continued to provide impressive political and managerial leadership that balances passion and compassion. The passion for the area is finely balanced with compassion for residents, particularly those that need support the most. The complementary leadership styles of the Mayor and the Chief Executive is strong and inspirational and the two continue to be highly regarded. They are supported by a strong Cabinet and a committed and effective senior management team; both should be commended for their excellent joint working to deliver for the people of North Tyneside during these challenging times.

The Peer Team was heartened to see how the Council addressed the Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations through formalised and coordinated processes. The Peer Team has noted the following progress against the six recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge of 2019.

1. Organisational values and behaviours of *'we listen'*, *'we care'*, *'we are ambitious'*, and *'we are good value for money'* are now much clearer and are beginning to filter down from the Mayor and the Chief Executive. They are clearly articulated and reflected in the Council's plans and programmes; and are being modelled by both the political and managerial leadership teams. The Council's focus on *'our people'*, *'our place'*, *'our economy'*, and *'our organisation'* is equally clear and reflected in all the work of the Council.
2. The Covid-19 pandemic threw up unprecedented challenges for everybody and the Council dealt with these in a thoughtful, coordinated, and supportive way. Group managers and frontline staff welcomed the visibility, support and communication from senior leadership during this time. They found the Chief Executive's Updates, dedicated social media pages, social chats by team leaders, online exercise classes, more freedom and trust to do what was needed, and general management flexibility and sense of care in responding to and dealing with personal and family issues, particularly helpful. This all helped them to feel more connected to the organisation and is something that should be built upon going forward.
3. The Council has moved immensely on strengthening its client function and giving it a strategic context. It has had detailed discussions with its service provider to agree an approach to strengthen these functions through three different, but interlinking, workstreams around the *'Team'*, *'Resources'* and *'Technology'*.

The Council has developed its digital strategy with a focus on using, storing and sharing *'Data'* responsibly; designing easy to use interactions for *'Customers'*; having stable and fit for purpose technical tools for the *'Team'*; and supporting residents, businesses and visitors across the *'Borough'* with accessibility to digital connectivity.

Strengthening of the Workforce/Human Resources/Organisational Development client function is work in progress and once completed it should enable the Council to move to next level. The Peer Team was pleased to note that a strategic approach to Human Resources is being developed through a workforce and organisation development plan that will be directly linked to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and that the Senior Team has agreed an overall approach to leadership and the outcomes required for this corporate function.

4. The Council has also now put in place a robust MTFP which wraps around its strategic plans. This has enabled Members and officers to have a clear view of how the delivery of the Council's priorities and operational plans will be financed and where the pressure points are likely to be. This will be even more important as the Council delivers against its post pandemic recovery and renewal ambitions for the local area and its residents.
5. The framework for an Inclusive Economy is sound. Its emphasis on employment, safety, social equity, housing, digital connections, and sustainable environment is aligned with the Council's values and strategic priorities. The challenge now is to consider the extent to which a commercially guided approach to unlock and accelerate development is needed; and move it onto the delivery phase so that it starts having an impact on people's lives and livelihoods, as well as addressing the inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. This will mean bringing the Council's workforce and the local community on board to deliver inclusive economic benefits to all.
6. Positive progress has been made by the Council on creating space for itself on the North Tyneside Combined Authority (NTCA) and it continues to have positive relationships with its strategic partners. In addition to providing senior leadership to the NTCA at political and managerial levels, the Council now has some emerging programmes funded by the NTCA. Going forward, the Council should increase the focus on the impact of the NTCA on its residents and the delivery of the Mayor's new Manifesto priorities. In addition, the Council must grasp any opportunities that may present themselves from the emerging North East Devolution Deal. The value of engagement on these forums should be demonstrably felt by North Tyneside and its residents.

Recovery and Renewal – Key Reflections

The Council has a very good understanding and analysis of the impact of the pandemic on the local area and residents. The Peer Team was impressed with the analysis and understanding the Council is developing around the 'direct' and 'indirect' impacts of the pandemic on local communities so that it can inform a refreshed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The increased focus on people and customers, as well as the need to reduce inequalities, is clear and is at the heart of all the positive things underway. There are some positive examples of how this work is being taken forward, for example, the Education plan that will be run over the next four years to assist catch up and assist in closing the widening gap of schools is impressive.

The Council has ambitious plans for North Tyneside. Its phased Covid-19 recovery framework for North Tyneside focusing on '*People, Place, Economy and Organisation*' provides a well thought through and coordinated approach to building the 'new normal'. This is being performance managed to ensure that outcomes are on track.

To accelerate recovery, renewal, growth and to secure buy-in and any future inward investment the Peer Team would encourage the Council to consider defining an overarching economic strategy for the Borough. This could support the Local Plan by identifying sector

development, where housing development sites will be, the location of the strategic growth areas, and where potential council investment interventions might be made. Such a strategy would enable the Council to share its ambition for the areas with its strategic partners, its workforce, and its residents to help drive the growth. It would also act as a useful reference to compete for regional and national resources, lobby government when necessary, attract inward investment, and deliver on its regeneration projects.

North Tyneside has a buoyant local economy, albeit via Small and Medium Enterprises, but the opportunities this might offer for more localised commercial activity could be explored. This might provide income to the Council and in turn provide help to residents. However, this will mean identifying the levers that will help to attract investment and enable the Council to exercise control to mitigate against risk.

The Council should continue to influence and develop integrated approaches with health colleagues in health and Social Care, paying particular attention to really integrating pathways to health services for residents. It should use the new JSNA to give teeth to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and support the HWB to maintain its leadership role across the health and wellbeing system and deliver integrated health care for the residents of North Tyneside.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic the Peer Team heard positive examples of increased collaborative problem-solving, closer partnership working, new and innovative ways of working bring agility and pace in decision-making, a heightened sense of community and an increase in volunteering activity (being recognised through the *'Spirit of North Tyneside'* initiative), reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, and a cleaner environment. All these positives should to be considered as the Council moves into the post-pandemic 'new normal'. It is time to continue to shift the organisational culture in a positive direction to build for the future.

The Council has outlined an impressive and challenging agenda for post pandemic recovery and renewal which will make a call on all its capacity. The Council has a very impressive Cabinet and a very capable officer cadre to drive and deliver this agenda for the benefit of North Tyneside and its residents. By building on the good work undertaken to align the Council behind some strong values and behaviours, tightening up its strategic functions, articulating clearly the Council's plans for the future, actively playing into the regional space, and putting in place the MTFP to align emerging plans with funding availability, the Council is in a strong position to deliver impressive results for the people of North Tyneside.

Recommendations

North Tyneside is on a successful transformation journey and it is now beginning to reap rewards for the organisation and the Borough's residents. To keep this journey on track and accelerate it further the Peer Team would recommend that the Council:

1. Completes the work to strengthen the Workforce/Human Resources/Organisational Development client function; and build on the good practice developed during the pandemic to connect, empower, and support the workforce, making creative use of technologies to engage with staff and residents, and support agility and pace in decision making.
2. Finalises its strategic plans, secures buy-in from all stakeholders, and start demonstrating the impact its ambitions and customer promises are making across the Borough.

3. Identify and consider the opportunities that may be available to:
 - a. attract inward investment and government funding through a shared and compelling local economic and growth narrative
 - b. support local investment interventions through commercial activity, where appropriate
 - c. work closely with Health partners to develop more integrated pathways to health and care services for residents
4. Continues to play in the regional and sub-regional space to bring in tangible benefits to the residents of North Tyneside.

Next Steps

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice, and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Mark Edgell (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA). His contact details are: Email: mark.edgell@local.gov.uk and Tel: 07747 636 910.



Satvinder Rana
Programme Manager

(On behalf of the peer team)

Key recommendations from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (18th – 21st June 2019).

- 1. *Crystalise the 'We Listen, We Care' principle and narrative into a coherent strategy and implementation plan and develop Council-wide strategic capacity to support this objective.*** This will help to translate this commitment into tangible plans for Members, staff and external partners which describe 'what' the message looks like in practice and 'how' they can embed it in their work and through their behaviours and actions.
- 2. *From the existing positive culture, articulate and communicate clear key values for the organisation.*** This means teasing out the different key words and phrases and consolidating this into one clear set of values that articulate and define what North Tyneside Council is all about, what it is trying to achieve.
- 3. *Realign the corporate enablers to better develop and deliver service reform with a particular focus on digital enablement.*** This means strengthening the strategic functions by having a stronger centralised intelligent client function, working with service area teams to get the best out of outsourced contracts. This will help to ensure that the outputs are aligned to the Council's ambitions and will support service reform, particularly in the progressive use of modern technologies.
- 4. *Develop an inclusive economic strategy for North Tyneside having regard for commercial opportunity, sectorial strengths, skills provision and social inclusion.*** An inclusive economic strategy co-developed with communities and businesses would help in targeting growth opportunities to specific sectors, both locally and as part of the North of Tyne Combined Authority strategy. It would enable the development of skills around those sectors so that local people can benefit from the investment that may flow into the area.
- 5. *Through a whole council approach, deliver a four-year medium-term financial plan to meet the challenge which will enable the Council to deliver its priorities.*** This will enable the Council to take a long-term view of its financial capacity by breaking the budget down and aligning expenditure against priorities to help the Council in delivering its ambition for people, place and the economy.
- 6. *Maximise North Tyneside's influence and participation in the new North of Tyne Combined Authority with particular emphasis on joint development of priorities.*** This will enable the Council to jointly work on key agendas such as skills development, inward investment, tourism and in addressing deprivation through inclusive economic development.

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North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet 20 September 2021

Title: 2021/22 Financial Management Report to 31 July 2021

Portfolios: Elected Mayor Finance and Resources	Cabinet Member: Norma Redfearn Councillor Martin Rankin
Report from Service Area:	Resources
Responsible Officer:	Janice Gillespie, Director of Resources Tel: 643 5701
Wards affected:	All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

This report is the second monitoring report to Cabinet on the 2021/22 financial position. The report brings together financial and performance information with the intention of explaining the current financial position in the context of the policy priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan. It provides the latest indication of the potential revenue and capital position of the Authority at 31 March 2022.

- 1.1.1 The 2020/21 financial year was highly complex for the Authority with the operational response to the pandemic requiring innovation, agility, professionalism and partnership. Like all local authorities, North Tyneside Council continues to feel the impact of the on-going Covid-19 pandemic and as such this report contains considerations to the potential financial impact the pandemic is having on the Authority in 2021/22.
- 1.1.2 Significant financial support to residents and businesses passed through the Authority's books in 2020/21 and reconciling that work has challenged the sector. Significant support is still available in 2021/22 too. The Authority currently has grants available of £26.203m to provide direct support for businesses (£12.367m), residents (£9.695m), care homes (£2.744m) and schools (£1.397m); as at the end of July 2021, all grant monies are committed.
- 1.1.3 In addition, the Authority has a further £8.456m of grant funding available to support services, £7.261m of Local Authority Support Grant and an estimate of £1.195m in relation to lost Sales, Fees and Charges. The total impact on services as a result of Covid-19 is forecast to be £18.420m, which leaves a pressure of £5.607m following

allocation of the £8.456m and £4.357m is utilised from the sector specific grants outlined above.

- 1.1.4 Areas of business as usual continue to face financial pressures, forecast as £1.813m at 31 July 2021, in particular across areas of Social Care and demand-led services that have been reported over a number of years. In considering the financial outlook for 2021/22, Services have considered the financial pressures they will face in 2021/22 and how they will mitigate these.
- 1.1.5 This report necessarily reflects these known pressures the Services will be required to manage during the financial year. As well as an explanation of any previously identified risks that have crystallised, this report sets out any new risks that may have a financial impact on the Authority. It is anticipated that the overall in-year pressures of this nature will be managed by the Services.
- 1.1.6 The report includes details of any additional grants received by the Authority since the budget was set. The report also advises Cabinet of the position so far on the 2021/22 Schools budgets, Schools funding and the forecast outturn for the Housing Revenue Account as at 31 July 2021.
- 1.1.7 Finally, the report provides an update on the 2021/22 Investment Plan, including delivery so far this year, along with details of variations and reprofiling of the Investment Plan, which are presented to Cabinet for approval.

1.2 Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) notes the forecast budget monitoring position for the General Fund, Schools' Finance and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as at 31 July 2021 (Annex sections 1, 5, 6 and 7);
- (b) approves the receipt of £2.401m new revenue grants (outlined in Annex section 3);
- (c) notes the Authority's Investment Plan spend of £12.394m to 31 July 2021 and the financing of the Plan to the end of the year (Annex section 8); and
- (d) approves variations of £2.352m (£2.352m for 2021/22) and reprogramming of (£12.832m) for 2021/22 within the 2021-2026 Investment Plan (Annex section 8).

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 3 June 2021.

1.4 Authority Plan and Policy Framework:

The budget is a key strand of the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Financial Position

This report is the second monitoring report presented to Members on the Authority's

2021/22 financial position. It provides an indication of the expected revenue and capital financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2022. This report is an interim view and it is expected this will change over the coming months as the response and recovery to Covid-19 continues.

The report covers:

- The forecast outturn of the Authority's General Fund and HRA revenue budget including management mitigations where issues have been identified;
- The delivery of 2021/22 approved budget savings plans; and
- An update on the Capital Investment Plan, including details of variations and reprogramming, that is recommended for approval.

1.5.2 General Fund Revenue Account

The budget for 2021/22 was approved by full Council at its meeting on the 18 February 2021. The net General Fund revenue budget was set at £150.154m. This included £4.337m of savings to be achieved, all of which had been identified in previous years.

The forecast overall pressure is estimated at £7.420m against the approved net budget. This is made up of a forecast pressure of £1.813m on normal activities and £5.607m relating to the impact of Covid-19. The pressure on normal activities in the services is driven mainly by Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding at £7.281m, reflecting the continued pressures in Children's Services, partly mitigated by the contingency balances that were created by Cabinet as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process and continue to be held centrally to reflect the on-going pressures in social care being felt locally and nationally.

Included in this projection is £5.720m of pressures in Corporate Parenting and Placements, and £1.624m in Integrated Disability & Additional Needs. The drivers for these pressures continue from 2020/21 and arise from:

- Continued growth in demand in Children's Social Care Services;
- Growth in numbers of children with Education and Health Care Plans;
- The timing of delivery of some aspects of the Efficiency Savings Programme to the extent that achievement of some savings may be at risk; and,
- Increases in staffing costs.

It is anticipated that the outturn forecast for normal activities will improve over the course of the financial year as planned remedial actions begin to impact on both expenditure and income.

With regards to the impact of Covid-19, the main drivers behind the £18.420m impact on services are also within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding where £9.600m is for increased costs to the Authority. Significant Covid-19 related pressures also exist in Environment, Housing and Leisure (£5.608m) and in Commissioning & Asset Management (£2.012m).

1.5.3 New Revenue Grants

The following revenue grants have been received during June and July 2021:

Service	Grant Provider	Grant	Purpose	2021/22 value £m
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department of Health and Social Care	New Burdens Funding – Domestic Abuse Duty	To provide support for the victims of domestic abuse and their children	0.450
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Education and Skills Funding Agency	School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant	Allows local authorities to monitor the performance of maintained schools and broker school improvement provision	0.117
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Education	Extension of the role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker Grant	To provide support to local authorities to help them meet their duty to appoint a virtual school head for children with a social worker to make advice and support available	0.100
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Work and Pensions	Flexible Support Fund – Youth Employment Partnerships	To help improve employment outcomes for long term unemployed individuals and group facing barriers to work	0.071
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Work and Pensions	Reducing Parental Conflict – Workforce Development Programme	To strengthen leadership around parental conflict and fund training for frontline staff to identify and respond to parental conflict	0.022
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Housing and Whole Family Working pilot	To implement the Housing and Whole Families Working Pilot helping low income families to thrive	0.047

Service	Grant Provider	Grant	Purpose	2021/22 value £m
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Education	Sector Led Improvement Programme	To enhance local and regional capacity by allowing the highest performing authorities to partner with other LA's in need of support	0.300
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Youth Custody Service/HM Prison and Probation Services	Remands to youth secure accommodation for children and young people	Transfer of responsibility to LA's for cost of remand to youth detention	0.030
Central Items	Department of Health and Social Care	Covid-19 Infection Control Grant Round 4	To provide support to social care providers with infection control measures	0.735
Central Items	Department of Health and Social Care	Covid-19 Rapid Testing Fund Round 3	To support the rapid testing of staff in care homes and support visiting by professionals and families	0.502
Environment Housing and Leisure	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Funding	To bring on line 5 homes with support for high need rough sleepers	0.021
Environment Housing and Leisure	Department for Transport	Bikeability	Cycling training for children attending compulsory education	0.001
Environment Housing and Leisure	Food Standards Agency	Prioritisation of New Businesses for Inspection	For additional administration support to help triage businesses for initial on-site visits	0.005
Total				2.401

1.5.4 School Funding

There is no further update since the previous Cabinet report on the position as at the end of May 2021. Schools are required to submit their rolling three-year budget plan by 31 May each year. The total planned deficit for 2021/22 is £5.132m. Cabinet will be aware that the Authority has been working with schools for a number of years with regard to the long-term strategic issue of surplus secondary places and the associated financial pressures, which continue to be compounded by rising employment costs. The provisional outturn for the year ended 31 March 2021 showed a surplus of £3.721m, which reversed the trend of deficits over the previous few years. The forecast trend going forwards, however, is increasing deficit balances.

As well as school balances being forecast to reduce overall, some individual schools continue to face significant financial challenges. There are six schools with deficit budget plans for 2021/22, all of which continue to be in deficit following 2019/20.

Cabinet will recall that the High Needs Block ended 2020/21 with a pressure of £8.720m. The initial latest of the budget position for 2021/22 indicates an anticipated in-year pressure of £3.491m reflecting a further rise in demand for special school places.

1.5.5 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The HRA is forecast to have year-end balances at 31 March 2022 of £3.058m, assuming all identified Covid-19 related costs and income shortfalls are covered centrally. These balances are £0.046m higher than budget which was set at £3.012m, due mainly to the impact of the previous year's financial performance, but there is also an in-year estimated underspend of (£0.010m), against an in-year budget of £1.943m.

Universal Credit was fully implemented across North Tyneside on 2 May 2018. As at the end of July 2021, 3,484 North Tyneside Homes tenants had moved on to Universal Credit and a team is working proactively with tenants to minimise arrears. This position will be closely monitored during the year to identify any impacts on the budget position.

1.5.6 Investment Plan

The approved 2021-2026 Investment Plan totals £275.789m (£98.593m 2021/22) and is detailed in table 29 of the Annex. The Annex to this report also sets out in Section 8 delivery progress to date, planned delivery for 2021/22, reprogramming and other variations identified through the Investment Programme Governance process.

An officer led review of the Investment Plan has resulted in proposals for variations of £2.352m and reprogramming of £12.832m of which more details are set out in Section 8 of the Annex to this report. The revised Investment Plan stands at £88.113m for 2021/22 and to the end of July 2021 spend of £12.394m had been incurred which represents 14.07% of the revised plan.

1.5.7 Performance against Council Plan

The 2021-2025 Our North Tyneside Plan (Council Plan) sets out the overall vision and policy context within which the Financial Plan and Budget are set. The Council Plan has three key themes – Our People, Our Places and Our Economy. For each one there is a set of policy outcomes that the Authority is seeking to deliver as set out below.

Our People will:

- Be listened to so that their experience helps the Council work better for residents.
- Be ready for school – giving our children and their families the best start in life.
- Be ready for work and life – with the right skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, economic independence and meet business needs.
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, well-being and independence, especially if they are carers.
- Be cared for, protected and supported if they become vulnerable including if they become homeless.
- Be encouraged and enabled to, whenever possible, be more independent, to volunteer and to do more for themselves and their local communities.

Our Places will:

- Be great places to live by focusing on what is important to local people, such as by tackling the derelict properties that are blighting some of our neighbourhoods.
- Offer a good choice of quality housing appropriate to need, including affordable homes that will be available to buy or rent.
- Benefit from the completion of the North Tyneside Living project and by North Tyneside Council's housing stock being decent, well managed and its potential use maximised.
- Recognise the climate emergency by further reducing the Borough's overall carbon footprint. This will include reducing the Council's carbon footprint, along with encouraging and enabling everyone to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Provide a clean, green, healthy, attractive and safe environment.
- Have an effective transport and physical infrastructure - including our roads, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport.
- Continue to be regenerated in Wallsend and Whitley Bay, through effective public, private and community partnerships, while ambitious plans will be developed for North Shields, Forest Hall and Killingworth.
- Be a thriving place of choice for visitors through the promotion of our award-winning parks, beaches, festivals and seasonal activities.

Our Economy will:

- Benefit, along with our people and places, from our ambitious vision which we created with partners in the North of Tyne Combined Authority. We will have a dynamic and more inclusive economy, which will ensure that all residents have a stake in our region's future.
- Grow by supporting new businesses and building on our strengths, including our existing world class companies, and small and growing enterprises.
- Be business friendly, ensuring the right skills and conditions are in place to support investment, and create and sustain new high-quality jobs and apprenticeships for working age people.
- Continue to support investment in our business parks, units and Town Centres.

The Authority has plans in place to deliver all elements of the Council Plan and performance against these plans is carefully monitored. The area under most financial pressure is Health Education Care and Safeguarding.

In common with most local authorities, and in line with the national picture, North Tyneside has seen costs within adult social care continue to rise. Along with the number of adults supported increasing over the last few financial years, the individual needs of those residents have increased due to people living longer with multiple complex conditions. Supporting those needs requires more intensive packages of care which are more expensive to provide. In addition to older people, younger adults with learning disabilities and physical disabilities are also living longer, often with multiple complex issues.

In Children's Services, good progress continues to be made on engaging with children in the early years of life to ensure that they are ready for school. Safeguarding vulnerable children and maximising their educational attainment remain key priorities.

Over recent years, there has been an increase nationally in demand for children's residential placements but with no corresponding increase in central government funded provision. As such, the levels of looked after children (LAC) and children who require supervision after leaving care continue to generate a significant financial pressure. Data for LAC levels suggest that, whilst fluctuating, there is a general trend of a steady increase in numbers (as per Section 5.2 in the Annex) but there are a wide range of levels of care provided, with more complex cases now being faced.

1.6 Decision Options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet may approve the recommendations at paragraph 1.2 of this report.

Options 2

Cabinet may decide not to approve to recommendations at paragraph 1.2 of this report.

1.7 Reasons for Recommended Option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

Cabinet is recommended to agree the proposals set out in section 1.2 of this report as it is important that Cabinet continues to monitor performance against the Budget, especially given the current level of financial pressures faced by the public sector.

1.8 Appendices:

Annex : Financial Management Report to 31 May 2021
Appendix 1: 2021 – 2026 Investment Plan

1.9 Contact Officers:

Janice Gillespie – Corporate Finance matters – Tel. (0191) 643 5701
Claire Emmerson – Corporate Finance and Schools matters – Tel. (0191) 643 8109
David Dunford – Corporate Finance and General Fund matters – Tel. (0191) 643 7027
Cathy Davison – Investment Plan matters - Tel. (0191) 643 5727
Darrell Campbell – Housing Revenue Account matters – Tel. (0191) 643 7052

1.10 Background Information:

The following background papers and research reports have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the offices of the author:

- (a) Revenue budget 2021/22
https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/North%20Tyneside%20Revenue%20Budget%202021_22.pdf
- (b) Investment Plan 2021-26
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s5460/Appendix%20D%20i%20-%202021-2026%20Investment%20plan%20-%20FINAL.pdf> (Agenda reports pack - Appendix D(i))
- (c) Reserves and Balances Policy
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s5467/Appendix%20G%20Reserves%20and%20Balances%20Policy%202021-22.pdf> (Agenda reports pack - Appendix G)
- (d) Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Performance Report
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s5469/Appendix%20I%20-%20202122%20Report%20of%20the%20Overview%20Scrutiny%20and%20Policy%20Development%20Committee%20Jan%202021.pdf>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and Other Resources

As this is a financial report, implications are covered in the body of the report. This report will also be presented to the Authority's Finance Sub-Committee at its meeting on 16 November 2021.

2.2 Legal

The Authority has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified.

2.3 Consultation/Community Engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Internal consultation has taken place with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Elected Mayor, Cabinet Members, the Senior Leadership Team and Senior Finance Officers.

2.3.2 External Consultation / Engagement

The 2021/22 budget was completed after widespread consultation and community engagement in line with the Authority's approved Budget Engagement Strategy.

2.4 Human Rights

The proposals within this report do not have direct implications in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998.

2.5 Equalities and Diversity

There are no direct equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

2.6 Risk Management

Potential future financial pressures against the Authority are covered in this report and registered through the Authority's risk management process.

2.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and Sustainability

There are no direct environmental and sustainability implications arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Assistant Chief Executive

2021/22 Financial Management Report Annex

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SECTION 1 - GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

1 General Fund Revenue Forecast

- 1.1 This report is the second monitoring report to Cabinet on the 2021/22 financial position. The report brings together financial and performance information with the intention of explaining the current financial position in the context of the policy priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan. It provides the second indication of the potential revenue and capital position of the Authority at 31 March 2022. The report explains where the Authority continues to manage financial pressures.

The 2020/21 financial year was highly complex for the Authority with the operational response to the pandemic requiring innovation, agility, professionalism and partnership. Like all local authorities, North Tyneside Council continues to feel the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and as such this report contains considerations to the potential financial impact the pandemic will have on the Authority in 2021/22. The Authority continues to see areas of pressure across Adults and Children's Social Care, but there are also significant impacts on income particularly across Sport and Leisure Services, and Catering Services.

- 1.2 The Authority's approved net revenue budget of £150.154m is forecast to outturn with a pressure of £7.420m. Table 1 in paragraph 1.5 below sets out the variation summary across the General Fund.

- 1.3 The Authority is continuing to take a prudent approach to forecasting including in relation to the impact of Covid-19 which currently is forecast to add pressures of £18.420m to the General Fund in 2021/22. The total Local Authority Support Grant received from Government for 2021/22 to date is £7.261m, of which £5.576m is new and £1.685m is carried forward from 2020/21. In addition, £4.357m of grants have been received to support specific activities, and an assumption has been made that the Authority will receive £1.195m of Sales, Fees and Charges funding, leaving a forecast pressure in the General Fund due to Covid-19 issues of £5.607m. The remaining pressure of £1.813m relates to normal ongoing activities.

Section 4 of this Annex sets out details of all grant funding received in respect of Covid-19 issues.

- 1.4 This Annex describes as far as possible the assumptions currently made in respect of additional costs and loss of income as a result of Covid-19, and where services continue to see variations in respect of business as usual.

1.5 Table: 1 2020/21 General Fund Revenue Forecast Outturn as at 31 July 2021

Services	Budget	Forecast Outturn July	Variance July	Previous Cabinet	Variance Change since May
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding	74.144	81.425	7.281	7.771	(0.490)
Commissioning and Asset Management	8.013	8.897	0.884	0.831	0.053
Environment, Housing and Leisure	44.279	44.243	(0.036)	(0.015)	(0.021)
Regeneration and Economic Development	1.399	1.462	0.063	0.063	0.000
Corporate Strategy	0.711	0.788	0.077	0.077	0.000
Chief Executive's Office	(0.078)	(0.109)	(0.031)	(0.031)	0.000
Resources	3.416	3.785	0.369	0.040	0.329
Law and Governance	0.308	0.726	0.418	0.323	0.095
Central Items – BAU	(2.051)	(9.263)	(7.212)	(7.212)	0.000
Central Items – Covid-19	0.000	5.607	5.607	4.003	1.604
Support Services	20.013	20.013	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Authority	150.154	157.574	7.420	5.850	1.570

SECTION 2 - DELIVERY OF BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

2.1 No new savings were proposed as part of the budget approved by Council in February 2021 so the total savings the Authority has had to find in the eleven years following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) remains at the 2020/21 total of £127.756m.

2.2 Table 2: Year on Year savings since 2010 CSR

Year	£m
2011/12	16.169
2012/13	16.739
2013/14	12.240
2014/15	16.552
2015/16	14.158
2016/17	15.737
2017/18	18.338
2018/19	10.143
2019/20	6.875
2020/21	0.805
2021/22	0.000
Total Savings	127.756

2.3 Although no new savings were proposed, a total of £1.792m of savings targets were agreed in prior years budget setting processes for delivery in 2021/22. Savings targets of £1.981m within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (HECS) were met in 2020/21 through Covid grants or alternative management actions with a further £0.482m met through one-year funding sources. This leaves a total of £3.643m savings targets within HECS which still require a permanent solution in 2021/22. A target of £0.082m from 2020/21 within Commissioning and Asset Management also requires achievement on a permanent basis in 2021/22. The total savings that need to be achieved in 2021/22 are therefore £4.337m.

2.4 The delivery of savings in 2021/22 is expected to continue to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic within HECS and Commissioning & Asset Management and forecasted saving delivery is unchanged from the May report.

2.5 Table 3: Efficiency Savings by Service at July 2021

Service	2021/22 Targets £m	Projected Delivery £m	In Year Actions £m	Yet to be achieved £m
HECS	3.643	0.540	1.100	2.003
Commissioning & Asset Management	0.264	0.100	0.000	0.164
Environment Housing & Leisure	0.430	0.430	0.000	0.000
TOTAL	4.337	1.070	1.100	2.167

- 2.6 The governance structure of the Efficiency Savings Programme includes a monthly review of progress by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). In addition, in-year budget and performance progress meetings are held between officers and Cabinet Members to consider progress and actions being taken to deliver savings. The variations in relation to the savings where delivery has been impacted by Covid are outlined in the sections below.

Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (HECS)

- 2.7 HECS has achieved savings targets totalling £0.540m relating to Sector Led Improvement income (£0.100m), maximising children's (£0.190m) and Adults NHS income (£0.250m). An in-year saving of £1.100m has been identified through management actions of retaining vacancies and managing third party payments within Adult services.
- 2.8 This service has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the level of response required through each phase as the Pandemic unfolded. A proportion of the savings involve income generation via third parties. Other service delivery-based savings have been impacted due to capacity issues where placements have had to be maintained due to delays in court proceedings or the type of placement not changing as previously planned due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- 2.9 Finance Officers continue to attend meetings with senior managers and the Head of Service across adult and children's services and individual managers have assigned responsibilities to pursue deliverability of existing schemes and to identify alternative proposals during 2021/22.

Commissioning and Asset Management

- 2.10 Within Commissioning and Asset Management the only savings target forecasted to be unmet in 2020/21 related to the target for an increase in school meals fees of £0.082m. This is now joined in 2021/22 by a further increase in this target of £0.082m. Both of these targets are forecasted as yet to be achieved pending decisions on school meal price increases. A target of £0.100m relating to SLA income is forecasted to be achieved.

Environment Housing and Leisure

- 2.11 All savings in this service are forecasted to be achieved.

SECTION 3 – NEW REVENUE GRANTS

3.1 New revenue grants have been received or notified during June and July 2021.

Table 4: Grants Received or Notified in June and July 2021

Service	Grant Provider	Grant	Purpose	2021/22 value £m
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department of Health and Social Care	New Burdens Funding – Domestic Abuse Duty	To provide support for the victims of domestic abuse and their children	0.450
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Education and Skills Funding Agency	School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant	Allows local authorities to monitor the performance of maintained schools and broker school improvement provision	0.117
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Education	Extension of the role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker Grant	To provide support to local authorities to help them meet their duty to appoint a virtual school head for children with a social worker to make advice and support available	0.100
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Work and Pensions	Flexible Support Fund – Youth Employment Partnerships	To help improve employment outcomes for long term unemployed individuals and group facing barriers to work	0.071
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Work and Pensions	Reducing Parental Conflict – Workforce Development Programme	To strengthen leadership around parental conflict and fund training for frontline staff to identify and respond to parental conflict	0.022

Service	Grant Provider	Grant	Purpose	2021/22 value £m
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Housing and Whole Family Working pilot	To implement the Housing and Whole Families Working Pilot helping low income families to thrive	0.047
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Department for Education	Sector Led Improvement Programme	To enhance local and regional capacity by allowing the highest performing authorities to partner with other LA's in need of support	0.300
Health Education Care and Safeguarding	Youth Custody Service/HM Prison and Probation Services	Remands to youth secure accommodation for children and young people	Transfer of responsibility to LA's for cost of remand to youth detention	0.030
Central Items	Department of Health and Social Care	Covid-19 Infection Control Grant Round 4	To provide support to social care providers with infection control measures	0.735
Central Items	Department of Health and Social Care	Covid-19 Rapid Testing Fund Round 3	To support the rapid testing of staff in care homes and support visiting by professionals and families	0.502
Environment Housing and Leisure	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Funding	To bring on line 5 homes with support for high need rough sleepers	0.021
Environment Housing and Leisure	Department for Transport	Bikeability	Cycling training for children attending compulsory education	0.001

Service	Grant Provider	Grant	Purpose	2021/22 value £m
Environment Housing and Leisure	Food Standards Agency	Prioritisation of New Businesses for Inspection	For additional administration support to help triage businesses for initial on-site visits	0.005
Total				2.401

SECTION 4 – IMPACT OF COVID-19

4.1 The Authority continues to play a key role in supporting businesses, residents, care homes and schools with financial support and additional Covid-19 related services throughout the Pandemic. Financial impacts remain, due to loss of income as a result of closures and restrictions on the facilities the Authority operates and additional costs resulting from Covid-19 in relation to its business-as-usual activities. The Authority has received a range of grants from Government to fund this additional activity and the financial impact on the Authority's normal services. The tables below outline the grants received, spend in year and the outcomes related to each grant.

4.2 **Table 5: Supporting Our Businesses**

Business Grant	Value Awarded 21/22	Value B/Fwd from 20/21	Value Spent 01.04.21-31.07.21	Value Committed @ 31.07.21	Value Available @ 31.07.21
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Business Support Top-Up	0.000	3.307	0.199	3.108	0.000
Local Restrictions Support 'Closed' & 'Open'	0.000	4.694	0.353	4.341	0.000
Additional Restrictions Grant	1.012	2.661	2.727	0.946	0.000
Christmas Support 'Wet-Pubs'	0.000	0.047	0.047	0.000	0.000
Capacity Fund	0.000	0.636	0.073	0.563	0.000
Travel Demand Management	0.000	0.010	0.010	0.000	0.000
Total	1.012	11.355	3.409	8.958	0.000

4.3 The Authority has £11.355m of grant funding brought forward from 2020/21 with a further £1.012m awarded in 2021/22 aimed at supporting businesses across the Borough. £3.409m of this has been allocated to date and the full funding is anticipated to be allocated during 2021/22.

4.4 Table 6: Supporting Our Residents

Residents Grant	Value Awarded 21/22	Value B/Fwd from 20/21	Value Spent 01.04.21-31.07.21	Value Committed @ 31.07.21	Value Available @ 31.07.21
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Test & Trace Programme Support Grant	0.000	0.782	0.331	0.451	0.000
Emergency Assistance Grant	0.000	0.080	0.018	0.062	0.000
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	1.439	5.302	0.247	6.494	0.000
Test & Trace (self-isolation) Support Payments	0.000	0.438	0.212	0.226	0.000
LA Practical Support Framework	0.184	0.000	0.010	0.174	0.000
Covid Marshalls	0.000	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.000
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	0.236	0.303	0.076	0.463	0.000
Rough Sleepers Additional Grant	0.025	0.000	0.022	0.003	0.000
Winter Grant	0.012	0.000	0.012	0.000	0.000
Local support (Winter Ext)	0.731	0.000	0.731	0.000	0.000
Rapid Testing in the Community	0.160	0.000	0.160	0.000	0.000
Total	2.787	6.908	1.822	7.873	0.000

4.5 The Authority has been awarded £2.787m of new grant funding in 2021/22 to continue supporting its residents on top of a brought forward balance of £6.908m from 2020/21, meaning there is £9.695m of funding available. This funding ranges from ensuring our most vulnerable are protected, individuals that needed to self-isolated still have access to the services they required and ensuring residents can visit our coastline and other attractions safely, where guidelines allow, through the employment of Covid Marshalls and other safety measures. The Authority has spent £1.822m in the period to the end of July and is committed to spending the balance of £7.873m in this financial year. The majority of the committed balance relates to the Contain Outbreak Management Fund. This grant is to help the Authority support the prevention of Covid-19 outbreaks or manage any that do occur in the borough. A number of plans are in place to spend this money over the remaining months of 2021/22 as restrictions continue to ease.

4.6 Table 7: Supporting Our Care Homes

Care Sector Grant	Value Awarded 21/22	Value B/Fwd from 20/21	Value Spent 01.04.21-31.07.21	Value Committed @ 31.07.21	Value Available @ 31.07.21
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Infection Control (combined)	1.278	0.544	0.591	1.231	0.000
Rapid Testing – Care Homes	0.922	0.000	0.388	0.534	0.000
Total	2.200	0.544	0.979	1.765	0.000

4.7 The Authority has been awarded £2.200m to support the care homes within the borough. The majority of this funding is passed over directly to the care homes. The remaining funding is used to support the Authority's adult social care services for infection control and testing activities.

4.8 Table 8: Supporting Our Schools

Schools Grant	Value Awarded 21/22	Value B/Fwd from 20/21	Value Spent 01.04.21-31.07.21	Value Committed @ 31.07.21	Value Available @ 31.07.21
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Digital Inclusion	0.000	0.076	0.035	0.041	0.000
Schools Catch-up Premium	0.880	0.000	0.880	0.000	0.000
Mental Health in Schools	0.024	0.000	0.000	0.024	0.000
Additional Home to School Transport	0.184	0.000	0.141	0.043	0.000
Mass Testing for Schools	0.000	0.233	0.233	0.000	0.000
Total	1.088	0.309	1.289	0.108	0.000

4.9 Grant funding of £1.088m has been received in 2021/22 with a brought forward balance from 2020/21 of £0.309m giving a balance available to spend on our maintained schools during 2021/22 of £1.397m. This funding is to help support schools to be able to continue to offer a Covid-safe environment and deliver services to ensure children are not detrimentally impacted by being unable to attend classes in school.

Supporting Council Services

4.10 The Authority's services have been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. These services are being supported in 2021/22 by £5.576m of Local Authority Support Grant and a brought forward balance of £1.685m. There is also utilisation of £4.357m of specific grants supporting services, and an estimate of £1.195m of grant funding to cover losses on Sales, Fees and Charges, which together with the Local Authority Support Grant amounts to a total grant availability of £12.813m. The tables below, summarised in Table 15, show that the forecasted total impact of Covid-19 on general fund services in 2021/22 is expected to be £18.420m, which will therefore leave a pressure on Covid-19 of £5.607m over the funding currently available.

The figures in the tables below are forecasts based on a range of assumptions relating to when the service areas predict their services will see the financial impact of Covid-19 reduce and activity return to a pre pandemic level. These forecasts will continue to be updated as new Government guidance is considered and implemented.

4.11 Table 9: Supporting Our Council Services in Commissioning & Asset Management

Commissioning & Asset Management	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Free School Meals	1.119	0.000	1.119
LA7 Home to School Transport	0.000	0.184	0.184
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	0.000	0.539	0.539
Electricity	(0.013)	0.000	(0.013)
Cleaning	0.025	0.000	0.025
Rents General	0.036	0.000	0.036
Car Parks (season tickets)	0.078	0.000	0.078
Penalty Notices (absence from School)	0.008	0.000	0.008
Central Purchasing	0.003	0.000	0.003
General Fund PPE	0.033	0.000	0.033
Total	1.289	0.723	2.012

4.12 Table 10: Supporting Our Council Services in Environment, Housing & Leisure

Environment Housing & Leisure	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Sport & Leisure	3.851	0.000	3.851
Waste Management	0.509	0.000	0.509
Highways & Transport	0.365	0.000	0.365
Cultural Services	0.243	0.000	0.243
Homelessness	0.015	0.000	0.015
Marshalls	0.000	0.174	0.174
Environment & Regulatory	0.344	0.000	0.344
Planning & Development	0.107	0.000	0.107
Total	5.434	0.174	5.608

4.13 Table 11: Supporting Our Council Services in Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding

Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
CYPL - School Improvement	0.324	0.000	0.324
CYPL - Front Door & safe and support	2.072	0.000	2.072
CYPL - Placement Costs	0.749	0.000	0.749
CYPL - Residential Staffing	0.833	0.000	0.833
CYPL - Adoption Agency (NTC share)	0.034	0.000	0.034
ASC - Adult Services	2.606	0.000	2.606
ASC - Rapid Testing in Social Care	0.000	0.922	0.922
ASC - Infection Control Grant	0.000	1.278	1.278
CYPL & ASC sub total	6.618	2.200	8.818
PH - Test & Trace Support Service	0.000	0.782	0.782
Total	6.618	2.982	9.600

4.14 Table 12: Supporting Our Council Corporate Strategy

Corporate Strategy	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Corporate Strategy	0.090	0.000	0.090
Total	0.090	0.000	0.090

4.15 Table 13: Supporting Our Council Resources and Central Items

Resources & Central Items	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Corporate ICT	0.334	0.000	0.334
Finance / Corporate Services	0.082	0.000	0.082
Revs and Bens Enforcement	0.400	0.000	0.400
Provision for Bad Debt	0.167	0.000	0.167
Total	0.983	0.000	0.983

4.16 Table 14: Supporting Our Council in Law and Governance

Law & Governance	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Law & Governance	0.127	0.000	0.127
Total	0.127	0.000	0.127

4.17 Table 15: Covid-19 Support to Services Summary

Service Area/ Category	Main Grant £m	Other Specific Grant £m	Total Claimed £m
Total Impact on Services	14.541	3.879	18.420
Local Authority Support Grant	(7.261)	0.000	(7.261)
Sales, Fees and Charges*	0.000	(1.195)	(1.195)
Specific Covid Grants	0.000	(4.357)	(4.357)
Unallocated in Reserve	7.280	(1.673)	5.607

*This figure is an estimate of the value the Authority will be claiming in relation to the funding available to support losses on Sales, Fees and Charges. Currently, this grant is only available in 2021/22 to cover losses incurred in April 2021 to June 2021.

SECTION 5 – SERVICE COMMENTARIES

5.1 Meetings have been held between finance officers and budget managers to review the forecast positions for 2021/22, with forecasts being prepared on a prudent basis at this early stage in the financial year. Challenge sessions are planned to review the quarterly financial position and service performance with the Elected Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, and other relevant Cabinet Members. Service Directors and their senior teams also attend these challenge sessions to discuss plans in progress to mitigate any pressures.

5.2 Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding (HECS)

5.2.1 HECS is showing an initial forecast variance of £7.281m against its £74.144m net controllable expenditure budget, an improvement of £0.490m from the May position of £7.771m. This position is after adjusting for a total of £8.818m of Covid-19 related cost and income pressures which are now shown within Central Items. The forecasted pressure is mostly within Children’s Services and excludes the application of contingency budgets set aside in Central Items for pressures in Children’s Services of £3.116m.

5.2.2 The HECS service continues to be impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic and has put in place a range of responses to support existing clients and other residents directly affected by the virus who have required new support packages to be put in place on discharge from hospital or to prevent an admission. Work is also ongoing to support social care providers to maintain their vital services. Further details on Covid impacts are shown in Section 4 above.

5.2.3 Table 16: Forecast Variation for HECS at July 2021

	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Corporate Parenting & Placements	15.802	21.522	5.720	5.999	(0.279)
RHELAC Service	0.008	0.008	0.000	0.000	0.000
Child Protection, Independent Assurance and Review	0.708	0.722	0.014	0.024	(0.010)
Early Help & Vulnerable Families	1.543	1.371	(0.172)	(0.030)	(0.142)
Employment & Skills	0.591	0.570	(0.021)	0.000	(0.021)

	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Integrated Disability & Additional Needs Service	2.284	3.908	1.624	1.609	0.015
School Improvement	0.319	0.341	0.022	0.172	(0.150)
Regional Adoption Agency	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Children's Services Sub-total	21.255	28.442	7.187	7.774	(0.587)
Central, Strategy and Transformation	1.131	1.161	0.030	0.063	(0.033)
Social Work and Associated Activity	7.211	7.605	0.394	0.564	(0.170)
Integrated Services	2.751	2.339	(0.412)	(0.394)	(0.018)
Business Assurance	0.296	0.378	0.082	0.081	0.001
Sub-total Operations	11.389	11.483	0.094	0.314	(0.220)
Commissioned Services – Wellbeing and Assessment	11.250	10.178	(1.072)	(1.015)	(0.057)
Commissioned Services – Learning Disability	25.435	25.185	(0.250)	(0.591)	0.341
Commissioned Services – Mental Health	3.312	4.603	1.291	1.258	0.033
Commissioned Services - Other	1.262	1.293	0.031	0.031	0.000
Sub-total – Commissioned Services	41.259	41.259	0.000	(0.317)	0.317
Adult Services Sub-total	52.648	52.742	0.094	(0.003)	0.097
Public Health	0.241	0.241	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total HECS	74.144	81.425	7.281	7.771	(0.490)

Main budget pressures across HECS

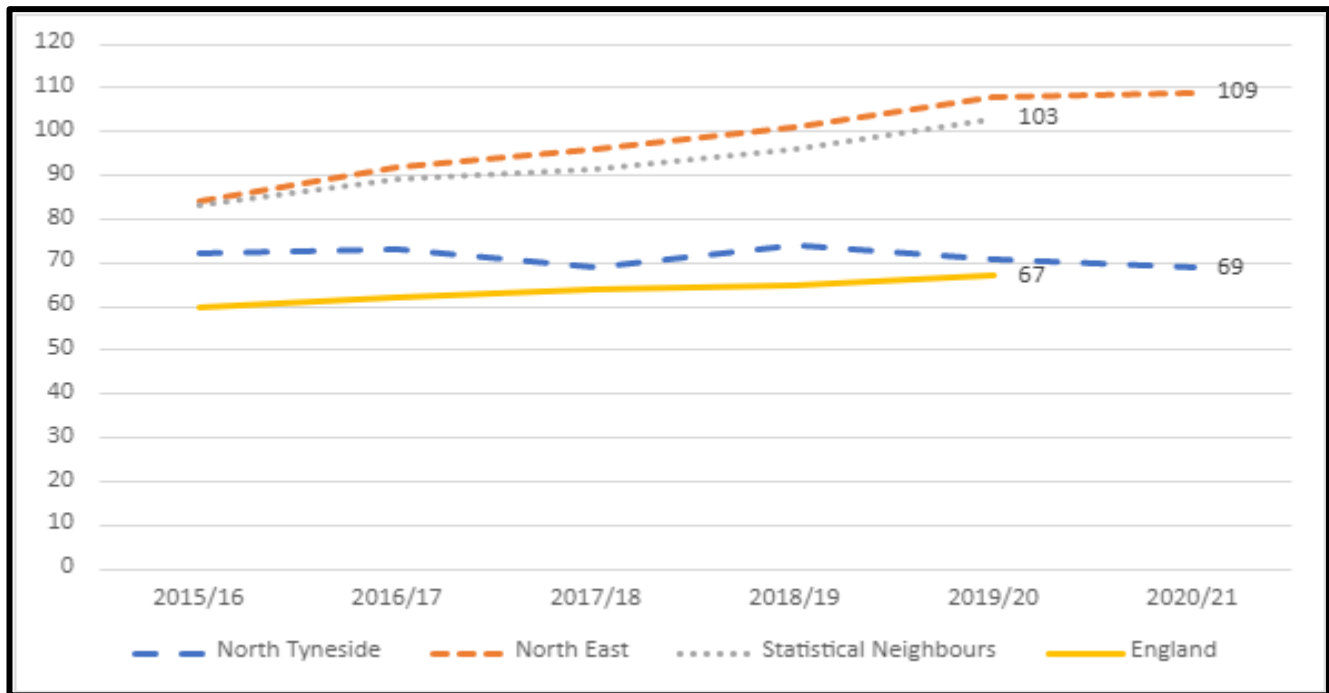
- 5.2.4 In addition to its response to the Covid-19 pandemic, HECS continues to manage a complex budget and is required to deal with a combination of funding arrangements, pressures and national policy changes. There are continuing upward pressures on care providers' fees partially resulting from the National Living Wage but which have become more acute with the operational impact of Covid-19 on care homes and issues around high vacancy levels in a small number of care homes within the borough. Dialogue continues with care home providers around appropriate fee rates. Negotiations also continue around ensuring funding contributions from the NHS for clients with health needs as the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (NTCCG) themselves face continuing budget constraints.
- 5.2.5 The main factor behind the overall forecast position, however, is the significant pressure within Corporate Parenting and Placements in relation to care provision for children in care and care leavers. There is also a pressure relating to services for children with additional needs. In addition to care provision pressures, there are also on-going pressures in the workforce arising from staff retention costs and recruitment costs.

Children's Services

- 5.2.6 In Children's Services the £7.187m forecast pressure relates mainly to pressures of £5.720m in Corporate Parenting and Placements and £1.624m in Integrated Disability and Additional Needs. The pressures were foreseen by Cabinet and backed by £3.116m of centrally held contingencies. This position excludes Covid-19 related pressures of £4.012m which have been transferred to Central Items.
- 5.2.7 The May position of Children's Services for 2021/22 was a pressure of £7.774m which had increased from an outturn in 2020/21 of £5.647m. The increase in forecast position in 2021/22 was mainly a result of new savings targets forecasted as unmet and reduced recharges to Covid grants and to adult services. A further assessment of the ongoing impact of the Pandemic has been carried out after infection rates in the borough rose and remained high in June and July. This reassessment has resulted in Covid costs for children's services rising to £4.012m from £2.907m in May. This includes a further £0.988m of savings targets currently forecasted as unmet.
- 5.2.8 The movement in the variance since the May report is due to a transfer of savings targets to Central Items to be set against Covid grants offset by an increase in external care packages for children of £0.420m. There is a reduction in pressures within School Improvement of £0.150m due to the transfer of non-curriculum-based ICT services to corporate ICT within Resources with an associated income target. Early Help and Vulnerable Families has improved due to changed assumptions in relation to recruitment into vacant posts.
- 5.2.9 North Tyneside Council, unlike many councils in the region, has managed to maintain the level of children in care at a stable rate during the Pandemic and at a rate which compares favourably with our neighbours.

5.2.10 The most recent available national comparators from 2019/20, as demonstrated by Chart 1 below, shows that North Tyneside, although above the England average, has historically performed well within the North East region in relation to the rates of children in care.

5.2.11 **Chart 1: Comparative Performance in Rates of Children in Care per 10,000 Children under 18**



5.2.12 Although an amount of £3.116m is held as a contingency budget for children’s services within Central Items, the budget within the service for the costs of looking after children who need to come into care is not sufficient for the relatively stable level of children who require these services. The costs for children who are formally not classed as in care but who required costed services also continues, as in previous years, to be significantly above budget. The service is currently undertaking an exercise in conjunction with colleagues in Finance, Performance and HR to identify growth requirements and saving opportunities as part of the ongoing development of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Corporate Parenting and Placements

5.2.13 The pressures within Corporate Parenting and Placements can be broken down as follows:

Table 17: Analysis of Pressures in Corporate Parenting and Placements

Type of Service	Budget £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change Since May £m
Care provision – children in care	9.188	3.189	3.066	0.123
Care provision – other children	3.147	0.917	0.931	(0.014)
Management & Legal Fees	(0.948)	0.808	1.152	(0.344)
Social Work	4.369	0.802	0.845	(0.043)
Safeguarding Operations	0.046	0.004	0.005	(0.001)
Total	15.802	5.720	5.999	(0.279)

5.2.14 The forecast has been developed based on the children in care as at the end of July 2021. The number in care at the end of July was 301 which was a net increase of 9 from the May figure of 292. The July forecast for the total number of care nights has increased by 1,811 from the May forecast of 102,304 but is still lower compared to the total number of care nights delivered in 2020/21 which was 108,745.

5.2.15 Table 18: Forecast cost, forecast variance, average placement cost and Placement mix

Placement Type	2021/22 July Variance	Average Annual Placement cost (£m) *	Forecast Bed Nights July	Forecast Bed Nights May	Placemen t Mix	No. of children July 21	No. of children May 21
External Residential Care	1.514	0.264	8,553	8,338	8%	28	26
External Fostering	(0.059)	0.040	8,820	9,048	9%	28	28
In-House Fostering Service	0.447	0.026	65,762	63,420	63%	182	174
External Supported Accommodation	0.524	0.119	3,552	3,218	3%	16	14
Other*	0.639	various	17,428	18,280	17%	47	50
Total	3.065		104,115	102,304	100%	301	292

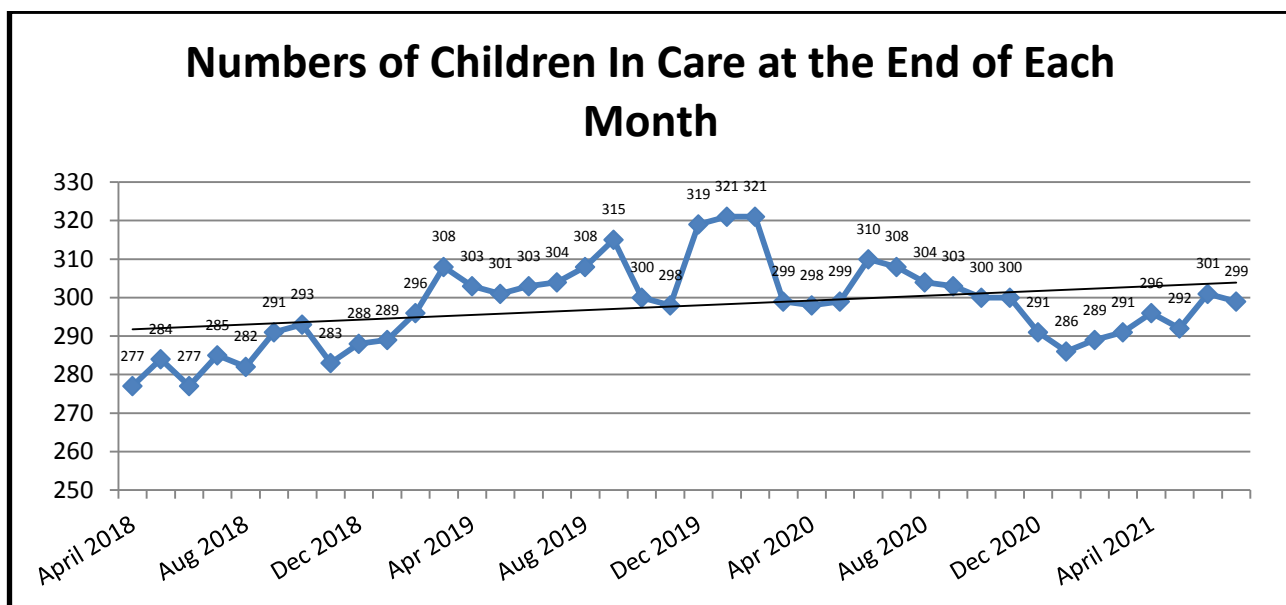
*Other includes Placed for Adoption, Placed with Parents/Parental Responsibility and NTC Children's Homes; the Annual Average Placement Cost represents the potential costs for a full year of those children in placements as at 31 July 2021.

5.2.16 The number of children in care can be volatile and costs for individual children can be very high. There is a potential risk that the forecast could increase if numbers of care nights delivered on complex cases starts to rise above current levels. There is a concern that there may be future spikes in numbers of children in care as the potential economic effects of the Covid-19 crisis impact on families.

Care Provision – Children in Care

5.2.17 Over recent years, there has been an increasing trend nationally in demand for children’s residential placements but with no corresponding increase in government-funded provision. The trend in North Tyneside over the last few years is that the overall number of children in care has mirrored the increases being felt nationally. Although as Chart 2 shows the current levels are below the trend line.

5.2.18 **Chart 2: Children in Care at the End of Each Month**



Care Provision – Children not in care

5.2.19 The pressure of £0.917m (May variance, £0.931m) relating to care provision for children not in the care system relates predominantly to children under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO). Cabinet will recall that the Authority’s policy for supporting children in SGOs was amended in 2018 and that this brought about additional costs. The contingency budget of £3.116m established in Central Items was, in part, intended to mitigate against these costs.

Management and Legal Fees

5.2.20 This area has a forecast pressure of £0.808m (May variance, pressure of £1.153m). Following a review of the continued impact of Covid-19 on services, savings targets of £0.080 currently forecasted as unmet have been transferred to central Items to be set against Covid grants. The remaining improvement relates mainly to reduce forecasts around interim management following a successful recruitment process.

Social Work

5.2.21 Within the overall pressure of £5.720m for Corporate Parenting and Placements, there are social work-related pressures of £0.802m (May, £0.845m). Of the £0.802m pressure, £0.567m relates to employee costs with £0.235m relating to non-pay costs. There is an additional team in place of 6 posts costing £0.244m and market supplements across the service amounting to £0.095m. There are s17 assistance costs forecasted above budget level by £0.051m, transport and travel pressures of £0.027m and legal and professional fee pressures of £0.105m. Cabinet is aware of the particular challenges faced across the children's social care sector nationally. Caseloads per social worker remain high at just over 20 compared to the national average of 16.3 (for 2020). The additional social work costs within Children's services reflects the commitment not to use agency staff within front line teams.

Integrated Disability and Additional Needs (IDANS)

5.2.22 IDANS is forecasting a pressure of £1.624m (May variance was £1.609m). Pressures within IDANS should be seen within the national and local context of increasing numbers of children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Within North Tyneside, the number of children with an EHCP has risen from 1102 in January 2018 to 1995 in July 2021. Within this service area the main pressures relate to operational staffing costs within in-house residential services of £0.259m and associated unachieved health income target of £0.213m. There are also forecast staffing pressures of £0.276m in Educational Psychology relating to an increase in non-chargeable statutory work associated with increased levels of EHCPs for children with additional needs. There are pressures of £0.720m on externally commissioned short breaks and staffing pressures of £0.152m across the Statutory Assessment and Review Team and the Disability Team.

5.2.23 The IDANS service is continuing to carefully review planned provision to identify any areas of spend which can be reduced without adverse impacts on the children and families receiving support.

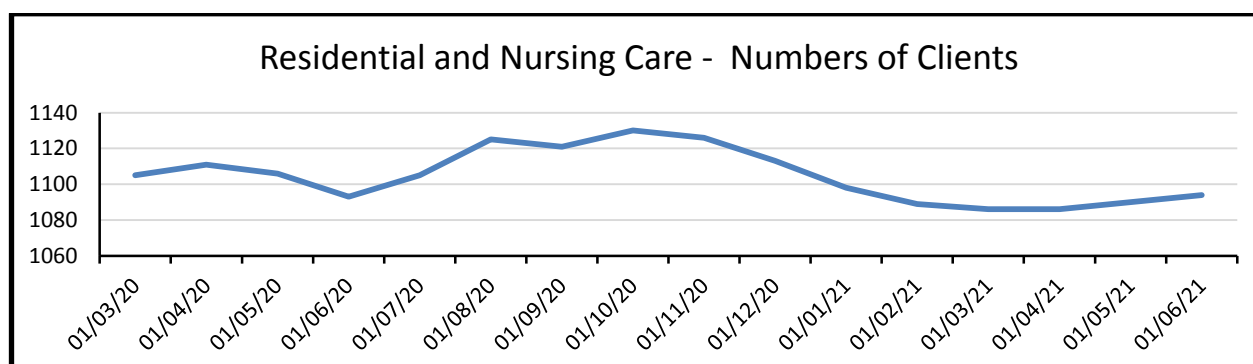
5.2.24 The School Improvement Service is showing a forecast pressure of £0.022m compared to a pressure of £0.172m in May. The non-curriculum elements of service delivery in relation to ICT services for schools have now transferred to corporate ICT and a realignment of this income target has now taken place resulting in this improved position. The pressure and mitigating actions relating to this SLA area are now shown in the Resources section.

Adult Services

5.2.25 Adult Services are forecasted to show a pressure of £0.094m which compares to a forecast underspend of £0.003m in May. This position is after a total of £4.806m of Covid costs are transferred to Central Items to be offset against Covid related grants.

- 5.2.26 Adult Services continues to be heavily impacted by the Pandemic with the relatively high rates of infection experienced in the borough in June and July resulting in significant proportions of the Authority's staff and staff employed within the local external care market being unavailable for work due to sickness and self-isolating following contact from Test and Trace or the NHS app. At various points in June and July approximately 25% of Integrated Services in house staff and an average of 20% of external homecare and care home workers were absent with some providers reporting up to 40%. The lack of capacity in the homecare market has contributed to higher levels of short-term placements into residential care.
- 5.2.27 There has been an additional £0.821m of care costs relating to new packages following hospital discharges under the Discharge to Assess arrangements brought in during the Pandemic. These additional costs have been forecasted within the Covid costs in Central Items. Hospital discharges remain high at around 275 per month compared to around 160 per month pre-Covid-19.
- 5.2.28 The analysis of sub service areas has been changed in 2021/22 to show the split between the operational aspects of the service and the externally commissioned care costs.
- 5.2.29 Forecasted costs associated with the operational management of the service are showing a pressure of £0.094m, reduced from the May position of a pressure of £0.314m. The reduction is due to changed assumptions around recruitment into vacancies. Pressures within social work teams are partially offset by an underspend in Integrated Services due to vacancies.
- 5.2.30 There is a pressure within Commissioned Services – Mental Health due to three new high-cost clients who entered the service in March and April 2021 (£0.940m). There are also pressures due to increased client numbers relating to residential and nursing care within Mental Health.
- 5.2.31 Forecasted pressures in Commissioned Services – Mental Health are offset by budget surpluses across Commissioned Services in Wellbeing and Assessment and Learning Disabilities. The overall numbers in residential and nursing care continued to rise in June and July largely due to a continued higher level of discharges from hospital and a lack of capacity in the homecare market.

5.2.32 Chart 3: Overall Numbers of Clients in Residential and Nursing Care



5.3 Commissioning and Asset Management

5.3.1 Commissioning and Asset Management (C&AM) is showing a pressure of £0.884m (May, pressure of £0.831m) as set out in Table 19.

5.3.2 C&AM has also been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic, particularly in relation to supporting schools and in relation to lost income with details shown in Section 4.

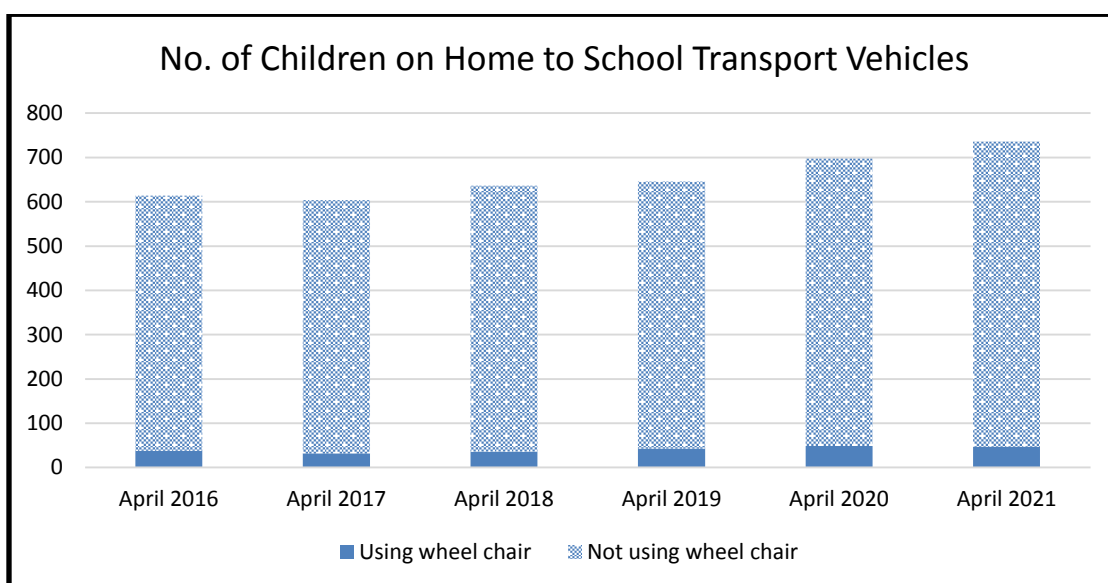
5.3.3 **Table 19: Commissioning and Asset Management (C&AM) Forecast Variation**

	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
School Funding & Statutory Staff Costs	5.410	5.328	(0.082)	(0.065)	(0.017)
Commissioning Service	0.406	0.429	0.023	0.025	(0.002)
Facilities & Fair Access	0.412	1.305	0.893	0.850	0.043
Community & Voluntary Sector Liaison	0.441	0.412	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.001)
Strategic Property & Investment	1.918	1.998	0.080	0.050	0.030
High Needs Special Educational Needs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Property	(0.727)	(0.727)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Commissioning & Asset Management & Support	0.161	0.160	(0.001)	0.000	(0.001)
Procurement	(0.008)	(0.008)	0.000	(0.001)	0.001
Grand Total	8.013	8.897	0.884	0.831	0.053

5.3.4 The main 'business as usual' budget issues relate to Facilities and Fair Access which is showing forecast pressure of £0.893m (May, forecast pressure of £0.850m). The pressure mainly relates to Home to School Transport (£0.742m) with additional pressures on the catering service (£0.161m) due to increasing numbers of free school meals and the consequential impact on loss of paid income. There is also a pressure of £0.060m on car parking income in relation to Quadrant.

5.3.5 The Home to School Transport position, a pressure of £0.742m, relates to the sustained and increase in children with complex needs attending special schools. Demand pressures in High Needs is a known issue nationally and is also impacting on the High Needs budget within the Dedicated Schools Grant (see paragraphs 6.12 to 6.15 for more details). As a result of the increase in demand for home to school transport for children with additional needs, the number of children in vehicles has risen from 614 in April 2016 to 736 in April 2021 as shown in Chart 4 below. Work is ongoing to identify the number of children expected to use transport for the start of the Autumn term in September. Work is also continuing on route rationalisation using the new QRoute system however the requirement for continued social distancing has limited rationalisation opportunities.

5.3.6 **Chart 4: Increase in Numbers of Children Accessing Home to School Transport**



5.3.7 In addition to Facilities and Fair Access, within Strategic Property and Investment, the repairs and maintenance budget is forecasted to show a pressure of £0.177m due to the cost of essential repairs across the Authority's buildings. This is partially offset by recharges to capital budgets and other savings across this service area.

5.4 **Environment, Housing & Leisure (EHL)**

5.4.1 EHL is forecasting a small underspend of £0.036m against the £44.279m net budget, as set out in Table 20 below. The position includes a planned £0.583m draw-down of reserves for the street-lighting PFI contract and PFI buildings.

5.4.2 The Covid-19 Pandemic continues to impact on EHL mainly in relation to lost income with £4.505m of the £5.608m estimated impact is due to income-generating services being expected to operate at a lower level. This forecast is based on a high-level impact assessment of on-going income modelled on expected operating levels to September, with operations then returning back towards pre-pandemic levels.

5.4.3 Table 20: Forecast Variation in Environment Housing & Leisure

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Arts Tourism & Heritage	1.623	1.691	0.068	0.067	0.001
Bereavement	(0.785)	(0.689)	0.096	0.051	0.045
Fleet Management	1.123	1.085	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.002)
General Fund Housing	0.936	0.941	0.005	0.005	0.000
Head of Service & Resilience	0.245	0.211	(0.034)	(0.001)	(0.033)
Libraries & Community Centres	5.202	5.183	(0.019)	0.026	(0.045)
Security and Community Safety	0.369	0.405	0.036	0.013	0.023
Sport & Leisure	2.719	2.683	(0.036)	(0.032)	(0.004)
Street Environment	8.313	8.210	(0.103)	(0.068)	(0.035)
Street Lighting PFI	4.717	4.717	0.000	0.000	0.000
Technical Package - Building Control	(0.430)	(0.429)	0.001	0.002	(0.001)
Technical Package - Consumer Protection	1.417	1.407	(0.010)	(0.010)	0.000
Technical Package - Planning	0.247	0.247	0.000	0.000	0.000
Technical Package - Transport & Highways	7.187	7.222	0.035	0.035	0.000
Waste & Recycling Disposal Contracts	7.421	7.367	(0.054)	(0.046)	(0.008)
Waste Management	3.975	3.992	0.017	(0.021)	0.038
Grand Total	44.279	44.243	(0.036)	(0.015)	(0.021)

5.4.4 The variance reflects forecast pressures against Arts, Tourism & Heritage & Bereavement of £0.068m and £0.096m with smaller pressures in Security and Community Safety and General Fund Housing which are mitigated by combined saving forecasts across Fleet Management, Sports & Leisure, Street Environment and Waste & Recycling Disposal. Technical Package budgets are balanced across the contract with Capita.

5.4.5 The following paragraphs outline the pressures in each service area with details of any variances or movement greater than £0.050m.

Local Environmental Services

5.4.6 Street Environment service is showing a £0.103m saving, mainly due to impact of vacant posts.

5.4.7 This is offsetting a £0.096m pressure in Bereavement, which is caused by the extended closedown for repairs of one of the cremators.

5.5 Regeneration and Economic Development

5.5.1 Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) is forecasting a pressure of £0.063m at July 2021, as shown in Table 21 below.

5.5.2 **Table 21: Forecast Variation for Regeneration and Economic Development**

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Business & Enterprise	0.751	0.747	(0.004)	(0.004)	0.000
Regeneration	0.445	0.436	(0.009)	(0.009)	0.000
Resources & Performance	0.203	0.279	0.076	0.076	0.000
Grand Total	1.399	1.462	0.063	0.063	0.000

5.5.3 The variance reflects a forecast cost pressure within Resources & Performance of £0.076m due to historic staffing pressures. Minimal underspends across the rest of the service slightly reduce the pressure.

5.6 Corporate Strategy

5.6.1 Corporate Strategy is forecasting to report a £0.077m pressure. The variance reflects a forecast underachievement in a cross-service income target of £0.157m.

5.6.2 Included within the forecast are assumptions a mix of corporate reserves and Covid-19 grant will be drawn down to meet the employee costs associated with the Customer Service and Covid-19 Recovery Programme posts, mitigating the impact of the income target pressure.

5.6.3 **Table 22: Forecast Variation Corporate Strategy**

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Children's Participation & Advocacy	0.258	0.253	(0.005)	(0.005)	0.000
Corporate Strategy Management	0.006	0.108	0.102	0.102	0.000
Elected Mayor & Executive Support	0.018	0.025	0.007	0.007	0.000
Marketing	0.289	0.287	(0.002)	(0.002)	0.000
Policy Performance and Research	0.140	0.115	(0.025)	(0.025)	0.000
Grand Total	0.711	0.788	0.077	0.077	0.000

5.7 Resources and Chief Executive Office

5.7.1 Overall Resources and Chief Executive Office are currently forecasting a joint pressure of £0.338m.

5.7.2 **Table 23: Forecast Variation Resources and Chief Executive**

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Chief Executive	(0.078)	(0.109)	(0.031)	(0.031)	0.000
Finance	0.002	0.230	0.228	0.068	0.160
ICT	2.876	3.016	0.140	(0.010)	0.150
Human Resources	0.538	0.539	0.001	(0.018)	0.019
Grand Total	3.338	3.676	0.338	0.009	0.329

5.7.3 Within the Finance service there continues to be forecast pressures due to the impact of funding managed by the Revenues and Benefits service, which is showing the following expected variances:

- The service area is predicting a pressure on the Bad Debt Provision of £0.197m, where a forecast reduction in the bad debt provision is not currently expected.
- Overpayment income improved from May by £0.037m to a £0.241m pressure which is still caused by reduced value of overpayments expected to be raised due to the ongoing move to Universal Credit (UC). The service is working to refresh the profile of change that is anticipated as the roll out of UC continues.
- The Benefits Subsidy Grant impact has worsened since May by £0.181m due to a fall in forecast payments to private tenants and an increase in eligible overpayments, updating the position to a £0.058m saving. This will continue to be updated across the year and a mid-year estimate will be provided to the Department of Work and Pensions in October.
- Enforcement income is currently forecasted to be in line with budget and will be updated on a monthly basis using the cost of collection statistics.

These forecasts are being carefully managed by the service management and will continue to be refined as the year progresses.

5.7.4 The Finance service is forecasting staffing savings across nearly all teams which mitigates these pressures. These staffing savings are a mix of vacancy savings and additional funding where the service area supports external organisations such as North of Tyne Combined Authority.

5.7.5 The main change in month is due to the reporting of a pressure within ICT as a result of the transfer of Education ICT income targets with a forecast £0.140m shortfall in SLA income within the service.

5.7.6 The remaining service areas within Resources are all forecasting small underspends for the year.

5.7.7 The Chief Executive's office is showing a saving of £0.031m, due to forecast savings in staffing and other operational spend.

5.8 Law and Governance

5.8.1 Law and Governance is forecasting a £0.418m pressure. This variance reflects forecasted cost pressures in Legal Services of £0.251m for the employment Locums/staff costs and £0.108m pressure for delivering North Tyneside Coroner services.

5.8.2 The movement of £0.083m in Democratic and Electoral Services reflects the increased costs of the election in May, which reflect the impact of increased canvassing. These pressures are partially offset by forecast underspends within Information Governance linked to income over-achievement.

5.8.3 **Table 24: Forecast Variation for Law and Governance**

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Customer, Governance & Registration	(0.071)	(0.038)	0.033	0.016	0.017
Democratic and Electoral Services	0.031	0.125	0.094	0.011	0.083
Information Governance	0.159	0.091	(0.068)	(0.069)	0.001
Legal Services	(0.105)	0.146	0.251	0.256	(0.005)
North Tyneside Coroner	0.294	0.402	0.108	0.109	(0.001)
Grand Total	0.308	0.726	0.418	0.323	0.095

5.9 Central Items

5.9.1 Central Items is forecasted to be in surplus by £7.212m, unchanged from the May report. The surplus figure of £7.212m includes the contingency budgets of £5.404m of which £3.116m of that budget provision relates to the pressure being experienced in Children's Services. The other main areas impacting the position are summarised below:

- Strain on the fund savings of £1.388m, due to minimum in-year costs anticipated this financial year;
- Minimum revenue provision savings of £0.350m; and,
- Interest savings on borrowing of £0.150, both of these arising from re-profiling of the Investment Programme and use of cash balances to minimum borrowing.

5.9.2 Savings within Corporate and Democratic Core in 2021/22 are due to anticipated pressures not being seen to materialise to date and the costs of pensions out of revenue are prudently forecasted to be balanced at this stage in the year. These may reduce across the rest of the year and provide some sustainable savings.

5.9.3 Table 25: Forecast Variation Central Budgets and Contingencies

Service Areas	Budget £m	Forecast July £m	Variance July £m	Variance May £m	Change since May £m
Corporate & Democratic Core	4.315	4.315	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Central Items	(6.366)	(13.578)	(7.212)	(7.212)	0.000
Grand Total	(2.051)	(9.263)	(7.212)	(7.212)	0.000

SECTION 6 - SCHOOLS FINANCE

Update on School Budgets

- 6.1 There is no update on school finances since the May position reported previously to cabinet. As in previous years, the details of schools' balances have been reported to the Department for Education (DfE) through the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) return. A report of this update will be presented to cabinet in September's finance report.

School Additional Funding – Falling Rolls and Growth

- 6.2 Schools Forum previously set aside school funding to support schools with falling rolls or with growth in pupil numbers. The rules and procedures for allocating this funding are based on guidance from Department of Education (DfE) and are set by School Forum. Eligible schools are identified by the School Finance service and a case requesting funding is presented to the finance sub-forum for their initial agreement before final approval at Schools Forum. This funding is not part of the Authority's general fund and is managed by Schools Forum.
- 6.3 Five schools were agreed to be eligible for falling rolls funding where the overall pupil numbers had dropped by more than 15. The expected value of the claims these schools are eligible for is £0.082m. These bids will be considered by Forum in September.
- 6.4 Five schools were seen to be initially eligible for growth funding, where their pupil numbers were expected to grow by September 2021. These schools will need to present evidence that they meet the qualifying criteria for this funding, with potential funding due to them collectively of £0.525m. Qualifying bids will be considered by Forum in September.

School Additional Funding – Schools in Financial Difficulty

- 6.5 Schools Forum also set aside school funding to support maintained schools in financial difficulty. Schools qualifying for the funding are invited to submit bids for this funding to the finance sub-group of Schools Forum, who then take any approved bids to full Forum for final sign off.
- 6.6 There have initially been three submitted bids for consideration by the finance sub-group, with one outstanding bid to be considered in early September. The initial three bids are being taken to full Forum for final authorisation.

Containment funding for Schools

- 6.7 Cabinet will recall from the previous report that the Authority's Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) had set aside £0.450m funding from the Containment Grant to assist schools. Schools subsequently identified £0.808m pressures on their balances for 2020/21 due to the costs of containing the spread of Covid-19 that were not met by the Department for Education. RCG considered these claims and increased the funding available to meet the full impact on schools, with the £0.808m due to be forwarded to the schools in September.

- 6.8 A further fund of £0.500m is also being considered for 2021/22 to meet similar costs borne by schools in the current financial year.

National Funding Formula Consultation for 2022/23

- 6.9 The method for allocating funding to schools is still set by a local funding formula (LFF), though DfE are considering making their national funding formula (NFF) mandatory in the future. Currently North Tyneside have agreed with Schools Forum to adopt the NFF factors in their LFF.
- 6.10 For 2022/23 the Authority will consider modelling a potential option to remove the requirement for capping and maximise the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) by reviewing the free school meals deprivation factors (FSM/FSM6). Guidance states that a local authorities LFF can incorporate one or both of the free school meals factors; North Tyneside have previously allocated funding to schools based on both FSM and FSM6 eligibility. The 2022/23 modelling would include only the FSM6 element (being the higher of the 2 factors).
- 6.11 Modelling scenarios will be presented to Schools Forum in September, in advance of the formal consultation with schools during October/November. The preferred model will then be taken to Cabinet for final agreement as part of the Authority's budget planning process.

High Needs Block

- 6.12 Cabinet will recall from the previous finance report that the High Needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was anticipating an in-year pressure of £3.268m in May, which would raise the cumulative pressure on the block to £12.068m.
- 6.13 The forecast for the High Needs Block at July 2021 is now an anticipated in-year pressure of £3.491m reflecting a further rise in demand for special school places within the Authority. These additional places create pressures in relation to place funding of £10,000 per place and the associated top-up funding reflecting each child's level of need. A breakdown of the in-year pressure is shown in Table 26.
- 6.14 **Table 26: Breakdown of High Needs Pressures at July 2021**

Provision	Budget £m	Forecast Variance July £m	Comment
Special schools and PRU	15.520	2.054	Pressure on places for children with profound, Multiple Learning Difficulties, Social Emotional and Mental Health problems and Autism Spectrum Disorder
ARPs/Top ups	4.120	0.650	Pressures in pre 16 top ups e.g. Norham ARP

Provision	Budget £m	Forecast Variance July £m	Comment
Out of Borough	2.890	0.726	Increased number of children placed outside North Tyneside Schools
Commissioned services	3.888	0.061	
Subtotal	26.418	3.491	
2020/21 Balance		8.720	
Adjustment		0.080	
Subtotal	26.418	12.291	

High Needs Recovery Plan

6.15 As previously noted North Tyneside is an outlier in terms of the number of Education Health and Care Plans currently in use. The most recent figures suggest that the Authority are around 1% above the national average in terms of whole population. This has a significant impact on all the services that work with our children and young people with additional needs. An informal discussion with the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) took place on 16 June where the Authority outlined its progress in relation to a recovery plan for high needs expenditure. These proposals have been shared with stakeholders including Schools Forum on 7 July. A High Needs Recovery Plan will be submitted to the ESFA by 13 August and the plan seeks to address the High Needs deficit by 2025-26. The themes of the recovery plan link clearly to our SEND Inclusion Strategy and our Ambition for Education:

- Improved Graduated Approach to support more young people to have success in their local school;
- Review of Commissioned Services with a focus on maintaining young people in their local school;
- Annual reviews are focussed, timely and include 'value for money';
- The banding and mechanisms the Authority uses to fund schools are brought in line with our graduation aspirations;
- Use of capital funding to address issue around capacity;
- More effective place planning and projection is used to ensure that there are sufficient resources in place; and,
- Ensuring that the Authority are working with our partners and stakeholders.

SECTION 7 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Forecast Outturn

7.1 The forecast set out in Table 27 below is based on the results to July 2021. Currently the HRA is forecasting an underspend of £0.010m, which includes £0.012m of Covid-19 related costs (see Table 28). Throughout the year, costs will be monitored closely across all areas with additional focus on Rent Arrears and the effect this has on the bad debt provision. In addition, changes to prudent assumptions around rental income, Council Tax voids, Contingency and staffing vacancies will be monitored which could lead to improvements in the forecast position.

7.2 Table 27: Forecast Variance Housing Revenue Account

	Budget £m	Current Forecast £m	Variance £m
Management – Central	2.520	2.520	0.000
Management – Operations	4.767	4.738	(0.029)
Management – Strategy & Support	3.588	3.609	0.021
Capital Charges – Net Effect	12.969	12.969	0.000
Contingencies, Bad Debt & Transitional Protection	1.280	1.280	0.000
Contribution to Major Repairs Reserve – Depreciation	13.276	13.276	0.000
Interest on Balances	(0.050)	(0.050)	0.000
PFI Contracts – Net Effect	2.043	2.043	0.000
Rental Income - Dwellings, Direct Access Units, Garages	(60.995)	(60.995)	0.000
Rental Income – HRA Shops and Offices	(0.356)	(0.356)	0.000
Revenue Support to Capital Programme	10.551	10.551	0.000
Repairs	12.350	12.348	(0.002)
Total	1.943	1.933	(0.010)

7.3 The Covid-19 costs for HRA relate to unproductive workforce costs, as can be seen in Table 28 below.

7.4 **Table 28: Forecast Impact of Covid-19 on HRA for 2021/22**

Service Area	Covid Cost Pressure £m	Covid Income Pressure £m	Total Covid Pressure £m	Description
HRA – Workforce	0.012	0.000	0.012	Costs of carrying unproductive staff resource and related support costs during downtime, for staff delivering HRA-related work
Total	0.012	0.000	0.012	

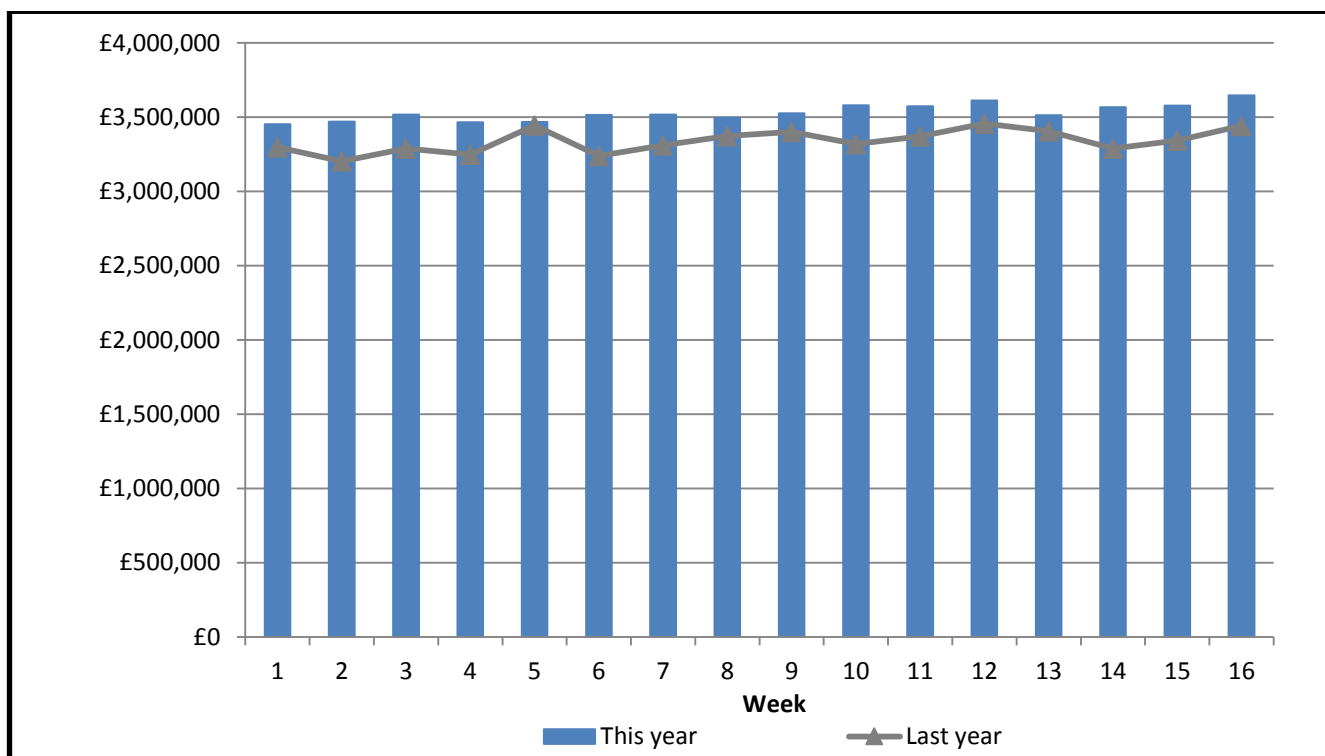
Rental Income

7.5 Rental income is currently performing on target, with the number of empty homes for the first two months of the year broadly in-line with the budget assumptions. Therefore, the current rental forecasts could improve as the year progresses if the service starts performing ahead of target. However, some of this improved position may be offset by the continuing impact of Universal Credit and the potential of an increase in the bad debt provision; all of which will be closely monitored throughout the year.

Rent Arrears

7.6 The impact of rent arrears has risen in the first four months of 2021/22 as compared to 2020/21, however the rate of increase during the first two months is fairly low as current arrears have only increased by around £0.155m during the period since the start of April 2021. Chart 5 below shows the value of current rent arrears in 2021/22 compared to the same period in 2020/21. A team is working proactively with tenants to minimise arrears, and this is being closely monitored as the year progresses to identify any adverse impacts on the budget position. Last year saw a significant under-spend against the bad debt provision, which had over-spent for the previous two years. If the rate of increase continues at the current rate during the year, and there are no significant increases in the amount of debt being written off, then the Authority will need to review the allocation both in terms of declaring an in-year saving, but also in relation to refreshing the HRA Business Plan as part of the next budget round. The impact of Universal Credit continues to be monitored, as significant increases in numbers on UC could adversely affect the rate at which arrears grow.

7.7 **Chart 5: Rent Arrears in Weeks 1-16 (April-July) 2021/22 compared to 2020/21**



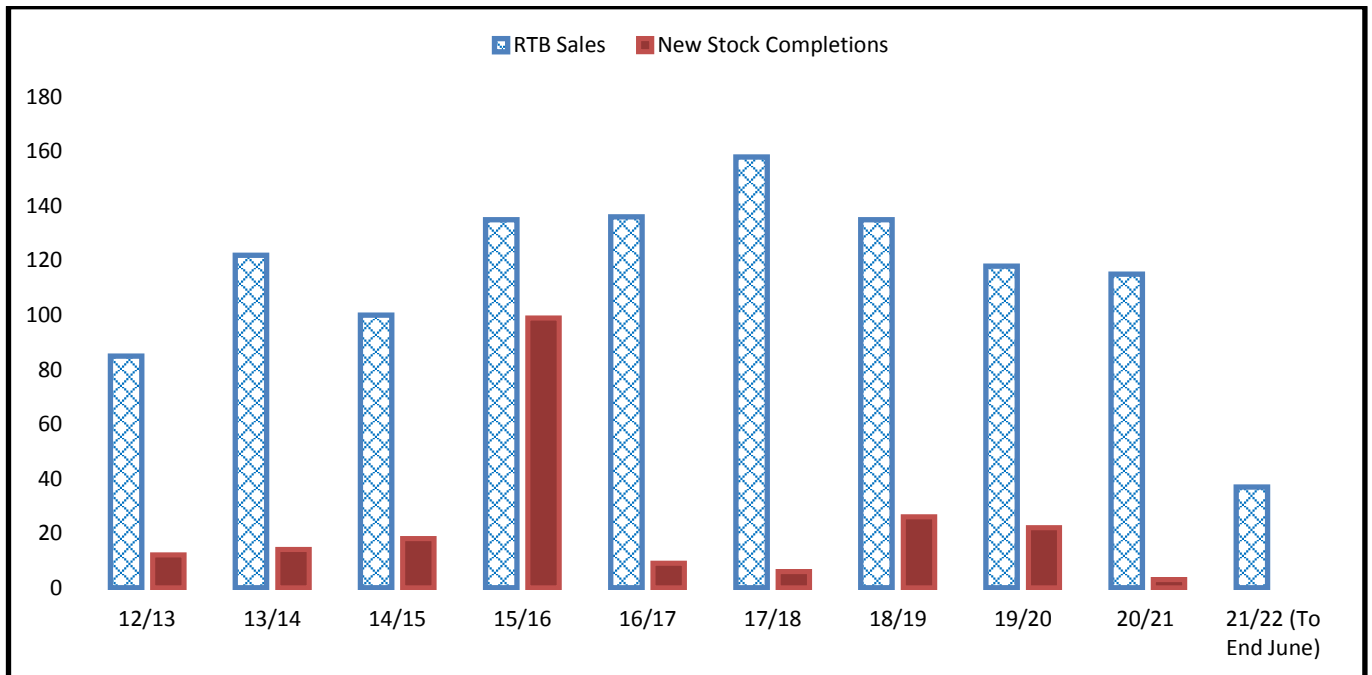
7.8 Universal Credit was fully implemented across North Tyneside on 2 May 2018. The Authority continues to work with residents to provide ICT support to help them make applications and to provide personal budget support to help residents manage their household finances. At 31 March 2021 there were 3,306 tenants of North Tyneside Homes on Universal Credit with arrears totalling £2.689m. By the end of July 2021 there were 3,484 tenants on Universal Credit (increase of 178 tenants) with related arrears of £2.700m (increase of £0.011m). These figures seem to bear out the reduced rate of increase in arrears mentioned above.

Right to Buy (RTB) Trends

7.9 The impact of RTB is critical to long-term planning for the HRA. Prior to the introduction of self-financing in 2012, average RTB sales had dropped to around 25 per annum, mainly due to the capped discount (£0.022m) which had remained static as property values had increased, making RTB less attractive financially to tenants. Shortly after self-financing began, Central Government announced a change to RTB significantly increasing the maximum discount, initially to £0.075m and then subsequently annual inflation was added to the maximum. Chart 6 below shows the trend in RTB sales since that time. There has been an upturn in sales in 2021-22, as 37 properties were sold in the first quarter compared to 23 at the same stage last year.

7.10

Chart 6: Yearly RTB Sales v New Stock Additions



SECTION 8 - INVESTMENT PLAN

- 8.1 The Authority's Investment Plan represents the capital investment in projects across all Service areas. Officers continue to plan the delivery of those key projects included within the 2021/22 Investment Plan and regularly review the impact of Covid-19.
- 8.2 There is currently an emerging risk around the supply of materials and increased cost that could impact the works and services the Authority delivers. This is a national issue with material supply not being able to keep pace with delivery programmes alongside a range of rising costs. Work is on-going with both our material suppliers and the wider supply chain to understand how significant these impacts could be on the delivery and cost of works and services during this year. Specific areas of concern are around the supply and costs of all steel based and softwood products, along with growing concerns around the supply of cement and glazing. A risk register around material supply is currently being developed to monitor the likelihood and impact of these risks materialising, however it looks increasing likely that the Authority will have some supply issues and increased costs that will impact our works and services over the coming months. This will be reported through the bi-monthly monitoring reports to Cabinet.
- 8.3 Some of the key highlights of the Investment Plan due to be delivered during 2021/22 are summarised below:

Affordable Homes New Build and Conversion Works

- 8.4 There are currently 4 affordable home projects that will progress during 2021/22, these include:
- The construction of 12 new affordable homes on the former site of the Cedars, North Shields;
 - The construction of 9 new affordable homes on the former site of Bawtry Court, Battlehill;
 - Refurbishment and remodelling works to create 7 new affordable units at Charlotte Street, Wallsend; and,
 - Convert a Brownfield garage site in Falmouth Road, into 9 new affordable homes.

Housing Investment Work

- 8.5 The Housing Capital delivery programme will see the following works delivered across the borough during 2021/22:
- Kitchens and bathrooms to 678 homes;
 - Heating upgrades to 600 homes;
 - Window and doors replacements to 30 homes;
 - Boundary improvements to 830 homes;
 - Roof replacements to 227 homes;
 - External Brickwork Repairs to 223 homes;
 - DPC restoration works to 26 homes;
 - Footpath repairs throughout the borough; and,
 - Fire door replacement to 55 communal blocks

Education Investment Works

- 8.6 Delivery of the priority condition related projects across the school estate as part of the Schools Condition Investment Programme

Asset Investment works

- 8.7 Delivery of the priority condition related projects across the asset property estate as part of the Asset Condition Investment Programme

Highways and Infrastructure Works

- 8.8 The main Highways & Infrastructure works include:
- Delivery of the LTP including the annual resurfacing programme and integrated transport projects. Larger projects are the construction phase of the Pier Road stabilisation scheme the demolition of Borough Road Bridge;
 - Delivery of the Additional Highway Maintenance Programme including footway improvements in line with the Mayor's priorities; and,
 - Progression of the Tanners Bank highway improvement scheme at various junctions in North Shields.

Regeneration Works

- 8.9 Regeneration Works for 2021/22 include:
- North Shields – continuation of works for the North Shields Heritage Action Zone scheme for Northumberland Square and Howard Street and initial works for the transport hub;
 - Segedunum – completion of the project initiation document to enable the development of proposals and a strategy to secure match funding;
 - Work is ongoing examining the potential options for the enhancement of the facilities at Killingworth Lake; and,
 - Development of outline scope for the Waggonways project.

Variations to the 2021-2026 Investment Plan

- 8.10 Variations of £2.352m and reprogramming of £12.832m to the Investment Plan have been identified and are included in tables 29 and 30 below. Further details are provided in paragraph 8.11.

8.10.1 **Table 29: 2021 - 2026 Investment Plan changes identified**

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024-26 £m	Total £m
Approved Investment Plan – Council 8 February 2021	68.611	43.305	42.858	90.796	245.570
Previously Approved Reprogramming/Variations					
2020/21 Monitoring	11.398	0.000	0.000	0.000	11.398
2020/21 Outturn	13.497	0.000	0.000	0.000	13.497
2021/22 August Cabinet	5.087	0.237	0.000	0.000	5.324
Approved Investment Plan	98.593	43.542	42.858	90.796	275.789
Jun/Jul 21 Monitoring Variations					
Variations	2.352	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.352
Reprogramming	(12.832)	8.446	2.886	1.500	0.000
Total Variations	(10.480)	8.446	2.886	1.500	2.352
Revised Investment Plan	88.113	51.988	45.744	92.296	278.141

8.11 Details of the main variations are shown below:

- (a) **CO081 Gosforth Park Natural Reserve Grey Squirrel Control and Enhancements £0.065m** – Section 106 has been approved to enable the installation of equipment and secure containers and to provide education highlighting the importance of the native red squirrel and the threats and problems caused by invasive non-native grey squirrel. The project will be delivered by the Natural History Society of Northumbria;
- (b) **EV092 E-Cargo Bikes £0.012m credit** – This scheme has been completed. The adjustment is to remove the excess budget from the Investment plan as all the eligible grant has been claimed;
- (c) **EV034 Local Transport Plan £0.434m credit** – The reduction in the budget is to reflect the funding announcement from the Department of Transport which was lower than budget for the Maintenance Block. Although Pothole funding has been awarded but not yet allocated within the Investment Plan. This will be subject to future decisions;
- (d) **EV097 Weetslade & Westmoor Roundabouts, Great Lime Road (S106 Bellway Homes) £4.241m** - Bellway Homes have agreed that the Council / Capita Partnership will undertake their highway mitigation works associated with the planning conditions for their Whitehouse Farm development. The works include improvement on the A1056 Weetslade Roundabout, A189 West Moor Roundabout and Great Lime Road. This project has replaced the Section 278 works £1.554m included in EV084 A189 Improvements Haddricks Mill to West Moor which has been removed from the Investment Plan; and,

CO085 Northumberland Park Labyrinth project £0.046m - This project relates to the creation of a Labyrinth feature within Northumberland Park, led by the Parks team with the assistance of established volunteers from Friends of Northumberland Park. This includes preparing ground for landscape development, incorporating suitable drainage in and around the labyrinth site location within Northumberland Park, improving footpath provision and standards.

8.12 Senior Managers and project officers have undertaken a reprofiling exercise to compare budgets available for 2021/22 to expected delivery of the projects and there has been £12.832m reprogramming identified. The reprogramming is reflected in the following projects:

- (a) DV064 Council Property Investment - £0.300m
- (b) ED075 Devolved Formula Capital - £0.500m
- (c) ED120 Basic Need - £1.700m
- (d) ED132 School Capital Allocation - £0.800m
- (e) EV076 Operational Depot Accommodation Review - £0.200m
- (f) EV083 Street Lighting LED - £3.521m
- (g) GEN03 Contingencies - £3.00m
- (h) HS004 Disabled Facilities Grant - £2.580m
- (i) HS015 Refurbishment / Decent Homes - £0.231m

8.13 The impact of the changes detailed above on capital financing is shown in table 30 below.

8.13.1 **Table 30: Impact of variations on Capital financing**

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024-26 £m	Total £m
Approved Investment Plan	98.593	43.542	42.858	90.796	275.789
Council Contribution	(6.821)	2.435	2.886	1.500	0.000
Grants and Contributions	(3.430)	5.780	0.000	0.000	2.350
Revenue Contributions	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	(0.231)	0.231	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Financing Variations	(10.480)	8.446	2.886	1.500	2.352
Revised Investment Plan	88.113	51.988	47.437	44.859	278.141

Capital Receipts – General Fund

8.14 General Fund Capital Receipts brought forward at 1 April 2021 were £2.583m. The capital receipts requirement for 2021/22, approved by Council in February 2021, was £0.423m (2021-26 £0.677m). There was reprogramming of capital receipts from 2020/21 of £0.342m giving a revised requirement of £0.765m for 2021/22 (2021-26 £1.019m). To date £0.100m useable capital receipts have been received in 2021/22 and also £3.125m has been received from Aurora to repay loans. The receipts position is shown in table 31 below.

8.14.1 Table 31: Capital Receipt Requirement – General Fund

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024-26 £m	2021-26 Total £m
Requirement reported to 8 February 2021 Council	0.423	0.254	0	0	0.677
Reprogramming 2020/21 Outturn	0.342	0	0	0	0.342
Revised Requirement	0.765	0.254	0	0	1.019
Receipts Brought Forward	(2.583)	(1.918)	(1.664)	(1.664)	(2.583)
Total Receipts received 2021/22	(3.225)	0	0	0	(3.225)
Receipts used to repay capital loans	3.125	0	0	0	(3.125)
Net Useable Receipts	(0.100)	0	0	0	(0.100)
Surplus Receipts	(1.918)	(1.664)	(1.664)	(1.664)	(1.664)

Capital receipts – Housing Revenue Account

8.15 Housing Capital Receipts brought forward at 1 April 2021 were £8.263m. The housing receipts are committed against projects included in the 2021-2026 Investment Plan. The approved Capital Receipt requirement for 2021/22 was £0.750m. This, together with the reprogramming and variations reported to Cabinet, gives a revised requirement of £2.047m. To date, receipts of £3.202m have been received in 2021/22. Previously pooling of receipts was paid quarterly to Central Government but the requirement has changed to an annual pooling payment. Therefore, subject to future pooling, this leaves a surplus balance of £9.418m to be carried forward to fund future years.

8.15.1 Table 32: Capital Receipt Requirement - Housing Revenue Account

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024-26 £m	2021-26 £m
Requirement reported to February 2021 Council	0.750	1.886	2.871	5.673	11.180
Reprogramming 2020/21 Outturn	1.124	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.124
Variations August 21 Cabinet	0.173	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.173
Revised Requirement	2.047	1.886	2.871	5.673	12.477
Receipts Brought Forward	(8.263)	(9.418)	(7.532)	(4.661)	(8.263)
Receipts Received 2021/22	(3.202)	0.000	0.000	0.000	(3.202)
Receipts Pooled Central Government	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
(Surplus)/ Balance To be generated to fund future years (subject to further pooling)	(9.418)	(7.532)	(4.661)	1.012	1.012

The final figure for useable receipts and pooled receipts in year will depend on the final number of Right to Buy properties sold during 2021/22.

Investment Plan Monitoring Position to 31 July 2021

8.16 Actual expenditure for 2021/22 in the General Ledger was £12.394m; 14.07% of the total revised Investment Plan at 31 July 2021. This is after adjusting for £0.073m of accruals relating to 2020/21 expenditure.

8.16.1 Table 33: Total Investment Plan Budget & Expenditure to 31 July 2021

	2021/22 Revised Investment Plan £m	Actual Spend to 31 July 2021 £m	Spend as % of revised Investment Plan %
General Fund	56.366	7.219	12.81%
Housing	31.747	5.175	16.30%
TOTAL	88.113	12.394	14.07%

SECTION 9 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT & CASH POSITION

Current Cash Position

9.1 The Authority's current available cash balance as at the end of July 2021 is £34.948m, with £27.500m invested externally with other UK Local Authorities. All investments are made in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

9.2 Table 34: Investment Position as at 31/07/2021

Counterparty	Type	Amount (£m)	Maturity
DMO	Term	29.000	2 Aug 2021
Barclays	Call	0.948	n/a
Lloyds Bank	Call	5.000	n/a
Inter – LA	Fixed	27.500	22 April 2022*

**This is the last maturity of this tranche.*

9.3 Due to the continued low interest rate environment the strategy will remain to repay maturing debt.

Short-term cash investment rates remain at all-time lows and an opportunity has been taken to maximise investment returns by investing longer and locking in investment returns by undertaking forward dated transactions. Forecast investment income excluding DMO investment is anticipated to be £0.081m.

9.4 The approach of maintaining low cash balances has been part of the strategy for a number of years and has generated substantial savings year on year. The government's Debt Management Office (DMO) and other deposit investment rates are currently paying 0.01%, taking into account CHAPS transfers fees and principal invested, it can cost the Authority to invest surplus cash. Therefore, the Authority is investing longer to reduce transactional costs as well as maximise returns. The temporary borrowing market is currently very liquid with significant cash available at very low rates. A summary of rates available is shown in table 35 below. PWLB rates also continue to remain low due to the low Gilt yields, which they are tracked against.

9.5 Table 35: Summary of Borrowing Levels

Temporary Market		PWLB	
Tenor	Level	Tenor	Level
1 week	0.01%	2 years	1.07%
1 month	0.01%	5 years	1.28%
3 months	0.02%	10 years	1.64%
6 months	0.04%	20 years	2.00%
9 months	0.07%	30 years	2.00%
12 months	0.15%	50 years	1.80%

**Please note interest rates are as 02 Aug 2021
PWLB rates do not include certainty rate reductions,*

- 9.6 Any shortfalls in cashflow are covered by in year temporary borrowing, which is a quick and cost-effective method of cash management in the current situation.

Borrowing Position

- 9.7 Table 36 shows the Authority's current debt position, the current total borrowing maturing in 2021/22 of £5.000m.

Table 36: Current Debt Position

	PWLB (£m)	LOBO (£m)	Temp (£m)	Total (£m)
Total Outstanding Borrowing Debt	397.443	20.000	5.000	422.443
Debt Maturing 2021/22	0.000	0.000	5.000	5.000

Covid-19 Impact on Cash

- 9.8 The impact of Covid-19 on cashflow for the Authority has resulted in several large grants being front loaded and a lumpy grant income profile to the Authority. In March 2020, the Authority drew down £25.000m of PWLB to bolster the Authority's cash position, de-risk our borrowing requirement and take advantage of historically low levels in PWLB, and by doing so has contributed to the continued the surplus cash balance. Whilst a proportion of this is currently invested out for a fixed term, the Authority is currently carrying a cash surplus balance. However, it is anticipated this surplus will unwind as the Authority resumes business as usual and expenditure previously put due to the pandemic on hold can resume. Projected reduced revenue streams, increased costs and repayment of outstanding debt is forecast to utilise cash balances within the year. It is therefore prudent to assume the Authority will be in a deficit cash position to the amount of the projected budget pressure.

The Authority is under-borrowed to the value of £95.166m as at 31 March 2021, and whilst the Authority cannot borrow to fund this revenue pressure however, it can look to utilise reserves, unwind its under-borrowed position and externalise borrowing.

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	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
General Fund						
BS026 Asset Planned Maintenance						
Council Contribution	2,120	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	8,120
Section 106	9	0	0	0	0	9
Capital Receipts	32	0	0	0	0	32
Contribution from Reserves (Insurance)	244	0	0	0	0	244
BS026 Asset Planned Maintenance Total	2,405	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	8,405
BS029 Wallsend Customer First Centre						
Council Contribution	280	0	0	0	0	280
North of Tyne Combined Authority	250	0	0	0	0	250
BS029 Wallsend Customer First Centre Total	530	0	0	0	0	530
BS030 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme						
Low Carbon Skills Grant	3,289	0	0	0	0	3,289
BS030 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Total	3,289	0	0	0	0	3,289
CO079 Playsites						
Section 106	82	0	0	0	0	82
CO079 Playsites Total	82	0	0	0	0	82
CO080 Burradon Recreation Ground						
Section 106	107	0	0	0	0	107
CO080 Burradon Recreation Ground Total	107	0	0	0	0	107
CO081 Gosforth Nature Reserve Grey Squirrel Control and Enhancements						
Section 106	65	0	0	0	0	65
CO081 Gosforth Nature Reserve Grey Squirrel Control and Enhancement	65	0	0	0	0	65
CO082 Sport and Leisure Facility Improvements						
Contribution from Reserves (Leisure)	18	0	0	0	0	18
CO082 Sport and Leisure Facility Improvements Total	18	0	0	0	0	18
CO083 Whitley Bay Crematoria						
Council Contribution	1,379	0	0	0	0	1,379
CO083 Whitley Bay Crematoria Total	1,379	0	0	0	0	1,379
COxxx Northumberland Park Labyrinth						
Section 106	19	0	0	0	0	19
Contribution from Friends of Northumberland Park	25	0	0	0	0	25
Revenue Contribution (05582)	2	0	0	0	0	2
COxxx Northumberland Park Labyrinth Total	46	0	0	0	0	46
DV058 Swan Hunters Redevelopment						
Council Contribution	13	0	0	0	0	13
DV058 Swan Hunters Redevelopment Total	13	0	0	0	0	13
DV064 Council Property Investment						
Council Contribution	735	300	0	0	0	1,035
DV064 Council Property Investment Total	735	300	0	0	0	1,035
DV066 Investment in North Tyneside Trading Co						
Council Contribution	1,959	0	0	0	0	1,959
Section 106	3,413	0	0	0	0	3,413
DV066 Investment in North Tyneside Trading Co Total	5,372	0	0	0	0	5,372
DV067 Northern Promenade						
Capital Receipts	223	0	0	0	0	223
Revenue Contribution (08252)	577	0	0	0	0	577
DV067 Northern Promenade Total	800	0	0	0	0	800
DV068 Southern Promenade						
Environment Agency Grant	193	0	0	0	0	193
DV068 Southern Promenade Total	193	0	0	0	0	193
DV071 Section 106 Contributions to Set Up Health Facilities						
Section 106	228	36	0	0	0	264
DV071 Section 106 Contributions to Set Up Health Facilities Total	228	36	0	0	0	264

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
General Fund						
DV073 Ambition for North Tyneside						
Council Contribution	0	654	1,225	2,000	0	3,879
Capital Receipts	63	254	0	0	0	317
Historic England - Heritage Action Zone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution (08252)	0	746	500	0	0	1,246
DV073 Ambition for North Tyneside Total	63	1,654	1,725	2,000	0	5,442
DV074 North Shields Heritage Action Zone (Ambition)						
Council Contribution	705	116	87	0	0	908
Historic England - Heritage Action Zone	675	115	86	0	0	876
DV074 North Shields Heritage Action Zone (Ambition) Total	1,380	231	173	0	0	1,784
DV075 Town & Neighbourhood Centres (Ambition)						
ERDF	34	0	0	0	0	34
DV075 Town & Neighbourhood Centres (Ambition) Total	34	0	0	0	0	34
DV076 Getting Building Fund (North Shields Public Realm)						
NELEP - Getting Building Fund	3,386	0	0	0	0	3,386
DV076 Getting Building Fund (North Shields Public Realm) Total	3,386	0	0	0	0	3,386
ED075 Devolved Formula Capital						
Education Funding Agency (Devolved)	1,306	1,079	579	579	579	4,122
ED075 Devolved Formula Capital Total	1,306	1,079	579	579	579	4,122
ED120 Basic Need						
Education Funding Agency (Basic Need)	239	2,014	113	113	113	2,592
ED120 Basic Need Total	239	2,014	113	113	113	2,592
ED132 School Capital Allocation						
Education Funding Agency (SCA)	4,867	4,334	3,534	3,534	3,534	19,803
ED132 School Capital Allocation Total	4,867	4,334	3,534	3,534	3,534	19,803
ED189 School Nursery Capital Fund						
Education Funding Agency (Devolved)	25	0	0	0	0	25
Education Funding Agency (SNCF)	77	0	0	0	0	77
ED189 School Nursery Capital Fund Total	102	0	0	0	0	102
ED190 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation						
Education Funding Agency (High Needs)	663	0	0	0	0	663
ED190 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Total	663	0	0	0	0	663
EV034 Local Transport Plan						
Dept for Transport LTP ITA	958	958	958	958	958	4,790
Dept for Transport LTP Maint	1,951	1,947	2,000	2,000	2,000	9,898
Section 106	340	0	0	0	0	340
Public Transport Funding	28	28	28	28	28	140
EV034 Local Transport Plan Total	3,277	2,933	2,986	2,986	2,986	15,168
EV055 Surface Water Improvements						
Environment Agency Grant	421	0	0	0	0	421
NWL Contribution	40	0	0	0	0	40
EV055 Surface Water Improvements Total	461	0	0	0	0	461
EV056 Additional Highways Maintenance						
Council Contribution	195	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,195
Dept for Transport - Pothole Challenge Fund	1,851	0	0	0	0	1,851
EV056 Additional Highways Maintenance Total	2,046	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,046
EV069 Vehicle Replacement						
Council Contribution	1,602	762	1,248	1,676	1,123	6,411
EV069 Vehicle Replacement Total	1,602	762	1,248	1,676	1,123	6,411
EV076 Operational Depot Accommodation Review						
Council Contribution	339	0	0	0	0	339
ERDF	1,572	200	0	0	0	1,772
EV076 Operational Depot Accommodation Review Total	1,911	200	0	0	0	2,111
EV083 Street Lighting LED						
Council Contribution	957	2,135	1,386	0	0	4,478
EV083 Street Lighting LED Total	957	2,135	1,386	0	0	4,478

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
General Fund						
EV084 A189 Improvements Haddricks Mill to West Moor						
DFT National Productivity Fund	245	0	0	0	0	245
Section 278	0	0	0	0	0	0
EV084 A189 Improvements Haddricks Mill to West Moor Total	245	0	0	0	0	245
EV091 Other Initiatives Climate Change						
Council Contribution	127	0	0	0	0	127
EV091 Other Initiatives Climate Change Total	127	0	0	0	0	127
EV092 E-Cargo Bikes2						
DFT E-Cargo Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0
EV092 E-Cargo Bikes2 Total	0	0	0	0	0	0
EV094 Transforming Cities Tranche 22						
Council Contribution	2,053	0	0	0	0	2,053
Capital Receipts	447	0	0	0	0	447
Transforming Cities Fund	105	0	0	0	0	105
EV094 Transforming Cities Tranche 22 Total	2,605	0	0	0	0	2,605
EV095 Emergency Active Travel Tranche 1 & 2						
Dept for Transport Covid19 Emergency Travel Fund Tranche2	1,400	0	0	0	0	1,400
EV095 Emergency Active Travel Tranche 1 & 2 Total	1,400	0	0	0	0	1,400
EV096 Tanners Bank						
Dept for Transport LTP Maint	50	53	0	0	0	103
Dept for Transport - Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund	470	410	0	0	0	880
EV096 Tanners Bank Total	520	463	0	0	0	983
EV097 Weetslade & Westmoor Roundabouts, Great Lime Road (S106 Bellway Homes)						
Section 106	4,241	0	0	0	0	4,241
EV097 Weetslade & Westmoor Roundabouts, Great Lime Road (S106 Be	4,241	0	0	0	0	4,241
GEN03 Contingencies						
Council Contribution	2,759	2,000	2,000	2,000	500	9,259
GEN03 Contingencies Total	2,759	2,000	2,000	2,000	500	9,259
GEN12 Local Infrastructure						
Council Contribution	110	100	100	100	100	510
GEN12 Local Infrastructure Total	110	100	100	100	100	510
HS004 Disabled Facilities Grant						
Better Care Fund	1,400	2,580	0	0	0	3,980
HS004 Disabled Facilities Grant Total	1,400	2,580	0	0	0	3,980
HS051 Private Sector Empty Homes						
Council Contribution	441	393	0	0	0	834
Homes & Communities Grant	210	0	0	0	0	210
HS051 Private Sector Empty Homes Total	651	393	0	0	0	1,044
HS052 Killingworth Moor Infrastructure						
Housing Infrastructure Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
HS052 Killingworth Moor Infrastructure Total	0	0	0	0	0	0
HS053 Green Homes Local Authority Delivery						
Green Homes Grant (LAD1b) - Dept for BEIS	2,162	0	0	0	0	2,162
Green Homes Grant (LAD2) - Dept for BEIS	1,154	0	0	0	0	1,154
HS053 Green Homes Local Authority Delivery Total	3,316	0	0	0	0	3,316
IT020 ICT Strategy						
Council Contribution	1,436	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	5,436
IT020 ICT Strategy Total	1,436	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	5,436
General Fund Total	56,366	25,714	18,344	17,488	13,435	131,347
HRA						
HS015 Refurbishment / Decent Homes Improvements						
See HRA Financing	26,554	20,664	21,248	21,745	22,877	113,088
HS015 Refurbishment / Decent Homes Improvements Total	26,554	20,664	21,248	21,745	22,877	113,088
HS017 Disabled Adaptations						

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
HR/ HS01 See HRA Financing	1,314	1,072	1,083	1,094	1,105	5,668
HS017 Disabled Adaptations Total	1,314	1,072	1,083	1,094	1,105	5,668
HS039 ICT Infrastructure Works See HRA Financing	273	608	1,109	360	112	2,462
HS039 ICT Infrastructure Works Total	273	608	1,109	360	112	2,462
HS044 HRA New Build See HRA Financing	3,606	3,930	3,960	6,750	7,330	25,576
HS044 HRA New Build Total	3,606	3,930	3,960	6,750	7,330	25,576
HRA Total	31,747	26,274	27,400	29,949	31,424	146,794
Total £000	88,113	51,988	45,744	47,437	44,859	278,141

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
General Fund						
Council Contribution	17,210	10,960	10,546	10,276	6,223	55,215
Council Contribution - Capital Receipts	765	254	0	0	0	1,019
Grants & Contributions	37,550	13,754	7,298	7,212	7,212	73,026
Revenue Contribution	579	746	500	0	0	1,825
Contribution from Reserves	262	0	0	0	0	262
General Fund Total	56,366	25,714	18,344	17,488	13,435	131,347
HRA Financing						
HRA Capital Receipts	2,047	1,886	2,871	2,689	2,984	12,477
HRA Revenue Contribution	10,759	9,831	9,485	11,932	12,760	54,767
HRA MRR	17,689	14,557	15,044	15,328	15,680	78,298
HRA Grants & Contributions	1,252	0	0	0	0	1,252
HRA Financing Total	31,747	26,274	27,400	29,949	31,424	146,794
Total £000	88,113	51,988	45,744	47,437	44,859	278,141

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Associated Engagement Strategy

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor Deputy Mayor Finance and Resources Housing	Cabinet Member(s): Norma Redfearn Councillor C Johnson Councillor M Rankin Councillor S Cox
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Report from Service Area: Resources

Responsible Officer: Janice Gillespie, Director of Resources **Tel: (0191) 643 5701**

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 This is the initial report to Cabinet outlining the process to be adopted for the Authority's Financial Planning and Budget process for 2022/23 as part of the proposed framework for the four years 2022/23 to 2025/26. Further reports will follow as part of the process of setting the Authority's Budget for the financial year 2022/23. The next report to Cabinet will be on 29 November 2021 and will outline Cabinet's initial Budget proposals.

This report sets out information in relation to the proposed 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process, including key decision milestones. This will include:

- A review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MFTP);
- Development of the detailed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budgets for 2022/23;
- An update of the Investment Plan and the Treasury Management Strategy; and
- The Budget Engagement Strategy to be adopted as part of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process.

1.1.2 While this report forms an important part of the Authority's Budget-setting process for the 2022/23 Budget, it also provides Cabinet with an overview of the potential financial implications of COVID-19, for both the current year and for the period of the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). An initial review of the MTFS has been carried

out in light of future government announcements and, as the scale of the financial impact of COVID-19 becomes clear, it will need to be updated.

- 1.1.3 In addition, this report acknowledges the continuing exceptional circumstances in which the 2022/23 Budget will need to be prepared as the Authority starts to emerge from the pandemic. This will have an impact on the organisation's ability to achieve planned Budget savings and income for 2022/23, its capacity to develop and deliver new Budget proposals for 2022/23, and on the wider Budget position, which is the subject of extremely high levels of uncertainty. The report sets out details of a proposed Budget planning process for 2022/23 but recognises that there will be a need for flexibility. In this context, the report also provides a summary of key areas of wider risk and uncertainty for Cabinet to consider.

1.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) notes the revised Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the proposed principles for Budget planning for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix A and section 1.5.8;
- (b) approves the proposed outline 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process which incorporates the key decision milestones and dates, as set out at Appendix B;
- (c) recognises that there may be a requirement for flexibility within both the Budget-setting process and the assumptions used, as a result of future Government announcements and other developments relating to COVID-19;
- (d) approves the Budget Engagement Strategy as part of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process as set out at Appendix C; and
- (e) considers the key Budget risks and uncertainties as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, including the implications of announcements made at the Spring Budget 2021 and subsequently as part of the COVID-19 response.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 20 August 2021.

1.4 Information

Council Plan and Policy Framework

- 1.4.1 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules are set out in Part 4.7 of the Authority's Constitution. The Budget is guided by paragraph 4.7.3 covering the process for the preparation, consideration and final approval of the Authority's Budget. The constitutional requirements for preparing, considering and approving the Budget drive the timetable for the Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.4.2 The development of the Budget will follow the process laid down in the Authority's Constitution. The Financial Planning and Budget process is a fundamental part of the overall governance and assurance framework of the Authority. This in turn provides assurance that the Budget is considered as part of preparing the Annual Governance Statement to Council each year.

- 1.4.3 The priorities in the Council Plan (the “Our North Tyneside Plan”) provide the strategic policy framework within which Budget resources will be allocated for 2022-2026.

Background

- 1.4.4 The last few years have been uncertain and challenging for local government but financial planning for 2022/23 is particularly difficult. Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has repeatedly highlighted the vital role that the Authority continues to play in supporting vulnerable people and communities across the Borough. This once again demonstrates the critical need to set a balanced and sustainable budget to enable the Authority to continue to deliver the services which are so important for all North Tyneside’s residents, businesses and visitors. This report therefore sets out the process by which the Authority will build on the 2021/22 Budget in order to develop the detailed financial plans for future years, which will secure the Authority’s financial position and safeguard the provision of essential services into 2022/23 and beyond.
- 1.4.5 The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, delivered the Spring 2021 Budget on 3 March 2021. This was only the Chancellor’s second Budget, but as part of the Government’s response to COVID-19 there have been 13 major fiscal announcements since the previous Budget on 11 March 2020. This was also the first budget since the UK entered the various lockdowns imposed in response to COVID-19, and the UK’s departure from the European Union.

The Chancellor confirmed that economic support will be maintained until the country has exited lockdown. This includes extensions to furlough, support for the self-employed, support for businesses in the form of business rate relief and targeted grants, and education catch-up funding.

- 1.4.6 The Government continues to explore the long-term reform of adult social care, the Fair Funding and Business Rates Retention reviews have been pushed back to April 2023 at the earliest, and the future of Government grants such as the Better Care Fund and Troubled Families are also uncertain. The outcome of these has the potential for a significant impact on local government and, in the absence of any announcements, this only adds to the challenge.
- 1.4.7 As in recent years, the Authority will not receive detailed information about funding allocations for 2022/23 until autumn 2021 at the earliest. In the absence of a Comprehensive Spending Review, any long-term funding allocation is unlikely. There is very little time for Government to undertake a full multi-year spending review and in this context a one-year roll over of the local government settlement is increasingly likely for 2022/23.

Beyond the immediate impact of COVID, the overall level of uncertainty means that the financial environment for local government is set to remain highly challenging. There continues to be a growing gap between funding and service pressures. This is driven by demographic changes, unfunded burdens such as the National Living Wage, and the needs of vulnerable social care users becoming increasingly complex. Children’s services, in both social care and education (particularly the High Needs Block), are also under very significant pressure.

- 1.4.8 Any consideration of the Authority’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan must be undertaken in the context of the funding outlook for local

government and what that means for the Authority. Full details of the funding outlook for local government are included in section 3 of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

- 1.4.9 The current Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covers the period to the end of 2024/25. Whilst there continues to be a great deal of financial uncertainty, recommended practice suggests that due consideration is given not only to the short-term but to how the Authority will continue to finance its activities in the medium-term. It is therefore recommended at this stage that the MTFP covers the four-year period 2022/23 to 2025/26.

1.5 Policy Context

Council Plan 2021-2025

- 1.5.1 The Council Plan vision and context is currently being refreshed and updated following the mayoral election in May 2021 and to consider the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the Borough. The updated Council Plan was approved by Cabinet on 2 August 2021, subject to consideration of any supplementary information received as a result of the ongoing engagement process, which concluded on 15 August. A report will be presented to Full Council on 23 September 2021 for approval of the updated Council Plan, in advance of the Council's budget setting process beginning.
- 1.5.2 The updated Council Plan reflects the current policy priorities of the Elected Mayor and Cabinet for the next four years and the future vision of North Tyneside in the following five themes:
- Thriving
 - Family friendly
 - Caring
 - Secure
 - Green

Each of these five themes has a clear set of policy priorities and outcomes as set out below.

A thriving North Tyneside

- We will regenerate the high streets of North Shields and Wallsend and will bring forward Master Plans for Wallsend and Whitley Bay town centres. We will also bring investment and improvements to the North West area of the Borough and ensure that regeneration delivers ambition, opportunity and benefits for all of our residents;
- We will bring more good quality jobs to North Tyneside – by helping local businesses to grow and making it attractive for new businesses to set up or relocate in the Borough;
- We will invest in adult education and to support apprenticeships to make sure people have the right skills for the job;
- We will keep our libraries and leisure centres open as part of a vibrant cultural and leisure offering;
- We will continue to be the destination of choice for visitors through the promotion of North Tyneside's award-winning parks, beaches, festivals and seasonal activities; and
- We will reduce the number of derelict properties across the Borough.

A family-friendly North Tyneside

- We will support local schools, making sure all children have access to a high-quality education with opportunities to catch up where needed after the pandemic;
- We will provide outstanding children's services, events and facilities so North Tyneside is a great place for family life; and
- We will ensure all children are ready for school including through poverty proofing the school day – giving our kids the best start in life.

A caring North Tyneside

- We will provide great care to all who need it, with extra support available all the way through to the end of the pandemic;
- We will work with the care provision sector to improve the health and well-being working conditions of our care heroes;
- People will be cared for, protected and supported if they become vulnerable, including if they become homeless;
- We will support local community groups and the essential work they do; and
- We will work to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination and ensure the social rights of the people of North Tyneside are key to council decision making.

A secure North Tyneside

- Council wardens will work with Northumbria Police to tackle antisocial behaviour;
- We will continue to invest £2m per year in fixing our roads and pavements;
- We will maintain the Council Tax support scheme that cuts bills for thousands of households across North Tyneside;
- We will take a holistic view to tackling health and socio-economic inequalities across the borough including through our Poverty Intervention Fund to tackle food poverty;
- We will provide 5000 affordable homes; and
- We will review the supply chain of services delivered on behalf of the Council to maximise value for money and environmental sustainability.

A green North Tyneside

- We will keep increasing the amount of waste that can be recycled and introduce food waste collections and deposit return schemes;
- Council environmental hit squads will crack down on littering;
- We will secure funding to help households to install low-carbon heating;
- We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast; and
- We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment
- We will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.

Review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Medium-Term Financial Plan

- 1.5.3 In line with the principles agreed with Cabinet for setting the annual Budget, an initial review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been performed. The revised MTFS is included as Appendix A to this report.

- 1.5.4 The Authority's 2021/22 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) were agreed in February 2021, during the third national lockdown imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although some of the impacts of COVID-19 have become clearer during this time, there remain many significant unknowns in terms of the societal, organisational and financial implications. Over the last 18 months, the Authority has made fundamental changes in relation to both ways of working, and financial planning. However, at this point it appears that Government intends that funding support for COVID-19 pressures will be withdrawn during, or in some cases at the end, of the current financial year.

The Authority's financial planning largely assumes that COVID-19 pressures will abate in line with the withdrawal of Government support. Therefore, £34.659m, of COVID resources provided in 2021/22 (as at the end of July 2021) will cease before the start of 2022/23. The MTFS also assumes that COVID-related cost pressures of £18.420m, identified at the end of July 2021, will not continue in 2022/23. Any ongoing COVID cost pressures would increase the gap to be addressed, conversely any further funding allocations for 2022/23 would reduce the gap. However, as the budget setting process progresses, if and when longer term cost pressures for 2022/23 become clearer, there may be a need to reflect further changes in budget assumptions.

- 1.5.5 As described in section 1.4.6 above, funding announcements are not expected until the Autumn 2021. Whilst a multi-year settlement is welcomed and will give local authorities some degree of certainty, until the details are released Budget planning for 2022/23 remains extremely challenging.

The impact of the pandemic is having far-reaching consequences and has required an adjustment in both organisational priorities and ways of working. The pandemic has undoubtedly caused long term changes to a number of the Authority's services, particularly in respect of joint working, public expectations, levels of demand, and the underlying cost base. Services such as children's and adult social care have seen a significant impact from the pandemic, affecting service delivery, demand, and ways of working across almost all areas of the business.

- 1.5.6 Legislation, policies and practices have all seen changes in the previous months; consolidating these and responding to further changes in future will be crucial. In addition, it is highly likely that key income sources including council tax, through both the Collection Fund and tax base growth, and business rates will continue to be under significant pressure in 2022/23. The current MTFS position therefore incorporates prudent assumptions about these income streams, which will need to be reviewed over the course of the Budget-setting period.

- 1.5.7 Finance officers have worked through a range of assumptions and the potential gap between available resources and anticipated expenditure for the General Fund across the next 4 years could be anywhere between £30m to £45m.

- 1.5.8 The Authority has previously agreed a set of principles as part of the process to develop the Budget. The majority of those principles remain relevant for Budget-setting for 2021/22 and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). However, it is important that there is a clear understanding of the work that will need to be undertaken in the lead up to Cabinet presenting its initial Budget proposals in November 2020. It has therefore been necessary to revise the approach to preparing the Budget for 2022/23 and the MTFP.

Where appropriate, the principles set out below provide more detail of the how the work will be undertaken. This will give a clear focus on financial planning priorities over the coming months in order to produce a balanced Budget in 2022/23 and achieve financial balance over the medium-term.

- 1.5.9 The underlying aim is to ensure that the Authority can continue to deliver the Council Plan, and do this within the available resources:
- 1) The overall financial strategy will be to ensure that the Authority's resources are directed to achieving the Council Plan and associated outcomes. The Authority's strategy will be reviewed on at least an annual basis;
 - 2) Overall, Authority spending should be contained within original Budget estimates. If, following monthly budget monitoring, Service budgets are projected to exceed original estimates, plans should be prepared setting out the actions required to ensure spending at the end of the year does not exceed original estimates;
 - 3) In preparation for setting the 2022/23 Budget all services will be required to take part in Budget Challenge sessions;
 - 4) In order to inform further revisions of the 2022/23 Medium-Term Financial Strategy, there will be a fundamental review of the assumptions relating to:
 - a. Council Tax and Business Rates planning;
 - b. forecast delivery of planned 2021/22 savings programmes and viability of previously planned savings;
 - c. cost and income pressures, including unfunded pressures resulting from COVID-19;
 - d. any further Government funding announcements for 2021/22 and future years; and
 - e. Seek to identify proposals to begin to address future years, reflecting need for longer-term planning.
 - 5) Options to address any shortfall in savings to close the 2022/23 Budget gap will include:
 - a. The Government providing additional funding;
 - b. Corporate / centrally identified savings opportunities; and
 - c. Services identifying further savings.
 - 6) The Authority will maintain its General Fund Balance at a minimum level of £7.000m at the end of each year, subject to a risk assessment as part of the annual Budget-setting process;
 - 7) The Authority will aim to balance its revenue Budget over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan without reliance on the use of the General Fund Balance. The MTFP will cover the period 2022/23 to 2025/26;
 - 8) The Authority will plan for any changes to specific grants/interim funding/financial settlement/legislation;
 - 9) The Authority will maintain earmarked reserves for specific purposes which are consistent with achieving its key priorities. The use and level of earmarked reserves will be reviewed at least annually;

- 10) Opportunities for working in collaboration and partnership and for different ways of working will be identified and developed where this will support the delivery of the Authority's outcomes and improve service efficiency and delivery. This will include the use of wellbeing powers/general power of competence, development of trading opportunities and different business models, and the sourcing and securing of external funding;
- 11) The Authority will consider the use of prudential borrowing to support capital investment to deliver the Council Plan and will ensure that the full costs of borrowing are taken into account when investment decisions are taken;
- 12) The Authority will aim to promote and stimulate strong and sustainable economic growth leading to wellbeing and prosperity for residents and communities, supported by a planned approach to strategic investment managed through the Authority's Investment Plan;
- 13) The Authority will continue to review its strategic assets to maximise the potential to release value for strategic re-investment and to ensure that asset requirements are aligned to the delivery of services across the Borough;
- 14) The Authority recognises the impact of increases in Council Tax levels and fees and charges on our residents, many of whom are struggling on relatively low income and low wealth and will therefore balance the need for increases against the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and demand for services. This will include the consistent application of an agreed fees and charges policy;
- 15) The Authority will continue to consider business risk in all decision-making process and, alongside this, will ensure that resources are aligned to reduce any material financial risk to the Authority; and
- 16) The Authority will continue to review its Treasury Management Strategy and the efficient management of debt on an annual basis, with an ongoing focus on delivering safe stewardship.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 1.5.10 Following an unprecedented period of uncertainty during 2020/21 due to the pandemic, the Service continues to ensure that the enhanced level of investment due to re-programming can be delivered in 2021/22. As the Authority emerges from the pandemic, the focus is to ensure that at all times the safety of the Authority's tenants and staff is paramount. These factors will continue to be built into modelling assumptions for the refresh of the 30-year HRA Business Plan, along with any anticipated impact on inflation and trends in other issues nationally, as the UK deals with an anticipated slow recovery from one of the most serious economic downturns the country has ever faced.
- 1.5.11 The Authority's in house repairs and construction service continues to develop and strive to ensure it aligns to the Our North Tyneside Plan, delivers value for money to both the General Fund and the HRA and sees greater flexibility between repairs and capital works resources to improve services to customers. The benefits of the new service continue, and additional resources have been made available for both new build housing and to create a tenant priorities element to the repairs budget with an initial focus on improving empty homes standards and carrying out property MOTs. The main

targets for the Service remain to ensure that the key priorities of delivering excellent, flexible and value for money services are achieved.

- 1.5.12 2021/22 saw the second year of rent increases following the end of the 4-year 1% per annum reduction enacted by Government via the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. From April 2020 rent policy returned to being based on increases of Consumer Prices Index (CPI) + 1% per annum for at least the next 5 years in order to give housing authorities greater planning certainty. This saw a rent increase of 2.7% for 2020/21, and an increase of 1.5% for 2021/22, as the rate of CPI dropped down to 0.5% mainly due to the level of financial assistance the Government put into the economy to try and sustain it during the pandemic. The long-term assumption remains at 3% per annum based on Government targets of 2% rates for CPI.

This is an area of close scrutiny as the rate of CPI has continued to rise during 2021 and there is now a possibility that by September the rate may be above the Government target of 2%, which would see a rent increase of more than 3%. The Government had stated that for at least 5 years from 2019/20 rents would remain based on CPI, to give authorities more certainty around longer-term financial planning.

- 1.5.13 Cabinet can continue to consider options for further HRA capital investment funded by increased borrowing in accordance with the principles of the Prudential Code. Consideration of such options available as part of the 2021/22 Budget process, determined that the existing approach to debt management and repayment should be maintained in relation to the HRA. The COVID-19 pandemic and potential risks to levels of available resources mean that this will remain an option that is available to raise additional resources if required, and due consideration will be given to these options as part of the business plan refresh and Budget-setting process for 2022/23.
- 1.5.14 The impact of the changes as outlined above will to be considered as part of the updating of the 30-year HRA Business Plan, which aims to ensure the long-term viability of the HRA in line with the policy direction of the Elected Mayor and Cabinet and the needs of tenants. The work continues to re-assess the HRA Business Plan, particularly in light of the fluctuating picture as the Borough emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the options available to Cabinet will be reported as part of the HRA Budget proposals which Cabinet will receive in November. For the purposes of the current Financial Planning and Budget process, a four-year revenue plan will be updated and presented in line with the principles adopted for the General Fund.

Investment, Prudential Borrowing and Treasury Management

- 1.5.15 The Capital Investment Strategy is the policy framework document that sets out the principles to be used to guide the allocation of capital investment across all the Authority's Services and informs decisions on capital spending priorities within the Authority's Investment Plan. Investment priorities are considered in the context of the strategic objectives of the Our North Tyneside Plan and other key strategies and plans of the Authority. The Ambition for North Tyneside report, adopted by Cabinet on 26 November 2018 and updated annually, articulates the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's ambition for North Tyneside and explains in more detail their future ambitions for each part of the Borough. Delivery of these plans sets the challenge of meeting competing priorities against limited financial resources. It is intended that a borrowing ceiling will be applied for the Authority in terms of both borrowing requirements and revenue costs.

The Authority's capital investment plans are set out in the Investment Plan, with the latest approved programme covering the period 2021-2026. The effective use of capital

resources, including asset management, is fundamental to the Authority achieving its medium and long-term strategic objectives. Capital investment has a significant impact upon the local economy and helps to ensure that the Authority can continue to provide the best possible services and outcomes within North Tyneside.

- 1.5.16 Any capital investment decision will have implications for the Budget. The revenue costs over the lifetime of each proposed capital project are considered when the project is being developed to ensure that the impact can be incorporated within the Authority's financial plans and to demonstrate that the capital investment is affordable. Revenue implications may include the costs associated with supporting additional borrowing as well as any changes to the running costs associated with the asset or wider benefits to the Authority, such as the delivery of ongoing revenue savings or additional income through the generation of Business Rates, Council Tax or energy revenues.
- 1.5.17 The 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process will include a review of the current Investment Plan and the Capital Investment Strategy with a view to the development of a five-year Investment Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27.
- 1.5.18 The Authority continues to explore external funding possibilities and other resources such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income, section 106 contributions and section 278 contributions when developing capital projects in order to minimise the borrowing requirement as far as possible. Within the MTFP, assumptions have been made around the level of external funding in the future, but detailed work programmes are not committed to until the allocations have been confirmed. Projects and investment plans may therefore be re-prioritised depending on the availability of external funding and alignment with the policy direction of the Elected Mayor and Cabinet.
- 1.5.19 The generation of capital receipts can help to provide resources to support additional capital investment or to reduce the borrowing requirement (and therefore the associated revenue costs). The availability of capital receipts has also reduced in recent years. Currently, no new capital receipts have been included within the MTFP projections. If additional capital receipts are generated during the year, this provides the Authority with the flexibility to consider the introduction of additional projects to the Investment Plan or the ability to reduce its borrowing requirements.
- 1.5.20 The Treasury Management Strategy will be reviewed in light of the refreshed Investment Plan and the overall MTFP for both the General Fund and the HRA.

Update on developing the 2022-2026 General Fund Financial Plan and Budget

- 1.5.21 Whilst decisions around Budget-setting are approved on an annual basis, the Authority must demonstrate robust medium-term financial and resource planning. Best practice suggests between three and five years as a reasonable financial planning period.
- 1.5.22 Despite the level of uncertainty with regard to local government funding beyond 2021/22 and the continued unknown future impact of COVID-19, a four-year Financial Plan is in development. This reflects, as far as possible, known pressures and changes but is based on a range of assumptions in local government funding.
- 1.5.23 Local authorities are legally obliged to set a balanced Budget each year, and to ensure that they have sufficient reserves to cover any unexpected events. To legally balance the Budget, the Authority must make spending plans that match the estimated funding available over that time. The gap between available funds and planned net expenditure

is referred to as the funding gap, or efficiency requirement. In essence, the funding gap is the best estimate of additional resources, be those reductions in expenditure or increases in income, needed to cover rising cost pressures and demand for services alongside a reduced amount of funding from the Government and, to a lesser extent, other external sources.

Financial Sustainability

- 1.5.24 As part of the update of the MTFs and the MTFP, full consideration has been given to the Authority's Reserves and Balances Policy and level of reserves to ensure adequate protection against unforeseen events. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of the Director of Resources (in her role as Chief Finance Officer) to advise the Authority about the level of reserves that it should hold and to ensure that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use.
- 1.5.25 The Authority, acting on the advice of the Chief Finance Officer, must make its own judgments on the level of reserves and balances taking into account all the relevant local circumstances. These include operational and financial risks, and the arrangements in place to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control. The duties of the Chief Finance Officer in relation to the level of reserves are covered by the legislative framework described in 1.4.1 above. Under the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer must report to Full Council on the adequacy of reserves (section 27) and reserve transactions must be taken account of within the required Budget monitoring arrangements (section 28).
- 1.5.26 Setting the level of reserves is just one of several related decisions in the formulation of the financial strategy and the Budget for a particular year. This is carried out as part of the Authority's Financial Planning and Budget process. Account is taken of the key financial assumptions underpinning the Budget, alongside consideration of the Authority's financial management arrangements. In addition to the cash flow requirements of the Authority, the following factors are considered:
- The treatment of inflation and interest rates;
 - Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts;
 - The treatment of demand-led pressures;
 - The treatment of planned efficiency savings / productivity gains;
 - The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or major capital investment developments;
 - The availability of other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions; and
 - The general financial and economic climate in which the Authority operates.
- 1.5.27 Reserves are reviewed during the financial year and table 1 below shows the estimated use, following reviews of all General Fund reserves over the period to March 2026:

Table 1: General Fund Reserves Summary 2020/21 to 2025/26

Reserves Summary	Closing Balance 31/03/21 £m	Net Contribution (to) / From Reserves					Total
		2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	
General Fund Balances	(7.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(7.000)
General Fund Reserves	(45.669)	9.131	3.518	0.671	0.450	4.746	(27.154)
General Fund Grants	(42.254)	38.837	0.777	0.202	0.283	0.280	(1.874)
Dedicated Schools Grant	7.932	0.393	4.674	(2.000)	(2.000)	(1.000)	8.000
Total Reserves	(86.990)	48.361	8.970	(1.127)	(1.267)	4.026	(28.028)

1.5.28 In assessing the adequacy of reserves, consideration is given to the level of un-earmarked reserves available for the management of financial risk to the Authority. The General Fund reserves total of £45.669m includes £24.859m of earmarked reserves, and £20.810m of un-earmarked reserves. The un-earmarked reserves are made up of the following:-

- Strategic Reserve
- Support Change Fund Programme Reserve
- Redundancy and Remuneration Reserve

There is anticipated use of the Redundancy & Remuneration reserve and the Support Change Fund Programme reserve over the period of the MTFP. As reported in the 2021/22 Financial Management Report to 31 July 2021, the current forecast pressure is estimated to be £7.420m. Should this materialise it would be necessary for the Authority to utilise the Strategic Reserve to cover any residual pressure at the end of the current financial year.

With regards to Earmarked Reserves there is an anticipated use of the Training reserve, Education Change reserve, Feasibility Study reserve and the Poverty Intervention Fund.

1.5.29 Table 2 below sets out the level of un-earmarked General Fund reserves held at the end of the 2020/21 financial year as a proportion of the 2021/22 Gross Expenditure Budget and General Fund Net Revenue Budget.

Table 2: Reserves comparison for 2020/21 against 2021/22 North Tyneside Gross Expenditure and Net General Fund Budget

	2020/21 Balance £m
Strategic Reserve	14.504
Support Change Fund Programme	4.671
Redundancy and Remuneration Reserve	1.635
Total Un-earmarked Reserves	20.810
Gross Expenditure Budget	354.881
Reserves as a % of Gross Expenditure Budget	5.61%
General Fund Net Revenue Budget	150.154
Un-earmarked Reserves as a % of General Fund Net Revenue Budget	13.86%

- 1.5.30 There are many factors involved when considering appropriate levels of reserves which need to be assessed by individual local authorities. Included in the 2019/20 Annual Completion Report from the external auditor was a comparison across the LA7 region of levels of balances. This indicated that un-earmarked reserves within North Tyneside are lower than most in the region.
- 1.5.31 The Chief Finance Officer considers that, at this time, these reserve levels are adequate, but will continue to review this in light of the degree of uncertainty surrounding the future of local government funding and the potential ongoing impact of COVID-19. The Chief Finance Officer will consider the level of Strategic Reserve that should be sustained over the period of the four-year MTFP as part of the refresh of the Plan.

Equality and Diversity Considerations

- 1.5.32 The Authority has specific responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. Part of this is to ensure that the potential effects of decisions on those protected by the equalities legislation are considered prior to any decision being made. The Authority will continually monitor the effect of its Budget-setting process and decision-making by using equality impact assessments.
- 1.5.33 Full impact assessments will be included in all proposals for inclusion with the initial Budget proposals in November 2021 in order to be available to Cabinet when it further considers the MTFP and Budget proposals on 29 November 2021. An equality impact assessment is also carried out on the proposed Budget Engagement Strategy.

The Public Sector Equality Duty of the 2010 Equality Act requires that public sector organisations publish information annually relating to people with protected characteristics who are its employees or are affected by its policies and practices. In addition, at least once every four years, organisations should include consideration of the equality objectives the organisation thinks it should achieve to meet the general equality duty.

The Authority has not published the Annual Equality and Diversity Review as the Equality and Human Rights Commission has relaxed monitoring due to COVID-19. A

report outlining the review will be presented to Cabinet once it has been completed in accordance with the Authority's Equality and Diversity governance arrangements.

2022/23 Financial Planning and Budget process - Timetable of Key Decision Milestones

- 1.5.34 Key aspects of the 2022/23 Financial Planning and Budget process timetable are set out at Appendix B to this report, highlighting key decision milestones in the process.
- 1.5.35 The Elected Mayor and Cabinet are responsible for formulating the Authority's Budget. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, in close consultation with the Elected Mayor, has been nominated as the lead Cabinet Member for the overarching 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process. The Director of Resources will be the project sponsor.

The Budget Engagement Strategy

- 1.5.36 North Tyneside Council is committed to being an organisation that works better for residents and to ensure that it listens and cares. This commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in the Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.5.37 The aim of the Budget Engagement Strategy is to reach different sectors of the population through an approach that encompasses engagement with residents as a whole and customers/users of services as well as particular groups of people, including those with protected characteristics. The approach also ensures reach with particular interest groups such as carers, older people, children and young people, council housing tenants. The Budget Engagement Strategy also ensures targeted activity with specific external and internal stakeholder groups. Full details of the Budget Engagement Strategy are set out at Appendix C to this report.

1.6 Decision options:

- 1.6.1 The Authority's Constitution and Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out the stages to be completed in relation to agreeing the Budget of the Authority. There are no other options available in relation to this. The Budget Engagement Strategy forms part of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.6.2 Cabinet is referred to the legal requirements as stated in paragraph 2.2 of this report.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

- 1.7.1 The reasons for the recommendations are mainly legal in nature, as stated in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of this report.

1.8. Appendices:

Appendix A: 2022-2026 Medium-Term Financial Strategy
Appendix B: Financial Planning and Budget process: Timetable of Key Milestones
Appendix C: 2022/23 Budget Engagement Strategy

1.9. Contact officers:

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1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (a) Authority's Constitution and Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/December%202019.pdf>

N.B. The Budget and Policy Framework can be found at part 4.7 of the Constitution.

- (b) 2020-2024 Our North Tyneside Plan

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2188/Appendix%20A%202020-%20-%202024%20Our%20North%20Tyneside%20Plan.pdf>

- (c) Treasury Management Strategy

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2195/Appendix%20E%20-%20Treasury%20Management%20Strategy%20Statement%20and%20Annual%20Investment%20Strategy%202020-21%20Credit%20Cr.pdf> (Annex 1, Section 8, page 61)

- (d) COVID-19 – A Framework for Recovery in North Tyneside

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/g425/Public%20reports%20pack%2029th-Jun-2020%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

- (e) 2020/21 Provisional Finance Outturn Report

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=174&MId=738&Ver=4>

- (f) 2020/21 Draft Statement of Accounts

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=157&MId=600&Ver=4>

- (g) North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan Annual Information Report 2020

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/g379/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Oct-2019%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

- (h) An Ambition for North Tyneside Update

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1477/8%20An%20Ambition%20for%20North%20Tyneside%20Update.pdf>

- (i) Ten Year Plan for Waste

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1482/2%2010%20Year%20plan%20for%20Waste.pdf>

- (j) Climate Emergency Update

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1484/Climate%20Emergency%20Update.pdf>

- (k) North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2021
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1188/Homelessness%20Prevention%20Strategy%202019%20-2021.pdf>
- (l) A Digital Strategy for North Tyneside
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2638/A%20Digital%20Strategy%20for%20North%20Tyneside.pdf>
- (m) North Tyneside Trading Company - Strategic Business Plan 2020-2023
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s3893/North%20Tyneside%20Trading%20Company%20-%20Strategic%20Business%20Plan%202020-23.pdf>
- (n) North Tyneside Transport Strategy Annual Report
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s805/North%20Tyneside%20Transport%20Strategy%20Annual%20Report.pdf>
- (o) Workforce Development Plan

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

- 2.1.1 The financial implications arising from the outcomes of this report will be appraised as part of the decisions included in the Authority's 2022-2026 Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), incorporating the 2022/23 Budget-setting process. Decisions on the Budget in relation to the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, school's funding and the Investment Plan need to be made within the overall context of the resources available to the Authority and within the legal framework for setting budgets. The Authority will need to examine closely the links with key funding partners and their proposed financial plans, including an assessment of the impact of any grant fall-out over the proposed four-year resource-planning period.
- 2.1.2 Cabinet and Council need to have due regard to the Chief Finance Officer's advice in relation to the levels of reserves and balances proposed as part of the four-year MTFP for 2022-2026 in accordance with the Authority's Reserves and Balances Policy most recently agreed by Council on 18 February 2021.
- 2.1.3 The only direct financial implications arising from this report will be any residual costs arising from support for engagement activity. These costs will be met from existing budgets.
- 2.1.4 The Budget Engagement Strategy for 2022/23 will, in part, help to inform decisions about what will be included in the four-year MTFP for 2022-2026.

2.2 Legal

- 2.2.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Authority to set a balanced budget in the context of the resources available, including Government grants, Business Rates and Council Tax income.

- 2.2.2 The Local Government Act 2003 imposes duties on local authorities in relation to budget setting. The Act requires that, when an authority is deciding its annual Budget and Council Tax level, members and officers must take into account a report from the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of the Budget and the adequacy of the Authority's financial reserves.
- 2.2.3 The 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process has been prepared to comply with the timescales required within the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained within the Authority's Constitution.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal consultation

Consultation has been carried out with the Elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement, the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team. At the appropriate stage in the process, and the Budget proposals will be scrutinised as set down in the Authority's Constitution and Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

2.3.2 External consultation / engagement

The Budget Engagement Strategy for 2022/23 as outlined in this report sets out the process by which residents and other stakeholders will be involved in the consultation on the 2022/23 Budget as part of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process.

2.4 Human rights

All actions and spending contained within the Budget are fully compliant with national and international human rights law. This will be detailed as part of the Financial Plan and Budget at the appropriate stage in the process. For example, Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantees freedom of expression, including the freedom to 'hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas'. Article 8 of the Convention guarantees the right to respect for private and family life.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

In undertaking the process for the Budget, the Authority's aim will at all times be to secure compliance with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty under that Act.

To achieve this the Authority will be taking a phased approach:

- An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the proposals for the Budget Engagement Strategy. The aim will be to remove or minimise any disadvantage for people wishing to take part in the engagement activity. The Authority will make direct contact with groups representing persons with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to encourage participation and provide engagement in a manner that will meet their needs. Appendix C outlines the approach the Authority is taking.

- The outcome of any decisions made following engagement activity will be subject to further Equality Impact Assessment.

2.6 Risk management

Individual projects within the Budget are subject to full risk reviews. For larger projects, individual project risk registers are / will be established as part of the Authority's agreed approach to project management. Risks will be entered into the appropriate Service or Corporate / Strategic Risk Register(s) and will be subject to ongoing management to reduce the likelihood and impact of each risk.

2.7 Crime and disorder

2.7.1 Individual proposals within this report do not themselves have direct implications for crime and disorder. However, ultimately decisions may be made and considered as part of the overall Financial Planning and Budget process, as set down in this report. These will be detailed as part of reporting the Budget at the appropriate stage in the process.

2.7.2 Under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, local authorities have a statutory duty to work with partners on the reduction of crime and disorder. This is fulfilled through the Safer North Tyneside partnership within the framework of the North Tyneside Strategic Partnership.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

The proposals within this report do not themselves have direct implications in relation to the environment and sustainability. However, ultimately decisions may be made and considered as part of the overall Financial Planning and Budget process of the Authority, as set down in this report. These will be detailed as part of the Budget at the appropriate stage in the process.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Directors(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Assistant Chief Executive

2022-2026 Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Date: 20 September 2021 **Version:** Version 1 **Author:** Janice Gillespie



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Background Papers / Information

CIPFA Resilience Index Indicators & Interpretation

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is an initial review of the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS sets the financial context for the Authority's resource allocation process and budget-setting. It is based on a financial forecast over a rolling four-year timeframe from 2022/23 to 2025/26 which will help ensure resources are aligned to the outcomes in the Our North Tyneside Plan.
- 1.2 The Authority's 2021/22 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) were agreed in February 2021, during the third national lockdown imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although some of the impacts of COVID-19 have become clearer during this time, there remain many significant unknowns in terms of the societal, organisational and financial implications. Over the last 18 months, the Authority has made fundamental changes in relation to both ways of working, and financial planning. However, at this point it appears that Government intends that funding support for COVID-19 pressures will be withdrawn during, or in some cases at the end, of the current financial year.
- 1.3 The Authority is still evaluating how the likely 2022/23 gap will be funded. Without an increased level of Government assistance, there are likely to be significant savings needed to deliver a balanced Budget in 2022/23 and over the medium-term to 2025/26. Initial estimates are that the budget gap for the period of the MTFS is likely to be in the region of between £30m and £45m.
- 1.4 Despite the level of uncertainty, reviewing the MTFS remains essential to ensuring the Authority's medium-term financial sustainability. The Authority will have to make very difficult choices in the years ahead about which services to prioritise. To avoid cuts to services, the Authority continues to explore alternative options of service delivery to ensure that services remain fit for purpose in the context of smaller budgets. This may mean revisiting the expectations of residents in order to protect services for the most vulnerable. The opportunity to work with partners and neighbouring authorities remains in order to maintain and improve outcomes against a backdrop of reducing public spending.
- 1.5 Looking beyond the impacts of coronavirus, the overall level of uncertainty means that the financial environment for local government remains extremely challenging for the foreseeable future. Local authorities continue to face a growing gap between funding and service pressures, driven in part by demographic changes, unfunded burdens such as the National Living Wage, and the needs of vulnerable social care users becoming increasingly complex. Children's services, in both social care and education, particularly for children with special educational needs and disabilities, are also under very significant stress. This pressure is anticipated to increase in the medium-term as a result of additional needs driven by the effects of COVID-19 and the associated lockdown. Other services have been subject to significant restrictions which have also seen increasing pressure placed on discretionary and preventative services.
- 1.6 Over the coming months and whilst the budget activity for 2022/23 is progressing the refresh of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy will determine the likely levels of resources available; determine the level of spending and priority commitments

arising from the COVID-19 recovery plan and the Authority's ambitions over the medium-term. Given that there is likely to be a funding gap the refresh will also identify additional options to deliver budget reductions that can be evaluated alongside spending priorities.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a key part of the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework which aims to ensure that all financial resources are directed towards delivery of Authority priorities. The MTFS is a four-year plan which sets out the Authority's commitment to provide services that meet the needs of people locally and that represent good value for money within the overall resources available to it.

The MTFS is what links the Authority's vision and priorities with forecasted resources and budgets and shows how the Authority's finances will be structured and managed to ensure that this fits with, and supports, the priorities of the Authority and its partners.

The strategy considers:

- International and national economic influences on the Authority;
- The influence of Central Government policy and strategy;
- Local factors which influence policy within the Authority; and
- Delivering key policies and priorities.

The strategy brings together the key issues affecting the:

- Revenue Budget;
- Investment Plan;
- Treasury Management Strategy; and
- Capital and Investment Strategy.

- 2.2 The MTFS establishes the likely level of revenue resources available to the Authority over the medium-term and also estimates the financial consequences of the demand for Authority services. It improves financial planning and strategic financial management through providing the financial context within which the Authority's budget will be set.

The review of the MTFS also allows for consideration of the Authority's reserves policy and level of reserves to ensure there is adequate protection against unforeseen events.

The Principles of the MTFS

- 2.3 The Authority has previously agreed a set of principles as part of the process to develop the Budget. The majority of those principles remain relevant for budget-setting for 2022/23 and for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). However, it is important that there is a clear understanding of the work that will need to be undertaken in the lead up to Cabinet presenting its initial Budget proposals in November 2021. It has therefore been necessary to revise the approach to preparing the Budget for 2022/23 and the MTFP.

Where appropriate, the principles set out below provide more detail of the how the work will be undertaken. This will give a clear focus on financial planning priorities over the coming months in order to produce a balanced Budget in 2022/23 and achieve financial balance over the medium-term.

- 2.4 The underlying aim is to ensure that the Authority can continue to deliver the Council Plan, focus on delivering the phased approach to recovery, as set out in the Framework for Recovery report described in section 6, and do this within the available resources:
- 1) The overall financial strategy will be to ensure that the Authority's resources are directed to achieving the Council Plan and associated outcomes. The Authority's strategy will be reviewed on at least an annual basis;
 - 2) Overall, Authority spending should be contained within original Budget estimates. If, following monthly budget monitoring, Service budgets are projected to exceed original estimates, plans should be prepared setting out the actions required to ensure spending at the end of the year does not exceed original estimates;
 - 3) In preparation for setting the 2022/23 Budget all services will be required to take part in Budget Challenge sessions;
 - 4) In order to inform further revisions of the 2022/23 Medium-Term Financial Strategy there will be a fundamental review of the assumptions relating to:
 - a. council tax and business rates planning;
 - b. forecast delivery of planned 2021/22 savings programmes and viability of previously planned savings;
 - c. cost and income pressures, including new pressures resulting from COVID-19;
 - d. any further Government funding announcements for 2021/22 and future years; and
 - e. seek to identify proposals to begin to address future years, reflecting need for longer term planning.
 - 5) Options to address any shortfall in savings to close the 2022/23 Budget gap will include:
 - a. Government providing additional funding;
 - b. Corporate / centrally identified savings opportunities; and
 - c. Service departments identifying further savings.
 - 6) The Authority will maintain its General Fund Balance at a minimum level of £7.000m at the end of each year, subject to a risk assessment as part of the annual budget-setting process;
 - 7) The Authority will aim to balance its revenue Budget over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan without reliance on the use of the General Fund Balance. The MTFP will cover the period 2022/23 to 2025/26;

- 8) The Authority will plan for any changes to specific grants/interim funding/financial settlement/legislation;
- 9) The Authority will maintain earmarked reserves for specific purposes which are consistent with achieving its key priorities. The use and level of earmarked reserves will be reviewed at least annually;
- 10) Opportunities for working in collaboration and partnership and for different ways of working will be identified and developed where this will support the delivery of the Authority's outcomes and improve service efficiency and delivery. This will include the use of wellbeing powers, development of trading opportunities and different business models, and the sourcing and securing of external funding;
- 11) The Authority will consider the use of prudential borrowing to support capital investment to deliver the Council Plan and will ensure that the full costs of borrowing are taken into account when investment decisions are taken;
- 12) The Authority will aim to promote and stimulate strong and sustainable economic growth leading to wellbeing and prosperity for residents and communities, supported by a planned approach to strategic investment managed through the Authority's Investment Plan;
- 13) The Authority will continue to review its strategic assets to maximise the potential to release value for strategic re-investment and to ensure that asset requirements are aligned to the delivery of services across the Borough;
- 14) The Authority recognises the impact of increases in Council Tax levels and fees and charges on our residents, many of whom are struggling on relatively low income and low wealth and will therefore balance the need for increases against the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and demand for services. This will include the consistent application of an agreed fees and charges policy;
- 15) The Authority will continue to consider business risk in all decision-making process and, alongside this, will ensure that resources are aligned to reduce any material financial risk to the Authority; and
- 16) The Authority will continue to review its Treasury Management Strategy and the efficient management of debt on an annual basis, with an ongoing focus on delivering safe stewardship.

3. Financial Context

Financial Strategy

3.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is designed to ensure that the Authority's resources are prioritised to meet the needs of residents; the Authority is able to operate as a going concern; and is able to set a balanced budget each year. The MTFS ensures that:

- The Authority maintains a prudent approach in regard to its finances over the 4 years of the MTFS; and
- The savings programme focuses on the achievement of ongoing savings but recognises the value of one-off savings to support both the implementation of savings and one-off investment.

In compiling the MTFS the Authority has considered a number of factors which influence the resources and expenditure that it has available to it. These have been reviewed and take into consideration international, national, regional and local issues. These have been examined to ensure that the MTFS reflects the most up to date financial position for the Authority.

Factors Influencing the Medium-Term Financial Strategy

3.2 Local authority funding is subject to both national and international influences, which can have a significant impact on the level of services to be provided and our Authority's ability to provide them. This section will briefly outline some of the key economic issues affecting the Authority's forecasts over the next few years.

Spring Budget 2021 and local government funding

3.3 The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, delivered the Spring 2021 Budget on 3 March 2021. This was only the Chancellor's second Budget, but as part of the Government's response to COVID-19 there have been 13 major fiscal announcements since the previous Budget on 11 March 2020. This was also the first budget since the UK entered the various lockdowns imposed in response to COVID-19, and the UK's departure from the European Union. The Budget included details of the continuing package of measures and set out the next phase of the Government's plan to tackle the virus and protect jobs. The two main issues for the Budget to address were:

- How and when to begin paying down the debts arising from the pandemic; and
- What continued support will be offered to households and businesses impacted by the pandemic.

In this context, the Chancellor's speech addressed the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and plans for the recovery. However, it should be noted that there were very few announcements about the detail of public sector funding and in particular:

- No mention of the long-term funding of social care;
- No mention of various other reforms to local government finance including fair funding and business rates (although the Government's interim response to the fundamental review of business rates was published on 23 March 2021, with final report due in Autumn 2021); and
- Departmental funding allocations have only been published for 2021/22 which would suggest there may be little prospect of a long-term local government settlement for 2022/23 onwards.

The Chancellor confirmed that economic support will be maintained until the country has exited lockdown (until September 2021). This includes extensions to furlough, support for the self-employed, support for businesses in the form of business rate relief and targeted grants, and education catch-up funding.

- 3.4 The Chancellor also used the Budget to outline a number of other initiatives which will see funding flowing to local authorities. These included the Levelling Up Fund, and the UK Community Renewal Fund. Both funds will be subject to a bidding process.
- 3.5 The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published updated March 2021 forecasts for the economy alongside the Budget and commented that forecasts reflected “an economy that is weaker in the near term but rebounding faster than we forecast in November” and that this enabled the Chancellor to do three things:
- extend the virus-related rescue support to households, businesses and public services by a further £44.3 billion, taking its total cost to £344 billion;
 - boosted the recovery, through a temporary tax break costing more than £12 billion a year that encourages businesses to bring forward investment spending from the future into this year and next; and
 - as the economy normalises, he has taken a further step to repair the damage to the public finances in the final three years of the forecast by raising the headline corporation tax rate, freezing personal tax allowances and thresholds, and taking around £4 billion a year more off annual departmental spending plans, raising a total of £31.8 billion in 2025/26.
- 3.6 The Budget provided detailed Departmental Expenditure Limits for 2021/22 only, although longer term commitments/settlements have been provided for schools, the NHS and defence. At a summary level, the OBR state that Government forecasts indicate a cut of “more than £15 billion a year from departmental resource spending from 2022/23 onwards”, which suggests a challenging Spending Review later this year, particularly for unprotected areas of spending. The Budget document states that the Government “will conduct a Spending Review later this year to set future departmental RDEL and CDEL budgets as well as devolved administrations’ block grants. Details on the Spending Review, including the RDEL and CDEL envelopes, will be set out in due course.” However, for now, the general approach to strengthening the public finances appears to be centred on tax increases (including freezing the rates for personal tax allowances and higher rate threshold from April 2022 and increasing the rate of corporation tax

from 2023). As such the precise implications for local government and other public sector funding are hard to determine.

- 3.7 As in previous years, the Authority will not receive detailed information about funding allocations for 2022/23 and beyond until Autumn 2021 following the outcome of the CSR. Whilst a multi-year settlement is welcomed and will give local authorities some degree of certainty, until the details are released Budget planning for 2022/23 remains extremely challenging. There is very little time for Government to undertake a full multi-year spending review and in this context a one-year roll over of the local government settlement is increasingly likely for 2022/23.

Beyond the immediate impact of COVID, the overall level of uncertainty means that the financial environment for local government is set to remain highly challenging. There continues to be a growing gap between funding and service pressures. This is driven by demographic changes, unfunded burdens such as the National Living Wage, and the needs of vulnerable social care users becoming increasingly complex. Children's services, in both social care and education (particularly the High Needs Block), are also under very significant stress. Other Council services (for example transport, planning, environment, and trading standards) have been subject to significant financial restrictions. In turn these have a knock-on effect by increasing the pressure placed on discretionary and preventative services.

Latest Consumer Prices Index Figures

- 3.8 The latest CPI figures were published in July by the Office for National Statistics. The CPI rose by 2.0% in the 12 months to July 2021, down from 2.5% to June; on a monthly basis, CPI was unchanged in July 2021, compared with a rise of 0.4% in July 2020. The September CPI figure is usually used to set the business rates multiplier for the coming year, and (for the 2021/22 financial year) was the inflation figure applied to authorities Settlement Funding Assessment levels.

4. Local Policy Context

- 4.1 From a local policy context, in addition to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, the Authority also has the following:
- 4.2 The Our North Tyneside Plan 2020-2024 sets out the overall vision and policy context within which the Financial Plan and Budget are set.

This vision and policy context is currently being refreshed and updated following the mayoral election in May 2021 and to consider the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the Borough. The proposed policy priorities in the refreshed Our North Tyneside are subject to consideration of any supplementary information received during the engagement process, which concludes on 15 August. The final policy priorities will be presented to the full Council Meeting on 23 September 2021.

The proposed refreshed Council Plan reflects the current policy priorities of the Elected Mayor and Cabinet for the next four years and the work of the North Tyneside Strategic Partnership, which includes all of the organisations and sectors who work together with the Authority to deliver an improved future for the Borough and its residents.

By listening to our residents, businesses and visitors, the proposed refreshed Council Plan provides a clear framework for the Authority to plan its use of resources. It provides the context for all financial decisions and the operational delivery of services both at Borough level but also increasingly as we work alongside other local authorities across the region, statutory partners, the community and voluntary sector and with business through the North East Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Council Plan future vision is of a North Tyneside in the following five themes:

- thriving
- family-friendly
- caring
- secure
- green

Each of these five themes has a clear set of policy priorities and outcomes as set out below

A thriving North Tyneside

- We will regenerate the high streets of North Shields and Wallsend and will bring forward Master Plans for Wallsend and Whitley Bay town centres. We will also bring investment and improvements to the North West area of the Borough and ensure that regeneration delivers ambition, opportunity and benefits for all of our residents

- We will bring more good quality jobs to North Tyneside – by helping local businesses to grow and making it attractive for new businesses to set up or relocate in the Borough;
- We will invest in adult education and to support apprenticeships to make sure people have the right skills for the job;
- We will keep our libraries and leisure centres open as part of a vibrant cultural and leisure offering;
- We will continue to be the destination of choice for visitors through the promotion of North Tyneside’s award-winning parks, beaches, festivals and seasonal activities; and
- We will reduce the number of derelict properties across the Borough.

A family-friendly North Tyneside

- We will support local schools, making sure all children have access to a high-quality education with opportunities to catch up where needed after the pandemic;
- We will provide outstanding children’s services, events and facilities so North Tyneside is a great place for family life; and
- We will ensure all children are ready for school including through poverty proofing the school day – giving our kids the best start in life.

A caring North Tyneside

- We will provide great care to all who need it, with extra support available all the way through to the end of the pandemic;
- We will work with the care provision sector to improve the health and well-being working conditions of our care heroes;
- People will be cared for, protected and supported if they become vulnerable, including if they become homeless;
- We will support local community groups and the essential work they do; and
- We will work to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination and ensure the social rights of the people of North Tyneside are key to council decision making.

A secure North Tyneside

- Council wardens will work with Northumbria Police to tackle antisocial behaviour;
- We will continue to invest £2m per year in fixing our roads and pavements;
- We will maintain the Council Tax support scheme that cuts bills for thousands of households across North Tyneside;
- We will take a holistic view to tackling health and socio-economic inequalities across the Borough including through our Poverty Intervention Fund to tackle food poverty;
- We will provide 5000 affordable homes.
- We will review the supply chain of services delivered on behalf of the Council to maximise value for money and environmental sustainability

A green North Tyneside

- We will keep increasing the amount of waste that can be recycled and introduce food waste collections and deposit return schemes;
- Council environmental hit squads will crack down on littering;
- We will secure funding to help households to install low-carbon heating;
- We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast; and
- We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment
- We will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030.

Local Plan

- 4.3 The Local Plan is the second key strategic element that drives the direction of resources in the Borough and was adopted by the Authority on 20 July 2017. The Plan, the first spatial strategy for 15 years, sets a vision for the Borough for the next 15 years. It sets out in detail how the Borough can be a thriving, prosperous and attractive place to live and work. It details how the Borough will require around 9,800 homes (in addition to about 4,700 that already have planning permission) and employment land for at least 12,700 new jobs. The Office of National Statistics projected an increase of 15,800 people between 2014 and 2032. The population of North Tyneside in 2032 is expected to be 218,500.
- 4.4 The Our North Tyneside Plan has at its core, two fundamental policy aims. First, whilst there has been success across the plan there is still a need to reduce the inequalities that persist in North Tyneside. Within our Borough we continue to have some of the least deprived neighbourhoods in the country but also some of the most deprived in terms of financial independence, skills, qualifications, health and well-being. This will mean working in a very different way to ensure that resources can be more effectively targeted at the people who need them most to ensure that all residents have a successful, healthy and safe future, no matter where they live in the Borough.

The second is to continue to invest in the Borough's future and to create a prosperous economy that will generate income and provide the jobs and training opportunities that will be essential to successfully tackling these inequalities. The key areas of investment being:

- coastal regeneration
- Swans/the North Bank of the Tyne
- town centres
- new and improved schools
- road and other transport improvements in line with the agreed Transport Strategy

- housing (particularly affordable homes) in line with agreed Housing Strategy
- support for businesses
- marketing the Borough to secure more inward investment and generate more visitors as a tourist destination

Ambition for North Tyneside

4.5 At its meeting on the 26 November 2018, Cabinet considered and adopted the Ambition for North Tyneside. The report, which articulates the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's ambition for North Tyneside, explains in more detail the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's future ambitions for each part of the Borough. The Ambition for North Tyneside plan aligns with the Local Plan and aims to match the ambition for the Borough with the plans set out for the Borough. Cabinet receives an annual update on the delivery of these plans and a further updates will be received by Cabinet in due course. These reports are included as background papers to the MTFS.

5. Approach to Balancing the Medium-Term Financial Plan

5.1 The 2021/22 Medium Term Financial Plan agreed in February 2021 included planned efficiency savings for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 and covered the following:-

- Contractual changes
- Expenditure reduction
- Income growth
- Service provision – commissioning
- Corporate

In addition to the planned savings, options are being developed to continue to drive down costs and balance the General Fund over the next four years of the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The aim is to do this via a range of opportunities under four themes:-

Digital, Data & Customer; Using technology and our data to identify and deliver opportunities to improve customer service and efficiency. Maximising innovation opportunities.

Workforce Planning & Organisational Development; Organisation wide proposals, which underpin the other three themes, to make the best use of our greatest asset, our teams. What skills we will need and where the market and our succession planning will need to be considered.

Commissioning, Procurement & Commercial Opportunities; How we purchase and engage with our supply chain, delivering against a transparent procurement plan to secure financial benefits, transparency of demand will assist with commercial leverage.

Asset Management; Having a full and clear understanding of the costs of our asset base, both in terms of our operational assets and moving towards a comprehensive Asset Management Plan.

6. Key Challenges facing the Authority

- 6.1 On 29 June 2020 Cabinet received a report which outlined a framework for recovery in North Tyneside. The report set out how work will be taken forward within the Authority and across the Borough to move from the COVID-19 crisis response phase to the recovery phase.
- 6.2 The Authority's planning assumptions for the recovery phase are as set out below. These are in line with the Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy:
- the Authority must adapt to live with the virus in the community for the foreseeable future;
 - any further easements to lockdown and the restart of businesses and services set by Government will be very gradual and on a phased basis;
 - the "test, track and trace" arrangements will slow the spread of the virus and the Authority will work with partners on local outbreak control measures;
 - shielding for the most medically critically vulnerable will remain for some time and the Authority will need to retain its support arrangements for those people;
 - the Authority will see a changing nature of demand for some services such as Adult Social Care;
 - social distancing and good respiratory hygiene will be key to manage the spread of infection and all work places, schools and other education facilities, retail settings and public spaces will need to be COVID-Secure;
 - PPE will still be required where appropriate and the Authority will follow and promote Government guidance on its use such as the use of face coverings on public transport and in some other settings;
 - there will be a significant financial impact for the Authority; and
 - the economic impact across the Borough as a whole will be substantial – nationally the forecast is for 14% GDP down this year and 15% GDP up next.
- 6.3 The Authority's approach to recovery for North Tyneside is a long term one, starting with three distinct phases linked to the Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy as well as the regional economic recovery framework. The three phases are
- Immediate "restart" phase (June – September 2020);
 - Medium "transition" phase (October 2020 to March 2021 linked to Government's "Smarter Controls" phase); and
 - Long term "rebuild and grow" phase (April 2021 – July 2021 linked to Government's "Reliable Treatment" phase).
- 6.4 A comprehensive plan of how the Authority will deliver the phased approach has been produced and a set of activities have been developed across a number of workstream areas which are aligned to the Our North Tyneside Plan priorities. As plans are developed it is important to understand the longer-term financial impact of the third phase of recovery "rebuild and grow". The Authority has a clear responsibility to drive economic recovery and support this phase for the residents and businesses across the Borough. The challenge will be how economic recovery can be sustained with limited financial resources. Work will continue with the North

of Tyne Combined Authority and the wider region to ensure the opportunities for investment within North Tyneside are maintained.

Impact on Resources

- 6.5 The basic model of resource forecasting used for the 2020/21 MTFS remains valid. However, due to the level of uncertainty the Authority is now facing means, at least initially, there are a range of potential resource scenarios which will have to be used when considering the resources available for 2021/22 and the medium-term. The scenarios will have to be continually revised as the economic position, the pace of recovery from COVID-19 and the Government's national response becomes clearer.
- 6.6 It is highly likely that key income sources including Council Tax (through both the Collection Fund and Tax Base growth) and Business Rates will be under significant pressure in 2021/22 and over the medium-term, requiring a revision to planning assumptions. Work is underway to establish the likely impacts, but at this stage it remains too early to forecast with any confidence.

Likely impacts on Business Rates include:

- Total Business Rates collectable will potentially reduce where increased numbers of businesses close (particularly as temporary financial support measures are withdrawn);
- An increase in the number of properties claiming empty property relief where businesses either cease trading or seek to take advantage of changed working patterns to reduce property costs; and
- Appeals against rateable values may increase where rental values have been impacted.

Likely impacts on Council Tax include:

- The Tax Base may not increase as forecast due to suppressed growth in new properties;
- Council Tax support is likely to increase linked to increased levels of claimants due to unemployment and Universal Credit claims; and
- Decreases in the Council Tax collection rate due to households experiencing a reduction in income.

Social Care Services

- 6.7 COVID-19 has had a significant financial impact on social care services for both children and adults, in addition to the ongoing demand pressures in both of these areas. It is expected that there will be a lasting impact from COVID-19 on the social care finances at least in the short to medium-term, as the country continues to recover whilst still managing outbreaks of the virus.
- 6.8 There are continuing upward pressures on care providers' fees partially resulting from the National Living Wage but which have become more acute with the operational impact of Covid-19 on care homes and issues around high vacancy levels in a small number of care homes within the Borough. On top of this, the

impact of COVID-19 on adult social care finances has been profound. In addition to the government's Infection and Prevention Control Grant for care providers, the Authority has provided further payments to compensate for additional costs incurred. It is anticipated that demand for care and support will increase as a range of informal support arrangements that have been in place for adults during the pandemic reduce or cease. Additional measures that will need to be taken to ensure quality care is delivered whilst still controlling the spread of COVID-19 infection will further increase the financial pressures in this area.

- 6.9 At the end of 2020/21, all but three local authorities in the region had seen an in-year reduction in the rate of referrals to Children's Services. North Tyneside was one of the three authorities that had seen an increase, which amounted to 6.4%. Across the region, the rate of referrals and complexity around safeguarding and the nature of concerns has increased. Demand has increased across Children's Services from Early Help to Child in Need and Child Protection. Children in Care numbers, however, have remained relatively stable in North Tyneside when compared to the rest of the region. Internal sufficiency of placements has been impacted throughout Covid and the Authority, at times had to source/commission external placements because of this. It is projected that there will be increased demand for children's early help and social care due to the economic and emotional impact of COVID-19 on children and families. Other significant pressures exist around High Needs and the costs associated with the number of children with an Education Health and Care Plan.
- 6.10 The impact of COVID-19 across all services is currently under review. Any longer-term implications will need to be considered in the build up to budget-setting for 2022/23. Currently, a significant proportion of the increased financial pressures on Adults and Children's Social Care is supported by Government Covid grant funding. If, as expected, this stops at the end of the 2020/21 financial year, the pressures that remain post Covid, will need to be supported by the Service. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy will be updated to reflect the review and as part of the approach to budget-setting this will form part of the Budget challenge sessions.

7. The Authority's Current Financial Position and Outlook

7.1 The Budget for 2020/21 was approved by full Council at its meeting on the 20 February 2020. The net General Fund revenue budget was set at £161.361m. This included £3.244m of savings to be achieved (£0.805m relating to 2020/21). The final outturn reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2021 stated an overall surplus of £2.500m.

The surplus has arisen substantially from a reduced call on the contingency budget provision for Adult Social Care, increased interest savings and savings on the Strain on the Fund budget. Consideration has been given to the risks the Authority has to manage and the following proposed use of the surplus:

- £1.000m to the Change Reserve as we move into the final third of the current Strategic Partnership contracts and prepare for exit;
- £0.500m to the Insurance Reserve in recognition of the potential investment required to manage health and safety risks of the council's estate; and,
- £1.000m to an Education Change Reserve recognising the risk to the Authority in respect of Schools in deficit.

This position was agreed by Cabinet on 15 July 2021 pending the completion of the External Audit of the Statement of Accounts.

7.2 The budget for 2021/22 was approved by full Council at its meeting on the 18 February 2021. The net General Fund revenue budget was set at £150.154m. This included £4.337m of savings to be achieved, all of which had been identified in previous years.

The forecast overall pressure is estimated at £7.420m against the approved net budget. This is made up of a forecast pressure of £1.813m on normal activities and £5.607m relating to the impact of Covid-19. The pressure on normal activities in the services is driven mainly by Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding at £7.281m, reflecting the continued pressures in Children's Services, partly mitigated by the contingency balances that were created by Cabinet as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process and continue to be held centrally to reflect the on-going pressures in social care being felt locally and nationally.

Included in this projection is £5.720m of pressures in Corporate Parenting and Placements, and £1.624m in Integrated Disability & Additional Needs. The drivers for these pressures continue from 2020/21 and arise from:

- Continued growth in demand in Children's Social Care Services;
- Growth in numbers of children with Education and Health Care Plans;
- The timing of delivery of some aspects of the Efficiency Savings Programme to the extent that achievement of some savings may be at risk; and,
- Increases in staffing costs.

It is anticipated that the outturn forecast for normal activities will improve over the course of the financial year as planned remedial actions begin to impact on both expenditure and income.

With regards to the impact of Covid-19, the main drivers behind the £18.420m impact on services are also within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding where £9.600m is for increased costs to the Authority. Significant Covid-19 related pressures also exist in Environment, Housing and Leisure (£5.608m) and in Commissioning & Asset Management (£2.012m).

- 7.5 There have been a range of financial interventions introduced by the Government. The Authority received its share of the Government's Local Support Grant of £16.370m, £0.733m of this was allocated to additional costs and income lost in March 2020, meaning £15.636m was available to support council services in 2020/21. Of this, £13.466m was allocated to support revenue activities and a further £0.485m was allocated to capital. The remaining £1.685m has been carried forward to support the identified on-going impact of COVID-19 into 2021/22.
- 7.6 Local authorities were also compensated for losses incurred against their sales, fees and charges budgets. North Tyneside Council received £5.757m from this grant to support services and this was fully allocated.
- 7.7 As mentioned previously the Authority has received grants to support the businesses in the Borough. During 2020/21 £66.072m was received and £54.731m was paid across to businesses. The remaining balance will be paid out during the early stages of 2021/22.
- 7.8 Additional funding of £11.811m was received to support our residents, including direct financial support for our most vulnerable but also to support the Authority to put in place measures to keep residents safe whilst they continued to enjoy our coastline, town centres and the many attractions throughout the Borough, when restrictions allowed. Of this funding £4.616m was spent during 2020/21, with £7.195m carried forward to 2021/22. Of the funding carried forward £5.302m of it related to Contain Outbreak Management and the Authority has a range of proposals to spend this funding to help contain outbreaks as the Borough continues to see an easing of restrictions.
- 7.9 The Government provided £5.471m to help support the Care Home market and all of the £5.471m was allocated in 2020/21. The Authority also received £2.264m to support its schools and £2.031m was allocated with the remaining £0.233m anticipated to be allocated in early 2021/22.
- 7.10 There were further indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic which included the delay in the 2020 Spending Review, which was scheduled to be completed by July 2020. Additionally, the Fair Funding and Business Rates Retention (BRR) schemes review, scheduled for implementation in April 2021, will now not go ahead until April 2022 at the earliest. This led to further significant risk and challenges remain to the Authority's ability to update the four-year Medium-Term Financial Plan.

- 7.11 It has been highlighted previously by the Chief Finance Officer that the Authority has a relatively low level of reserves. Uncertainty with regard to the levels of funding for Local Government Finance beyond 2020/21, alongside the long-term implications of how the Borough and indeed the country will recover from the impacts of COVID-19 is of concern. The financial sustainability of the Authority remains a significant concern, particularly when taken in the context of funding reductions the Authority has managed since 2011/12.
- 7.14 The other general fund earmarked reserves total £65.487m, which is an increase of £33.130m from the 2019/20 position of £32.357m. Of this increase £19.298m relates to COVID-19 grants with specific conditions that have been imposed in spending those grants, and some of which the Authority acts as an agent for the government on. These COVID-19 balances are projected to be spent over the early part of 2021/22.
- 7.15 When setting the 2021/22 Budget reference was made to the impact of reliefs given to business for NNDR and residents for Council Tax on the collection fund which flows through into future years. Grant funding received in 2020/21 in respect of this relief of £15.153m is planned to be used during 2021/22 to mitigate the collection fund deficit and the impact on overall resources.
- 7.16 The net movement in HRA reserves and balances is a decrease of £2.179m. The HRA reserves have increased by £0.623m to £19.725m in 2020/21 and the HRA balances have decreased by £2.802m to a total of £5.001m. Within the HRA reserve total, £12.390m relates to PFI reserves.
- 7.17 School Balances show an increase of £3.556m this is a significant improvement of £10.476m against the planned deficit balance position of £6.755m. As at 31 March 2021, the DSG account is showing a net deficit balance of £7.932m, mainly caused by the increased pressures in High Needs. This compares to a deficit balance of £3.262m in 2019/20. Whilst the Authority does have some plans to recover this deficit position, there remains uncertainty as to how this is to be resolved, adding further risk for the Authority in the short to medium term.
- 7.18 The Government has confirmed that the Fair Funding and Business Rates Retention (BRR) schemes review, scheduled for implementation in April 2021, will now not go ahead until April 2022 at the earliest. The statement also said that the Government will continue to work with authorities on the best approach to the next financial year, including how to treat accumulated business rates growth and the approach to the 2022/23 local government finance settlement. Until this approach is confirmed significant risks remain on the Authority's ability to update the four-year MTFP due to the ongoing uncertainty about future funding arrangements.
- 7.19 It has been highlighted previously by the Chief Finance Officer that the Authority has a relatively low level of reserves. The level of uncertainty with regard to the levels of funding for Local Government Finance beyond 2021/22 alongside the uncertain long term implications of how the Borough and indeed the country will recover from the impact of COVID-19 is of concern when considering the financial sustainability of the Authority, particularly when taken in the context of funding reductions the Authority has managed since 2010/11. Despite some increases, the

general level of reserves available to support the Authority's budget remains relatively low when considering the current estimated gap arising from the financial impact of COVID-19.

- 7.20 The Strategic Reserve (£14.504m) represents 4.09% of the General Fund 2021/22 gross Budget and 11.46% of the 2021/22 net Budget, with the General Fund balances (£7.000m) added, these represent 6.06% of the 2021/22 gross Budget and 16.99% of the 2021/22 net General Fund Budget. There is no prescribed level of reserves advice by finance bodies with the level being considered in light of risks the Authority faces not just in the current year but looking ahead.
- 7.21 In these unrepresented times the importance of robust financial management across the Authority remains paramount. A range of tighter spending controls have been put in place to ensure no non-essential spend is incurred during 2020/21 and to ensure any COVID-19 related expenditure is appropriately considered and approved in advance of being incurred.
- 7.22 Medium-term financial planning remains extremely difficult due to the impact of COVID-19, the financial impacts of which are impossible to predict accurately. In addition to the impact of COVID-19 there is great uncertainty in relation to the level of funding beyond 2020 due to the changes in the Local Government finance system resulting in greater risks in relation to the localisation of business rates and the local Council Tax scheme. The unknown impacts alongside the level of risk to finances mean that these forecasts will need to be closely monitored and refreshed more frequently than usual as consequences become clear. Staying the same is not an option. The Authority is required to change to deliver its priority outcomes within the limited funding available.

8. Capital and Prudential Borrowing (Investment Strategy)

- 8.1 Capital investment generally relates to spending on physical assets that have a useful life of more than one year. This can be new assets, improvements to existing assets, or loans to third parties for a capital purpose.

Investment of this nature plays an important role in ensuring the Authority meets its health and safety responsibilities, it also plays an important role in improving economic opportunities across all parts of the Borough. Whilst some investment directly contributes to economic development, all has an indirect impact by providing stimulus to the economy, creating employment opportunities, supporting skills and development or contributing to confidence.

- 8.2 The Capital Investment Strategy has been developed to help support the delivery of capital investment and ensure that the investment programme builds on previous success, with a strong focus on delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan outcomes and linking to the Our Ambition for North Tyneside. The Strategy also provides a framework to enable projects to be developed with the aim of helping to deliver revenue savings to assist the Authority in managing the financial pressure it faces.

All proposals for capital investment follow a structured gateway process, and are challenged by Members and senior officers, from the initial ideas stage, through the delivery stage and finally to post implementation. All proposals are considered in terms of their strategic alignment with the Our North Tyneside Plan, Our Ambition for North Tyneside and the revised Efficiency Programme.

The Investment Programme Board (IPB) meets on a monthly basis and, as part of its monthly meetings, receives an update on all ongoing projects included in the approved Investment Plan (currently 2021-2026).

Summary of the Investment Plan 2021-2026

Spend	2021/22 £000s	2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	Total £000s
General Fund	56,366	25,714	18,344	17,488	13,435	131,347
Housing	31,747	26,274	27,400	29,949	31,424	146,794
Total	88,113	51,988	45,744	47,437	44,859	278,141

The estimated revenue implications of these schemes are included in the revenue Budget.

Summary of Financing 2021-2026

Spend	2021/22 £000s	2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	Total £000s
General Fund Council contributions:						
Unsupported borrowing	17,210	10,960	10,546	10,276	6,223	55,215
Capital receipts	765	254	0	0	0	1,019
Revenue contribution	579	746	500	0	0	1,825
Use of reserves	262	0	0	0	0	262
	18,816	11,960	11,046	10,276	6,223	58,321
Grants and contributions	37,550	13,754	7,298	7,212	7,212	73,026
Total General Fund Resources	56,366	25,714	18,344	17,488	13,435	131,347
Housing – HRA						
Capital receipts	2,047	1,886	2,871	2,689	2,984	12,477
Revenue contribution	10,759	9,831	9,485	11,932	12,760	54,767
Major Repairs Reserve	17,689	14,557	15,044	15,328	15,680	78,298
Grants and contributions	1,252	0	0	0	0	1,252
Total HRA Resources	31,747	26,274	27,400	29,949	31,424	146,794
TOTAL RESOURCES	88,113	51,988	45,744	47,437	44,859	278,141

Capital Allocations 2021/22

- 8.3 A number of capital allocations (grants) are announced by the Government as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. These include Education Funding (Capital Maintenance and Devolved Formula Capital) (Department for Education), the Local Transport Plan (Department for the Environment) and Disabled Facilities Grants (through the Better Care Fund). Figures for 2022/23 have not yet been announced and therefore indicative figures, based on previous allocations, will be included in the draft Investment Plan. As soon as actual allocations are announced these figures will be updated and included in subsequent reports.

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 8.4 The Capital Finance Regulations require the full Council to agree an annual policy for the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

The MRP is the amount that is set aside to provide for the prepayment of debt (principal repayment). The regulations require the Authority determines an amount

of MRP which it considers to be prudent. The broad aim of a prudent provision is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits.

The proposed 2022/23 policy is set out in full below:

- (a) Existing assets pre-1 April 2007: MRP will be charged at 2% per annum;
- (b) Supported borrowing: MRP will be charged at 2%;
- (c) Unsupported borrowing: for all assets financed by unsupported borrowing, MRP will be charged over the estimated life of the assets. This may include assets financed through PFI schemes and finance leases;
- (d) Lease transactions treated as “on balance sheet”: an element of the annual charge to the Authority for the lease will be treated as repayment of capital (i.e. repayment of principal and interest). The principal element is effectively the MRP charge for the year. This MRP charge will be equal to the element of the rent/service charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability; and
- (e) Loans made for capital purposes for which borrowing is taken out: MRP will be based on the actual principal repayment schedule relating to the loan provided.

Prudential Indicators

- 8.6 The Local Government Act 2003 requires authorities to comply with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Prudential Code requires authorities to develop a set of Prudential Indicators for capital as laid out in this Code. The indicators for 2022-2027 will be prepared using this guidance.
- 8.7 The Capital Investment Strategy and Investment Plan will be updated as part of the budget-setting process. The impact of COVID-19 and the long-term view of how the Authority can support the Boroughs economic recovery through investment will be a focus for the update.

9. Reserves

- 9.1 Local authorities must consider the level of reserves needed to meet estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. The Head of Resources is required, as part of the budget-setting process each year, to provide a statement on the adequacy of reserves that is subject to an external audit review to assess value for money and a going concern opinion.
- 9.2 The Authority keeps a level of reserves to protect against the risk of any uncertainties or unforeseen expenditure. This is considered best practice and demonstrates sound financial planning. Much like using savings to offset monthly household bills the use of financial reserves cannot solve a budget problem outright but allows for smoothing of impacts or allows the Authority time to ride any short-term situations before returning to normal. Therefore, reserves are mainly used to:
- Manage the impact of cuts over a longer period of time
 - Invest in schemes that allow services to be delivered cheaper
 - Take “one-off hits” for the Authority as a whole without the need to further reduce budgets
 - Provide capacity to absorb any non-achievement of planned budget reductions in each year
 - To temporarily roll over unused portions of grants that can legally be used at a later date
 - To insure against major unexpected events (such as flooding)
 - To guard against general risk (i.e. saving up for unexpected events)
 - To guard against emergent specific risks, such as business rate appeals, Authority tax support funding cuts and welfare reform. These risks are predicted to continue to increase.

Reserves Policy

- 9.3 The Authority’s policy on reserves is outlined within the MTFS principles as follows:

The Authority will maintain its general balances at a minimum of £7.000m. The Strategic Reserve will be maintained at a level of £10.000m over the period of the MTFP to cover any major unforeseen expenditure. The Authority will aim to balance its revenue budget over the period of the MTFS without reliance on the use of the general reserve.

The Authority will maintain earmarked reserves for specific purposes which are consistent with achieving its key priorities. The use and level of earmarked reserves will be reviewed annually.

The Authority’s Strategic Reserve is available to support budget-setting over the period of the MTFS and usage should be linked to the achievement of financial sustainability over the medium-term.

Review of Reserves

9.4 A review of all reserves is undertaken twice a year and covers:

- The purpose for which the reserve is held,
- An assessment of the appropriate level of the reserve to meet potential future;
- liabilities, in line with the Authority's reserves policy and aligned to the risk management framework;
- Procedures for the reserve's management and control, and
- A process and timescale for future reviews to ensure continuing relevance and adequacy.

9.5 The 2020/21 Revenue Outturn position was reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2021, showing the balance of usable reserves of £99.715m. (including ring fenced reserves and un-ringfenced), Grant Reserves of £34.321 and HRA Reserves of £19.725m. Of the above balances only £20.810m was un-ringfenced. A projection of the reserves and balances position over the MTFP is shown below.

The General fund grants projected MTFP balances include negative DSG balances.

Reserves & Balances	Projected Closing Balances				
	2021/22 £000's	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's
Reserves					
General Fund Ringfenced	25.082	23.515	23.094	22.894	18.398
General Fund Unringfenced	11.456	9.506	9.256	9.006	8.756
General Fund Grants	(4.909)	(10.361)	(8.563)	(6.845)	(6.126)
HRA	19.770	19.592	19.287	19.203	19.104
Reserves Sub Total	51.399	42.252	43.074	44.257	40.132
Balances					
General Fund	7.000	7.000	7.000	7.000	7.000
Schools	2.221	0.721	(0.779)	(2.279)	(3.779)
HRA	3.012	2.633	2.705	2.667	2.661
Balances Sub Total	12.233	10.354	8.926	7.388	5.882
Grand Total Reserves & Balances	63.632	52.605	52.000	51.654	46.014

9.6 Whilst an initial review of the reserves position for 2021/22 has taken place it will be necessary to undertake a thorough assessment of the impact on reserves over the MTFP throughout the budget-setting process. An explanation of each reserve and balances as at 31 March 2021 can be found in the Authority's draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21

In these unrepresented times the importance of robust financial management across the authority remains paramount. A range of tighter spending controls have been put in place to ensure no-nonessential spend is incurred during 2021/22 and to

ensure any COVID-19 related expenditure is appropriately considered and approved in advance of being incurred.

The Chief Finance Officer considers that, at this time, these reserve levels are adequate, but will continue to review this in light of the degree of uncertainty surrounding the future of local government funding and the potential impact of COVID-19. The Chief Finance Officer will consider the level of Strategic Reserve that should be sustained over the period of the four-year MTFP as part of the refresh of the plan.

Financial Assurance

9.7 Each year as part of the annual accounts process the Authority must demonstrate that it is a going concern. This means it must show that it is financially sound in this time of austerity and changing local authority structures. The Authority has an Internal Audit function who continually assess and review the financial management and control framework to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. On top of this the Authority is scrutinised by its external auditors, Ernst & Young, who will review and comment on whether the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the Value for Money (VFM) conclusion.

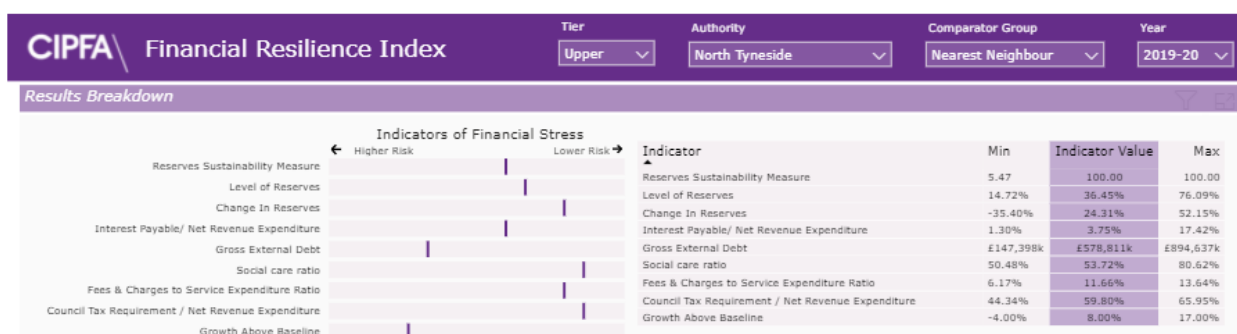
Financial resilience

9.8 CIPFA Financial Resilience Index

The Chartered Institute for Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) has recently published a paper: ‘Building financial resilience: managing financial stress in local authorities’ intended to help Chief Financial Officers and their authorities build financial resilience into all aspects of their planning and operations. It identifies the warning signs of financial stress and explains the pillars on which financial resilience depends.

CIPFA has outlined the warning signs of financial stress exhibited by local authorities. The table below shows how the Authority is performing against these warning signs.

Resilience Index 2021



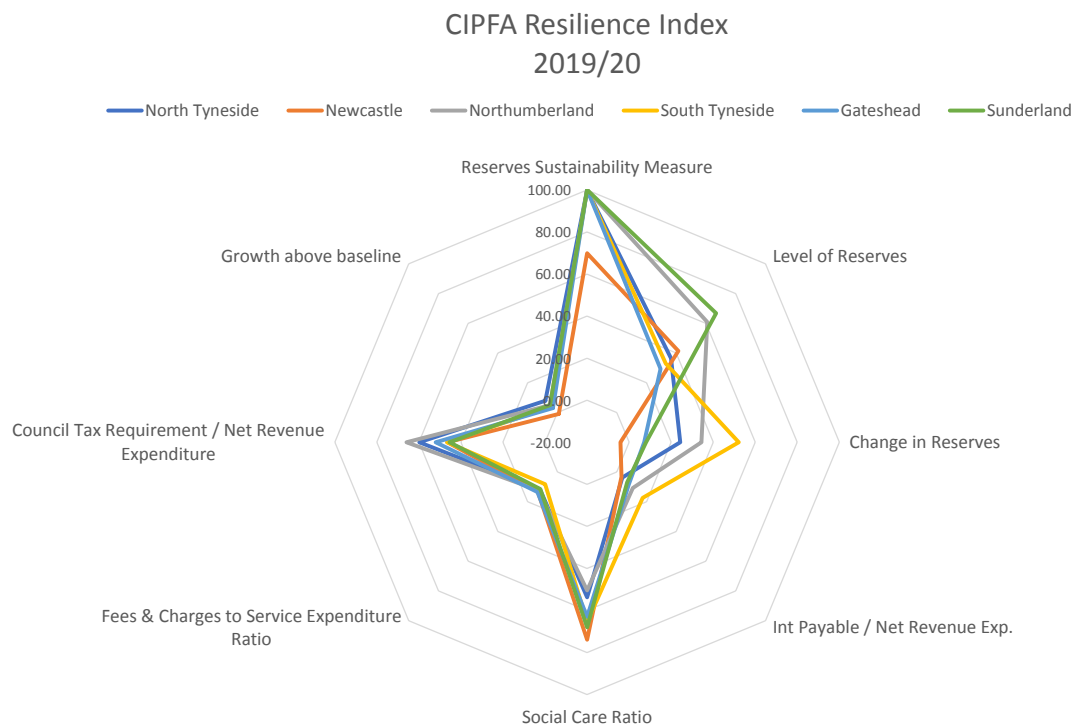
CIPFA has identified four key pillars of financial resilience:

- Getting routine financial management right
- Benchmarking
- Clear plans for delivering savings
- Managing reserves Indicators used in the Index include 'reserves depletion time', 'level of reserves', 'change of reserves', 'council budget flexibility', and 'council tax to net revenue expenditure'.

These measures have indicated that the majority of local authorities are in a stable financial position and are not showing signs of financial failure in spite of managing severe budget cuts. The Index above shows the Authority to be relatively low risk across the majority of the indicators of financial risk. The CIPFA Resilience Index Indicators & Interpretation is included on pages 34 and 35 of this document.

9.6.1 The CIPFA Resilience index plotted against neighbouring Authorities show North Tyneside Council as being in robust and sustainable financial position as well as demonstrating the Authority being broadly aligned against our neighbours for financial resilience.

Note the 2019/20 Resilience Index from CIPFA is currently the latest set of indicators.



The Authority identifies how it achieves financial resilience via the annual VFM assessment. This forms part of the annual external audit of the Authority's accounts.

CIPFA Financial Management Code

- 9.9 CIPFA has developed a Financial Management Code (FM Code), which is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The FM Code sets the standards of financial management for local authorities. It applies a principles-based approach and relates to other statutory and good practice guidance. It builds on other codes and frameworks. The principles translate into financial management standards which are obligatory but not prescriptive regarding how they are achieved.

Local authorities need to ensure that their governance and financial management meets the requirements of the code. CIPFA considers that the implementation date of April 2020 should indicate the commencement of a 'shadow year' and that by the end of 2020/21, local authorities should be able to demonstrate that they are working towards full implementation of the code. The first full year of compliance with the FM Code will be 2021/22.

10. Risk Assessment

Overall Financial Risk Assessment

- 10.1 Financial risks are driven by changes to Government policy and the national financial climate, issues arising throughout the year and reported as part of the financial management reporting process and those risks highlighted as part of the Authority's risk management procedures and monitored through the Authority's risk registers. As part of the monitoring process the Authority's Corporate Risk Register is monitored twice yearly by Cabinet.

Key Financial Risks

- 10.2 The key financial risks for the Authority (including the HRA), which have been considered as part of the Financial Planning and Budget process, are set out in the table below along with mitigating actions.

Potential Risk	Initial Response
COVID-19	
Financial Impact on Authority: There is a risk that due to the implementation of government guidelines due to the outbreak of COVID-19 that the Authority may face significant financial pressures through the loss of income from income generating services, public venues and events.	Controls will include: Assessment of income targets that will be affected; Government assurances to cover the cost of Business Rate holiday; Government Funding to cover cost of COVID-19 on the Authority; Grants received for Business Grants; Grant received for Business Rate Relief; COVID-19 Grant; A named finance officer to be aware of and collate impacts; monthly return to Central Government; Liaison with local and national finance peer groups for comparator discussions.
Long Term Financial Impact: There is a risk that there may be long term impact on the ongoing income from council tax and business rates	Revenue monitoring to understand affected services and areas; Update financial planning assumptions; A planned use of reserves; A named finance officer to be aware of and collate impacts.
Capture of Costs: There is a risk that we may not capture the costs associated with the response resulting in the full cost not being recovered from central government	Asked all services to set up separate cost centres specific COVID-19 costs; Head of Resources part of RCG to ensure finance actions are identified and completed; Weekly ANEC Treasurers call; Sharing information capture on issues and capture from ANEC participating Authorities. Network of organisations collating and sharing data e.g. LGA, SIGOMA

<p>There is a risk of being unable to set a balanced budget for 2022/23 and over the period of the MTFP.</p>	<p>Managed during the budget setting for 2022/23 and robust budget challenge.</p>
<p>There is a risk that the levels of savings and income the Authority has included in the Budget proposals are not fully deliverable.</p>	<p>A robust challenge process has taken place to ensure proposals can be delivered. All savings and income will be monitored throughout the year to identify any areas which are not delivering savings as planned so corrective action can be taken.</p>
<p>There is a risk that if the Efficiency Programme is not successfully implemented the Authority may be unable to deliver improved services and meet the increased demand for services within reducing resources. This could have the financial impact of the Authority not delivering on its Budget.</p>	<p>An overall Budget Proposal Document and Terms of Reference are in place for all existing and new Efficiency Programme projects. This spans all service redesign projects Monthly Updates to the Senior Leadership Team are provided as part of the in-year financial management process. The Customer Service Steering Group will be sighted on the outcomes from any Service reviews undertaken during 2022/23.</p>
<p>There is a risk that the assumptions that have been made based on the indicative settlement up to and including 2025/26 may be wrong, resulting in changes to the current targeted savings by 2025/26, for the General fund and for the HRA, which will be considered by Cabinet in January 2022.</p>	<p>Through a robust approach to financial management the authority is in a position to respond to determine actions necessary if the assumptions that have been made prove to be incorrect. The Authority work closely with national, regional and sub-regional financial networks to help ensure that the Authority is informed and aware of any national developments. Being involved in the consultation process enables any issues or concerns specific to NTC to be highlighted before final decisions are made.</p>
<p>There is a risk that not all growth pressures have been identified in the 2022/23 proposed Budget.</p>	<p>Detailed proposals have been put forward by each Head of Service and challenged by the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet Members and the Elected Mayor.</p>
<p>There is a risk that demand - led pressures exceed Budget provision.</p>	<p>Demand-led pressures continue in areas such as adults' and children's social care and the impact of the Living Wage on our care providers (and the price for services the Authority then has to pay) have been</p>

	taken into consideration as part of these initial Budget proposals.
There is a risk that specific factors arising during 2021/22 will not been fully taken into account when preparing the 2022/23 Budget.	The 2021/22 financial position is monitored through bi-monthly reporting to Cabinet and monthly reporting to the Senior Leadership Team. This process ensures factors arising during the year are taken into account.
There is a risk that the in-year pressures being reported through the 2021/22 financial management process impact on the deliverability of the 2022/23 budget.	As at 31 July 2021, a pressure of £7.420m of which £5.607m related to COVID-19 was reported against the 2021/22 Budget. All Services continue to develop and deliver actions to mitigate these financial pressures and expect the outturn forecast to improve through the year. In addition, non-essential spend continues to be minimised and a detailed review of demand-led projections aims to reduce over-commitments. Progress will be monitored through bi-monthly reporting to Cabinet and monthly reporting to the Senior Leadership Team.
There is a risk that the contingency provision included in the Financial Plan for 2021/22 is insufficient.	The review of the base Budget and the reflection of the 2021/22 pressures into 2022/23 will be considered.
There is a risk that there are insufficient levels of reserves and balances.	A full review of reserves and balances is undertaken on a regular basis as part of both the in-year monitoring and planning processes.
There is a risk that the Authority will be unable to protect its housing assets and services to tenants as a consequence of reduced income to the HRA. Government policy on welfare reform is resulting in a number of direct challenges to rent collection; the spare room subsidy and the benefit cap have already had an impact.	The budget-setting process incorporates a review of the HRA Business Plan to reflect the changes. The cost and quantity of work within the 30-year Investment Plan is revised annually to help mitigate the impact of changes. In addition, the Financial Inclusion Strategy sets out how the Authority and its partners will support its residents to better manage their finances and maximise their income. The HRA budget includes proposal to increase support to tenants in managing their ability to sustain their tenancies.

	<p>The Authority has representation on the MHCLG and CIPFA HRA working groups. This enables specific issues to be raised and allows the Authority to comment and influence change on HRA regulation</p>
<p>There is a risk that there may be a significant financial impact on school resources if the number of schools requesting deficit continues to rise at its current rate. This risk is currently driven by the number of surplus places at secondary schools.</p>	<p>The school deficit has been identified as a priority for the Authority, headteachers and governing bodies. A programme of work has been identified, working with schools to improve the schools deficit position. This will highlight the work that is required and through working with the schools a number of initiatives will be identified and progressed.</p>
<p>There is a risk that North Tyneside may be placed at a disadvantage following the decision to leave the European Union in both financial and economic growth terms. The full extent of the impact will not be clear until the Authority know the precise trade terms which will apply once the UK formally leaves the EU. This has a potentially significant financial impact due to loss of revenue grant and a potential loss of opportunities, e.g. capital grant and other revenue sources.</p>	<p>The potential impact from leaving the EU has been included in the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This is helping to ensure that potential areas of impact following the EU exit are highlighted and included (where relevant) in Budget planning. The Authority is a member of various regional groups which will help it keep up to speed on progress and have the opportunity to exert any influence that the Authority can. It is inevitable that there will be some impact from the decision to leave the EU, the challenge is to manage the impact where possible.</p>

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has again been undertaken against a background of significant uncertainty due to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is impossible to predict with any accuracy the financial impact of the pandemic which will not only be felt in the current financial year but also over the medium-term. This will undoubtedly have implications for how the Authority delivers its services in the future and its approach to financial planning. The Authority continues to assess the financial impact and as such a further revision of the MTFS will be presented to Cabinet in November 2021.
- 11.2 The initial review of the MTFS identifies a potential financial gap of between £30m and £45m for the next four years from 2022/23 to 2025/26. The MTFS supports the requirement to continue a rolling programme of internal indicative budget-setting and efficiency plans to bridge the financial gap. This funding gap comes on top of budget savings of £127.756m that have already been taken from budgets by this Authority since 2011/12.
- 11.3 Although the financial context continues to be increasingly challenging and uncertain the Authority has a track record of identifying and delivering significant savings and achieving budget outturn under agreed budget, supported by a framework of effective financial planning. This approach will need to continue to ensure that a sustainable medium-term financial position can be maintained. The approach will need to be built upon the delivery of significant changes in service delivery arising from effective decision making at an appropriate pace.
- 11.4 The Authority will continue to keep the MTFS estimates under more frequent review given the high degree of uncertainty surrounding not only the implications of COVID-19 but also the potential impact on government policy and government funding decisions in relation to local government arising from future finance reforms.

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report, where there is no link included those reports are available at the office of the author:

Background papers:

Local Plan
Workforce Development Plan

Background information:

- (a) Authority's Constitution and Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/December%202019.pdf>

N.B. The Budget and Policy Framework can be found at part 4.7 of the Constitution.

- (b) 2020-2024 Our North Tyneside Plan

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2188/Appendix%20A%202020%20-%202024%20Our%20North%20Tyneside%20Plan.pdf>

- (c) Treasury Management Strategy

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2195/Appendix%20E%20-%20Treasury%20Management%20Strategy%20Statement%20and%20Annual%20Investment%20Strategy%202020-21%20Credit%20Cr.pdf> (Annex 1, Section 8, page 61)

- (d) COVID-19 – A Framework for Recovery in North Tyneside

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/g425/Public%20reports%20pack%2029th-Jun-2020%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

- (e) 2020/21 Provisional Finance Outturn Report

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=174&MId=738&Ver=4>

- (f) 2020/21 Draft Statement of Accounts

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=157&MId=600&Ver=4>

- (g) North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan Annual Information Report 2020

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/g379/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Oct-2019%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

- (h) An Ambition for North Tyneside Update

<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1477/8%20An%20Ambition%20for%20North%20Tyneside%20Update.pdf>

- (i) Ten Year Plan for Waste
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1482/2%2010%20Year%20plan%20for%20Waste.pdf>
- (j) Climate Emergency Update
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1484/Climate%20Emergency%20Update.pdf>
- (k) North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2021
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s1188/Homelessness%20Prevention%20Strategy%202019%20-2021.pdf>
- (l) A Digital Strategy for North Tyneside
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s2638/A%20Digital%20Strategy%20for%20North%20Tyneside.pdf>
- (m) North Tyneside Trading Company - Strategic Business Plan 2020-2023
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s3893/North%20Tyneside%20Trading%20Company%20-%20Strategic%20Business%20Plan%202020-23.pdf>
- (n) North Tyneside Transport Strategy Annual Report
<https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s805/North%20Tyneside%20Transport%20Strategy%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

CIPFA Resilience Index Indicators & Interpretation

Indicator	Description	Relationship to risk and interpretation
Reserves Burn Rate	This indicator is the ratio between the current level of reserves and the average change in reserves in each of the past three years. A negative value (which implies reserves have increased) or one greater than 100 is recoded to 100.	The indicator provides a measure of how long (in years) it will take for a council to completely denude its reserves, if they continue to use reserves at the same rate as in the previous three years. A low value suggests that there is a risk that the authority will run out of reserves. A high value says, that on current trends, they are unlikely to deplete their reserves.
Level of Reserves	This is the ratio of the current level of reserves (total useable excluding public health & schools) to the council's net revenue expenditure. We have set the figure at 100% for a small number of district councils to remove the impact of extreme outliers.	A low level of reserves may indicate that a council has low capacity to cope with financial shocks. It will also face a risk should expenditure exceed income.
Change in Reserves	This indicator shows the average percentage change in reserves (total useable excluding public health and schools) over the past three years	A council that is using up its reserves may be at risk if they do not move to a more balanced budget.
Unallocated Reserves	This indicator is calculated as the ratio of unallocated reserves to net revenue expenditure	This indicator provides some further information on the reserves indicator. A low level of unallocated reserves may be a sign that a council will struggle with financial shocks.
Earmarked Reserves	This indicator is calculated as the ratio of earmarked reserves (excluding public health and schools) to net revenue expenditure	This indicator provides some further information on the reserves indicator. A low level of earmarked reserves could mean that a council will struggle with financial shocks or that they have not planned effectively for their use of reserves.
Change in Unallocated Reserves	This indicator is the average percentage change in unallocated reserves over the past three years	This indicator provides some further information on the reserves indicator. A council that is using up its reserves may be at risk if they do not move to a more balanced budget.

Appendix A

Indicator	Description	Relationship to risk and interpretation
Change in Earmarked Reserves	This indicator is the average percentage change in unallocated reserves over the past three years	This indicator provides some further information on the reserves indicator. A council that is using up its reserves may be at risk if they do not move to a balanced budget.
Social Care & Interest payments ratio	This indicator is the ratio of total spending on adults' social care, children's social care and debt interest to net revenue expenditure.	This indicator provides a measure of the degree of flexibility within a council's budget. Spending on these items is less likely to be reduced compared to other categories. A high ratio suggests that the council has little flexibility to make further savings, potentially leading to risk
Children's Social Care Ratio	This indicator is the ratio of spending on children's social care to net revenue expenditure	This indicator provides a breakdown of the total ratio to allow councils to understand their relative position for this component
Adult Social Care Ratio	This indicator is the ratio of spending on adult social care to net revenue expenditure	This indicator provides a breakdown of the total ratio to allow councils to understand their relative position for this component
Grants to Expenditure Ratio	This indicator shows the proportion of net revenue expenditure funded by central government grants.	Grants are a diminishing source of funding. However, a relatively high level of grants may suggest that a council may experience financial difficulties in the future as grants continue to be a declining source of income.
Council Tax Requirement / Net Expenditure	This indicator shows the ratio of council tax as a proportion of net expenditure	As locally raised council tax becomes more important, a lower ratio may be associated with difficulties in raising the income necessary to support spending.
Retained Income from business Rates/ Net Expenditure	This indicator shows the ratio of retained income from business rates as a proportion of net expenditure	As locally raised business rates become more important, a lower ratio may be associated with difficulties in raising the income necessary to support spending.
Children's Social Care Judgement	This indicator shows the latest OFSTED judgement on the quality of children's social care	A rating of inadequate or requires improvement may be associated with future higher spending on children's social care adding to council funding pressures
Auditors VfM Assessment	This indicator shows whether auditors have produce a non-standard conclusion on a council's accounts	A non-standard judgement may indicate some concern over the financial management and decisions within a council.

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2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget Process

Timetable of Key Milestones for 2022/23

Date / Meeting	Detail
2 August 2021 Cabinet	Cabinet approves the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process, incorporating the associated Engagement Strategy.
29 November 2021 Cabinet	Cabinet considers its 2022-2026 initial Budget proposals in relation to General Fund, Schools, Housing Revenue Account & Investment Plan for 2022-2026.
30 November 2021	Notice of Objection process for the 2022/23 Budget commences.
30 November 2021	Budget and Council Plan engagement process begins. Ends in January 2022.
December 2021 Scrutiny Process	Scrutiny of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget process.
Mid December 2021	Estimated timing of the 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.
17 January 2022 Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee	Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee considers the results of its review of the 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget and Council Plan process.
24 January 2022 Cabinet	2022/23 Council Tax Base agreed by Cabinet
31 January 2022 Cabinet	Cabinet approves the final proposals in relation to the 2022/23 Housing Revenue Account budget and associated Business Plan, including an assessment in relation to the current year's budget monitoring information (2021/22). In addition, Cabinet will agree the Annual Housing Rent policy for 2022/23.
31 January 2022 Cabinet	Cabinet considers its Budget proposals for 2022-2026 in relation to General Fund Revenue, Schools & Investment Plan for 2022-2026, taking into account feedback received as part of Budget Engagement and any recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.

Appendix B

Date / Meeting	Detail
1 February 2022 Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee	Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee/Budget Study Group as appropriate considers Cabinet's final Budget proposals.
7 February 2022 Cabinet	Cabinet meeting to consider any recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Budget Study Group following its review of the Cabinets 2022/23 Budget and Council Tax proposals.
15 February 2022	4pm deadline for responses to the Authority's Notice of Objection
17 February 2022 Council	Cabinet submits to the Council its estimates of amounts for the 2022-2026 Financial Plan and 2022/23 Budget & Council Tax levels.
21 February 2022 (if required) Cabinet	<p>Cabinet Meeting to consider any objections to Cabinet's Budget and Council Plan proposals.</p> <p>The Cabinet meeting on 21 February 2022 is now a scheduled meeting with other items of business and will proceed even where no objections are approved.</p>
1 March 2022 (if required) Council	Council meeting to agree the Budget for 2022/23, the Council Tax level for 2022/23 and the Investment Plan for 2022-2026

2022/23 Budget Engagement Strategy

North Tyneside Council is committed to being an organisation that works better for residents and to ensure that it listens and cares. This commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in the Financial Planning and Budget process.

The Authority's overall approach to engagement ensures that the public have opportunities to have their say throughout the year, through a series of different methods, including engaging with the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and ward members and through activities such as the Big Community Conversation. Due to the restrictions of the Covid Pandemic our face-to-face engagement has been limited but the Authority has increased the amount of online engagement which included the first ever virtual State of The Area event and interactive engagement regarding the North Shields Master Plan.

In all its engagement activity, the Authority is committed to ensuring that residents with protected characteristics, as set out in the 2010 Equality Act, can participate. In line with this an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the 2022/23 Budget Engagement Strategy and this is available on request.

In line with the proposed 2022-2026 Financial Planning and Budget Process as set out in Appendix B, engagement on Cabinet's initial budget proposals will take place from November 2021 to January 2022. The engagement approach is set out below.

Target Audiences

The aim of the Budget Engagement Strategy is to reach different sectors of the population through an approach that encompasses engagement with residents as a whole and customers/users of services as well as particular groups of people, including those with protected characteristics. The approach also ensures reach with particular interest groups such as carers, older people, children and young people and council housing tenants.

The Budget Engagement Strategy also ensures targeted activity with the following specific external and internal stakeholder groups:

External stakeholder groups

- North Tyneside Strategic Partnership
- Businesses
- Schools and education sector
- Voluntary and community sector (including faith groups)
- BAME Task Force

Internal stakeholder groups:

- Elected Members
- Staff

- Strategic Partners (Engie and Capita)
- Trade Unions

Approach

The Authority's approach aims for maximum reach by offering a range of different opportunities for people to have their say. In line with the Authority's corporate engagement strategy the approach will be consistent with the following principles

- Inclusive - making sure that everyone can engage in the process
- Clear - being clear on the aims of the engagement activity at the outset and the extent to which residents and others can be involved
- Integrated - ensuring that engagement activities are joined up with the relevant decision-making processes
- Tailored - aiming to better understand our audience and using different methods appropriately to enable and encourage people to be involved
- Feedback - giving feedback through agreed channels when engagement activity is completed
- Timely - aiming to give enough notice to make opportunities available to all and taking into account those times when it is more appropriate to engage depending on the target audience.

Budget engagement activity for the 2022/23 budget will be in line with any Government advice relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic and comprise of

- providing clear information about the Financial Planning and Budget process in the Autumn edition of the Our North Tyneside magazine. This will include information about this engagement strategy and how people can have their say throughout the process including how to join the Residents Panel to do so.
- in November 2021, publishing information about Cabinet's initial budget proposals. This will be published online via the Council's website and at front line locations including the Community Conversation Corners in the four Customer First centres, where these are available. Feedback will be able to be provided by residents and others via a questionnaire either on-line or at these front-line locations. This will be supported by communications activity via posters in our Leisure Centres and Libraries, the media and social media to ensure that people know they can get involved in this way.

- there will also be opportunities for face-to-face engagement with lead officers and Cabinet members during November/December 2021. Building on our engagement last year these face-to-face sessions will comprise, where possible.
- two in-depth sessions with the Residents Panel (which any resident can join). These sessions will provide people with the opportunity to gain an understanding of the Council's budget and to be able to appraise in detail the initial budget proposals and then provide feedback and
- engagement sessions for the following internal and external stakeholder groups
 - staff
 - businesses
 - schools
 - children and young people
 - community and voluntary sector
 - Trade Unions,
 - North Tyneside Strategic Partnership
 - older people
 - carers
 - BAME Task Force
 - groups representing people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

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North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: Ambition for Education – Update

Portfolio:	Children, Young People and Learning	Cabinet Member:	Councillor Peter Earley Councillor Martin Rankin
Report from Service Area:	Health, Education and Safeguarding		
Responsible Officers:	Jacqui Old, Director of Children and Adults		Tel: 0191 643 7317
	Mark Longstaff, Director of Commissioning and Asset Management		Tel: 0191 643 8089
	Janice Gillespie, Director of Resources		Tel: 0191 643 5701
Wards affected:	All		

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

North Tyneside has an education system to be proud of. A strong performer regionally and nationally, this reflects the hard work of Head Teachers and their teams, governing bodies, Elected Members, Authority staff and the fantastic children and young people.

The Authority believes that education is the catalyst for social mobility and the mitigation of deprivation; championing the learner continues to sit at the heart of the Authority's decision making.

As schools continue to remain at the centre of government's response to the global pandemic, it has cemented the need to build on the Authority's partnerships to transform lives, uncap the potential of children and young people, and mitigate against the longer-term impact of COVID-19. In difficult times schools across the Borough have remained open and offered continuous support to children, young people and the wider communities they serve.

Despite the challenges that COVID has brought, officers continue to work with schools to tackle the priorities within the Ambition for Education document to improve outcomes for all pupils

Notwithstanding the above the purpose of this report is to outline the key strategic challenges currently facing the education system in North Tyneside, the work already underway and the further work required to tackle these challenges in partnership with educational leaders.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

(1) note the key strategic challenges facing the education system and the work done to date.

(2) agree that the following work is progressed in relation to each challenge:

a) Financial sustainability of Schools in particular Secondary Provision

In working with both Monkseaton High, Norham and other stakeholders:

- carry out option appraisals to address the structural deficit issues,
- enter pre-publication engagement and consultation, and
- bring forward proposals to achieve educational and financial sustainability at both schools.

b) Increasing demand in relation to Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and associated resource pressures.

- progress the work within the eight Action plan themes identified within the High Needs recovery plan.

c) Post 16 provision across the borough:

- establish a 'post 16 Charter and information Hub for North Tyneside
- secure appointment of a dedicated officer post to promote schools and business/Industry partnership arrangements
- strengthen the depth and consistency of careers education across all North Tyneside Schools
- strengthen SEND Post 16 pathways across North Tyneside

d) Impact of Local Plan proposals on School Places and the need to further review catchment areas.

- refresh the Educational Impact Assessment as part of review of Local Plan
- review assumption made in 2016 against actual pupil numbers as well as forecasting future demands
- further review catchment area arrangements.

(3) agree to establish a project team and steering group to support and progress the work required.

(4) agree to receive further reports as required.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 19 August 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following themes in the Authority's updated Our North Tyneside Plan 2020-2024:

- A family friendly North Tyneside
- A thriving North Tyneside
- A caring North Tyneside

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

Over time, North Tyneside has established and sustained an Education system to be proud of, but the Authority is not complacent.

Historically, schools and colleges in the Borough have performed well in public examinations and against inspection frameworks with 91% judged to be good or better by Ofsted, but the Authority also recognises that for disadvantaged pupils there is more to do. At the end of the academic year 2019, performance data showed that despite pupils' overall outcomes comparing favourably with national outcomes, those of disadvantaged pupils continue to lag those of their non-disadvantaged peers and remain stubbornly below the national average. The picture is compounded further for those pupils identified as long-term disadvantaged for whom the gap between them and their peers is stark.

Indeed, gaps in disadvantaged pupils' attainment widen as they move through the education system. The Authority is still to capture the full impact of extended school closure on the learning and achievement of children and young people. The abandonment of public examinations in 2020 and 2021 means the longer-term impact of COVID-19 will only begin to be seen in 2022 and beyond. This remains a continuing priority for the Authority.

Despite the many difficulties for pupils in Y11 and Y13 in 2019/2020, most of the Authority's young people accessed their first-choice destination, and the proportion of pupils deemed as not in education employment or training (NEET) remained in line with national figures at 2.6% (national 2.4%). The same is true for 2020/2021, where despite the many setbacks and repeated disruption in schools children and young people secured qualifications enabling them to take the next steps into education, employment or training. This is testimony to the determination of both school staff and Authority Officers and their work with young people.

Central to the Authority's ambition for education is a desire to equip all students with the knowledge, skills and resilience needed to contribute to an unknown future and the world of work which may not be fully understood.

As well as the updated Council Plan Policy Framework recent key strategic documents have also been developed and approved in recent months

- Children and Young People Plan 2021-2025
- Ambition for Education Strategy in North Tyneside 2020-2024
- Joint School improvement Strategy
- North of Tyne Education Challenge
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Strategy

*'Making North Tyneside an even greater place for children and young people to thrive; where all can access a high-class education with a culture of inclusion and achievement.'*¹

Our 'Ambition for Education in North Tyneside' document sets out the priorities and targets for education from 2020 to 2024. It builds on the vision provided by 'Our North Tyneside Plan' and the 'Children's and Young People's Plan'. Our targets align with the 'North of Tyne Education Challenge' and 'Joint School Improvement Strategy' together with the SEND Inclusion Strategy.

The body of this report covers the following areas:

a) A recap and update on the work associated with the Education Review

b) Key Strategic Challenges facing Education provision in the borough:

1. Financial Sustainability of Schools in particular Secondary Education
2. Increasing demands in relation to Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) and associated resource pressures
3. Post 16 provision across the borough
4. Impact of Local Plan proposals on School Places and need to review catchment areas.

1.5.2 What matters most to children, young people, their families and carers

Before discussing the policy and technical matters, Cabinet will wish to be assured the absolute focus of everyone involved is what matters most to children, young people, their families and carers. In particular:

1.5.2.1 Attainment and Progress

The following provides some headline information around pupils' achievement last captured in 2019 and which will provide a baseline against which the Authority can begin to measure the impact of COVID:

- 72% of children reached a Good Level of Development at the end of the Reception year in 2019, improved by 49% since 2013 and in line with national average (71.5%).
- 83% of pupils in year 1 reached the threshold score in the phonics test. This is in line with the national figure.
- At Key Stage 1 across reading, writing, maths and the combined measure, North Tyneside has performed significantly better than the national figure at both the expected level and at the higher, greater depth standard.
- 67% of pupils achieved at least the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics (combined) at key stage 2. This is 2% above the national figure although a one percentage point decrease from 2018. However, at the expected

standard at key stage 2 the local authority performance is significantly above the national level.

- At key stage 4 attainment in 2019 is lower than the national average: 64.1% of students achieved 4 or above in English and maths compared to the national average of 64.9%.
- Attainment 8 (the attainment of students across 8 qualifications) is 45.9 points which is below the national average of 46.8 points.
- 22% of pupils in North Tyneside achieved the English Baccalaureate in 2019; this is below the national average (all schools 25%). The Government’s ambition, however, is for 75% of pupils to achieve the English Baccalaureate.
- At key stage 5:
 - The point score per academic entry is 33.5 which is above the England state-funded schools but below all schools and colleges. When expressed as a grade this is grade C+.
 - The average point score per vocational entry is 31.86 (distinction-). This is well-above the national average of 28.9 points (merit+).
- 91.9% of children go to a good or outstanding school. The National percentage of pupils in good or outstanding schools is 85%.
- 92% of parents and carers received their first choice Primary School compared to 90% nationally.
- 89% of parents and carers received their first choice Secondary School compared to 82% nationally.

1.5.3 A further update on the work associated with the Education Review

Work on supporting the Education system in the borough is a continuous process and before embarking on the next set of challenges it is worth reflecting on progress made and on some of the recommendations identified in the Education Review carried out in North Tyneside between 14 October 2013 and the 12 January 2015.

Area Updates – North West

Work identified	Progress Update
Rebuild Backworth Primary	Completed
Rebuild Longbenton College	Completed
• Work with Governing Body to tackle Deficit	Completed
• Deliver / Support New Leadership	Completed
Provide support to Seaton Burn College, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary / Primary Relationships • Brokering Business Relations • Support to Governing Body 	All completed Subsequent Academy Sponsor (North Gosforth)

Area Updates – North East

Work identified	Progress Update
Facilitate work with Head Teachers and Governing Bodies across a group of schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a 3-tier system whilst managing places, raising standards and controlling costs • Create stronger federation to share costs/resources 	Completed Work continues

Area Updates – South West

Work identified	Progress Update
Greater partnership with Secondary Schools in the Locality & Tyne Met College	Completed
Broker support from Churchill to Norham on Leadership arrangements	Completed

Area Updates- South East

Work identified	Progress Update
Rebuild Whitehouse Primary School	Completed
Rebuild Marden High School	Completed
Rebuild John Spence High School	Completed
Broker and provide support to Norham High School: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Partnership arrangements with Churchill Community College & Tyne Met College. • Broker stronger Secondary/Primary relationship • Invest in School Building- Norham 	All Completed
Significant refurbishment of Cullercoats Primary	Completed

1.5.4 Key Strategic Challenges Facing Education provision in the Borough

1.5.4.1 Financial Sustainability of Schools in particular Secondary Provision

a) Current Position- Challenge

Cabinet will be aware that school funding is a matter for the Department for Education; either by direct funding agreements with Academy Sponsors or delegated by local authorities to schools where budget management is the delegated responsibility of each Governing Body.

Governing Bodies, Head Teachers and their teams, the members of the Schools Forum and the Officer team have continued to work hard to handle the financial challenges. At the end of the financial year 2020/21 the position was: -

- The overall level of School Balances at the end of March 2021 was £3.721m compared to £0.165m as of March 2020. An improvement of £3.556m. This position is significantly better than the forecast at the start of the year.
- The total initial deficit approval requested at the start of 2020/21 was £10.052m. The outturn position for those schools in deficit was £9.289m which was an improvement of £0.763m from initial forecasts; and

- Of the eleven schools who requested deficit approval in 2019/20 four schools have reported an improved forecast position for the 2020/21 financial year and are no longer in deficit.

Despite this improvement the emerging position for 2021/22 is one of continued financial challenge for a number of schools, both in terms of deficit approvals and reduced surplus balances held by schools.

In 2021/22, 6 Schools (3 Secondary, 2 Primary and 1 Special) have sought deficit approval to the value of £13.580m.

It is important to note that this position is based on two sets of issues. In the first instance, the pressure in some parts of the Secondary School system is a direct consequence of the current surplus capacity. This has dropped from the peak of 20% explained during the Education Review to 15%, and is expected to reduce further, to less than 12%, by 2022/23.

It is also the case, as a consequence of parental choice, settlement patterns and individual school choices, that surplus is concentrated in three Secondary Schools and specifically causes the challenges at Norham High School and Monkseaton High School.

Norham High School

- The school continues to be judged as 'Inadequate' and an academy order from 2015 remains in place. Attempts to find an academy sponsor were unsuccessful due to concerns raised around the financial viability and longer-term sustainability of the school.
- The appointment of a new headteacher in September 2019 has seen a change in fortune with an interim monitoring visit in December 2019 indicating effective action is being taken to remove special measures. A further two Ofsted remote monitoring visits during the academic year 2020/2021 were equally positive. Such efforts are seeing increases in the proportion of parents identifying Norham as their school of first choice. In September 2020, only twenty-six pupils did so, this has almost doubled to 46 for September 2021, but remains well below the school's Published Admission Number (PAN). The school awaits a full Ofsted inspection when it is hoped the inadequate judgement will be removed.
- Local Authority officers continue to work productively with school leaders and Governors to remove the special measures. All departments have improved the quality of their schemes of work and there is now a whole school approach to developing pupils' literacy skills. Behaviour has improved considerably and respect in the school is restored.
- The financial position for Norham High school continues to be challenging, as the Governing Body are managing a structural deficit.
- The 3-year budget plan submitted by the school May 2021 showed that the overall deficit position is projected to be £3.969m in 2021/22.
- The headteacher has completed a staffing restructure and implemented a faculties model of leadership to take effect from September 2021. Thus, significantly

reducing the staffing costs for the school. This should bring about an in year balanced budget for 2022/23.

Monkseaton High School

- The financial position for Monkseaton High school continues to be challenging, whilst the Governing Body are managing a considerable structural deficit. The 3-year budget plan submitted by the school in May 2021 showed that the overall deficit position is projected to be in the region of £6.925m by 2023/24, rising by around £0.880m per year.
- Whilst officers are working with the School to manage the financial position Governors remain unable to bring about an in-year balanced budget.
- An independent review of the school's financial position indicated that the sixth form was not financially viable given its current occupancy. However, because the school sits within the three-tier system any reduction in age range would compromise the wider educational viability of the school.
- Surplus capacity within the school is proving the most challenging aspect of setting an in year balanced budget due to significant under occupancy as a result of parental choice. Based on current pupil projections the surplus capacity at Monkseaton High school for the next 3 years is estimated to be around 60%.
- Leaders have made some attempts to reduce staffing costs at the schools, although too much of the school's budget continues to be spent on staffing.

b) Work done

There has been a significant amount of work done over a long period of time in support of all schools in managing financial challenges and in particular these two Secondary Schools. Work has included:

- Quality Assurance mechanisms have improved. Through work undertaken with colleagues from School's Forum a renewed 'Schools in financial difficulty support and challenge framework' has been implemented. This has reduced the time afforded to schools to bring about balanced budgets. Schools must now show how they can achieve balanced budgets and repay deficits within three years.
- Improved financial planning tools and use of deficit clinics is enabling schools to better identify financial pressures and begin to take action to reduce pressures earlier
- Independent financial reviews of both Norham and Monkseaton High Schools have been completed. Both schools have received detailed reports on curriculum and staffing expenditure matched against national benchmarking data.
- An officer group continues to work with both Norham and Monkseaton High School to explore options available to leaders to bring about financial improvements.

c) Work to do.

In working with the schools identified above and other stakeholders, develop and consider options to address structural deficit issue at the Schools and bring forward proposals to achieve educational and financial sustainability at both.

For full detailed analysis of Schools (DSG) finance see Appendix 1

1.5.4.2 Increasing demands in relation to Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

a) Current Position- Challenge

National Context

The Local Government Association (LGA) Education Funding Report (June 2019) highlighted the significant national increase since 2014 in the number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and the proportion educated in special schools. Local authorities continue to be concerned about the level of High Needs funding to meet this increasing need.

SEND in North Tyneside

North Tyneside, like many local authorities both regionally and nationally, is experiencing an increase in the number of children with SEND. There has been a notable increase locally in the number of children with: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties; and profound Multiple Learning Difficulties (MLD).

The following provides an overview pertaining to the presentation of SEND in North Tyneside and the subsequent financial position of the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant:

- Just under 5,000 children and young people in North Tyneside schools have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), with 3,792 (12% of the overall school-age population) supported through a SEN Support Plan and 1,827 (3.6%) with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This is high when compared to national averages.
- For children and young people with an EHCP, the Authority has seen a 32% increase between January 2019 and January 2020. Again, this is high when compared to national averages. The Authority also place a higher proportion of our children and young people in specialist provisions than is seen nationally.
- The most prevalent need recorded by schools for SEND pupils in North Tyneside is Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), at 30%, which is higher than the national average. This is followed by Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). The Authority is aware that the proportion of different primary needs is changing over time.
- Due to several factors, as set out below, the current high needs funding deficit in North Tyneside is circa £9m and this is forecast to increase to £12.5m by the end of the financial year 2021/22.

- All councils with an overspend must submit a proposed budget recovery plan to the Department of Education (DfE) North Tyneside submitted their recovery plan to the ESFA on 13th August 2021.

The main reasons for the overspend are rising needs and pressures on budgets, attributed to:

- An increase in the number of children and young people with SEND and Educational, Health, Care Plans (EHCPs). EHCPs identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support required in order to meet those needs. In North Tyneside, as of the end of April 2021, there are 1,919 children and young people with an EHCP, an increase of 74% since January 2018. As of the January 2021 school census, there were 3,735 pupils in our schools have an SEN support plan, an increase of 15% since January 2018.
- A national extension in the length a young person can have an EHCP, increased from 18 to 25-years-old, with no extra funding to support this
- Additional children and young people within specialist provision and not enough places in special schools
- Increase in the number of 'out of borough' placements, which cost the authority more
- The way funding is allocated to the local authority, meaning limited flexibility to transfer money from one area to another. Previously the Authority had flexibility to determine how much money was allocated to different provision, but now there are four blocks of funding ringfenced to schools, high needs, central school services and early years. The Authority needs the permission of the schools' forum to move the funding around and this is limited to 0.5%.
- A large proportion of the funding allocated by DfE for high needs is based on historical spending patterns
- The cost of funding the support for those with special educational needs and disabilities is not fixed. This is a demand-led service where costs can and do change considerably depending on the specific needs of the individual.

b) Work done

Significant work has been progressed in relation to the current pressures in provision for Children and Young People with SEND. The most significant piece of work has focussed around developing a recovery plan, which has been discussed with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

The recovery plan identifies several Action Plan Themes, they are:

- **Theme One:** Improved graduated approach to support more young people to have a success in their local school
- **Theme Two:** Review of commissioned services with a focus on maintaining young people in their local school

- **Theme Three:** Annual reviews are focussed, timely and include a lens of 'value for money'
- **Theme Four:** The banding and mechanisms used to fund schools are brought in line with graduation aspirations
- **Theme Five:** More effective place planning and projection is used to ensure sufficient resource
- **Theme Six:** ARP (Additional Resourced Provision) Review of commissioned places in mainstream schools
- **Theme Seven:** Use of SEND capital increase capacity at in-borough schools
- **Theme Eight:** Seek Schools Forum approval of a percentage transfer from the school's block to the high needs block for 2022-23

c) Work to do

- To progress the associated actions identified within the action plan themes identified above.

1.5.4.3 Post 16 provision across the borough

a) Current Position

In light of the pressures from COVID-19 and following the re-location of Queen Alexandra sixth form college from their North Shields campus to the Tyne Met campus at Wallsend, Lead Members and the Authority sought this opportunity to review the provision for Post 16 students across the borough.

The overriding ambition within this review, was to ensure that children and young people have access to the best Post 16 provision that is based on the following proposed principles:

- All students, including those who are disadvantaged and with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can access well considered curriculum that are responsive to their needs and interests and those of employers;
- All students, no matter what their need are in receipt of high-quality teaching and learning experiences that build students' knowledge and skills progressively and prepare them well for the next steps in their education, employment or training;
- Students have flexibility and inclusivity of choice, with access to a broad range of academic, vocational and/or technical pathways; and
- There is longer term sustainability and suitability of any Post 16 offer.

b) Work done - The Review Process

It was agreed that an external independent consultant was required to undertake this review to ensure it was completed with impartiality and objectivity, an ex Her Majesties Inspector of schools, agreed to undertake the review.

All schools across North Tyneside were fully involved in the process of review. At a time when school leaders were managing considerable disruption and several extended periods of closure, their shared commitment to this review and their positive contributions were commendable.

Their desire for the Local Authority to provide strategic guidance as a result of this review is equally keen.

Using a series of questions as a basis for discussion with school and college leaders, the following actions were undertaken:

- There were Teams conversations with all Secondary headteachers.
- Headteachers of all special schools, including the Pupil Referral Unit, received individual online conversation using a similar set of questions.
- There were online conversations with the principals of the three local further education colleges.
- Towards the end of this consultation phase, briefer follow up calls to school and FE leaders were made updating them on the developing themes and findings.
- Online meetings were held with groups of First, Primary and Middle school head teachers to outline the scope of the review and seek leaders' views.

In addition, to those held with school leaders, further meetings were held as follows:

- Online conversations with a wide range of senior and specialist officers of the Borough. These included SEND and participation leads.
- Online conversations with a cross-section of employers and training providers, from across the Borough, including: the Northumbria NHS Trust, North Tyneside Business Forum, Cobalt Park, Gorilla Training, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and North Tyneside Enterprise
- Online conversations with colleagues from the North Tyneside Learning Trust, Connexions and North of Tyne.
- Extensive conversations with the expert Borough data/participation team in the development and implementation of a suite of student and parent/carers surveys. The surveys were followed up by conversations with targeted groups of students and parent/carers.
- Conversations with a senior officer of the Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
- Conversations with a sample of key stage 4 students from three secondary schools. As well as a conversation with young people leaving care.
- An online questionnaire was sent to all Borough schools with students in key stages 3,4 and 5.

c) Work to do

After detailed evaluation and analysis of the findings there are four main proposed recommendations emerging from this review.

- The establishment of a 'Post 16 Charter' and Information Hub for North Tyneside.
- A dedicated officer post to promote schools and business/industry partnership
- Strengthening the depth and consistency of careers education across all North Tyneside schools.
- Strengthening SEND pathways across North Tyneside.

1.5.4.4 Review of Educational Impact Assessment of Local Plan proposals on School Places and Catchment areas.

a) Current Position/Work Done

In April 2016 the Council undertook an Assessment to consider the impact on education as a result of creating over 17,000 new homes in the borough 2017 – 2032.

The Authority took into consideration the following:

- The overall population growth projection for North Tyneside
- Existing School locations and capacities (physical capacities)
- Known planned alterations or extensions to existing school capacities or locations
- Existing and proposed pupil numbers based upon the Council's adopted Pupil Placement Projection Model Methodology
- The identified development phasing for Local Plan development sites
- The potential growth in pupils numbers by each primary and secondary school catchment area.

At the point of assessment, the detailed work suggested the need for two additional Primary Schools and an additional Secondary School over the period of the Local Plan to 2032 to accommodate the forecast increase in pupil numbers.

b) Work to do

- Further work is required to refresh the Educational Impact Assessment as part of the review of the Local Plan.
- In particular reviewing the assumptions made in 2016 and update against actuals over that period as well as forecasting future demands within the pupil projection model.

- As part of this review consider further and future options to review Catchment area arrangements.

1.5.5 Establishing a Project Team

The challenges identified above which are significant in their own right are linked and any proposed changes in any one of the parts of the jigsaw could have a consequential impact on the other key areas.

Therefore, in taking this work forward it is proposed to establish a core team officer to progress this work consider options for change and/or improvements. The work of this team will be overseen by the Education Review Steering Group.

Subject to agreement the proposal would be to establish the Team from the 1st October 2021 and for the team to be in place for up to two years to support the work required and any proposals and decisions made. The funding to support the Team will be in the first instance drawn from the change reserve.

1.5.6 Establishing a Steering Group

Given the importance of the work identified it is proposed to establish formal governance arrangements to oversee progress. It is proposed that the Steering Group (Project Board) will be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Children Young People & Learning and include Directors and Senior Officers of the Authority as well as other key Stakeholders such as Headteachers and Trade Unions colleagues.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Accept the recommendations outlined in section 1.2 of this report.

Option 2

Not to accept the recommendations outlined in section 1.2 of the report.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

It reflects the priorities agreed by the Elected Mayor, Cabinet Member, Head Teachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Schools Finance Overview

1.9 Contact officers:

Jacqui Old, Director of Children and Adult Services, tel. 0191 643 7006

Mark Longstaff, Director of Commissioning and Asset Management, tel. 0191 643 8089

Janice Gillespie, Director of Resources, tel. 0191 643 8109

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [Review of Secondary School Provision Cabinet Report 14th October 2013](#)
- (2) [Education Review Cabinet Report 8th September 2014](#)
- (3) [Education Review – Feedback from Prepublication Cabinet Report 10th November 2014](#)
- (4) [Education Review – Feedback from Publication Consultation 12th January 2015](#)
- (5) [Education Review – Feedback from Publication Consultation Supplementary Report 12th January 2015](#)
- (6) [Education Review Update Report 13th July 2015](#)
- (7) [Education Review Cabinet Report 11th July 2016](#)
- (8) [Education for North Tyneside Cabinet Report 10th July 2017](#)
- (9) [Education for North Tyneside Cabinet Report 30th July 2018](#)
- (10) [LGA Education Funding Report, House of Commons, 4 June 2019](#)
- (11) [Education for North Tyneside Cabinet Report 29th July 2019](#)
- (12) Education Policy Institute – School Funding Review
- (13) [Ambition for Education Cabinet Report 25th January 2021](#)
- (14) [Ambition for Education Strategy 2020 - 2024](#)
- (15) [SEND Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2024](#)
- (16) Long Term Disadvantaged Report
- (17) Post 16 Review Report

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

As mentioned in section.1.5.5 there is a need to establish a core project team to deliver the planned work described throughout this report. Funding will be made available to support this from the Authority's change reserve. The position will be reviewed accordingly at the end of the initial period and any continued support required to be considered within future Cabinet reports.

Schools continue to face financial challenges and the Authority is working with them to deal with those challenges. The Dedicated Schools Grant is ring fenced grant that reflects overall School financial position deficits as well as the financial position of the High Needs Block. Any future proposals as a result of national policy or local decisions that have financial implications will be brought to Cabinet as appropriate

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

- Discussions have been held with the Elected Mayor and Cabinet Members and with the senior team leading services for our schools.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

- Discussion with all Head Teachers – Headteacher Briefings
- Discussion with Headteacher representative Groups:
 1. Education Improvement Partnership (Secondary Headteachers)
 2. Primary Learning Partnership (Primary Headteachers)
 3. Special Headteachers and Officers Group
- Consultation with Schools Forum –
- Briefings and Reports to Schools Forum
- Post 16 dialogue with key stakeholders:
 1. Young People
 2. Headteachers all phases
 3. Local Colleges including CEO & principal of Tyne Met
- SEND discussion with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- SEND discussions with Strategic Partners

2.4 Human rights

This report has been prepared having regard to Article 2 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998 and a person's right to have an effective education.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

Inherent within the principles of working for the Authority's Ambition for Education is a commitment to work with school colleagues to close the gaps in educational attainment and progress, between the most vulnerable pupils and their peers. Any proposed changes will be reported back through Cabinet and will undergo Equality Impact

Assessments where a potential impact on people with protected characteristics is possible.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk issues arising directly from this report

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X

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Schools Finance Overview

Schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant and operate to delegated budgets, which are the responsibility of individual school governing bodies. Where a school wishes to set a deficit budget (where its expenditure exceeds its income in year) it can only do so in accordance with the Education Skills and Funding Agency guidance and the Scheme of Financing for Schools and with the permission of the Authority's S151 Officer.

School budgets have come under increased pressure in recent years, because of the cumulative effect of cash-flat DSG funding and changes (restrictions) placed on the Authority through formula funding regulations, which has made funding for mainstream schools more sensitive to changes in pupil numbers, and has reduced the scope of local authorities to use its funding formulas to target funding to schools that are struggling financially.

Cabinet will be aware that, under legislation, schools retain a high degree of autonomy when setting budgets unless they are in a deficit position. Therefore, whilst Elected Members and officers are able to advise schools on the adequacy of balances, the Authority does not have the power to intervene.

Since April 2013 schools have had the powers to accept pupil numbers above their Pupil Admission Number, prior to this the Authority (through the Schools Admissions Team) used to cap the admission numbers to an individual school which helped to manage demand across schools. In addition, from April 2015 schools that had a poor Ofsted judgement were required to become sponsored academies, although ultimately a sponsor needs to be confident in a school's future financial outlook before it will engage as a sponsor.

Often schools with poor educational outcomes can struggle financially due to lower numbers on roll, which, if accentuated by a poor Ofsted judgement, accelerates the reduction in pupil numbers being admitted as parents choose to send their children to other schools. Setting a licenced deficit is a particular concern and risk for the Authority, because schools that have a poor Ofsted judgement are required to become sponsored academies. Where a school obtains an Academy sponsor, any deficit balance that they are carrying becomes a cost to the local authority and is not transferred to the sponsor. The Department for Education's view is that local authorities should take responsibility for allowing schools to have a deficit balance.

These issues create increased risk of schools having financial difficulties and there is therefore a need for intensive monitoring of school budgets to identify schools that may be heading into financial difficulty, or which are in danger of failing an Ofsted inspection.

Previous reports to Cabinet have outlined the significant financial difficulties being experienced by a number of schools in North Tyneside as a result of real terms reductions in schools funding, reductions in admission numbers and to a lesser extent, school formula funding changes, which has necessitated approval for the setting of licensed deficits within some schools in previous years.

Schools can set a budget with an in-year deficit, providing that they have enough surplus retained balances (reserves) carried forward to do so without this resulting in the school having a deficit balance at the end of the financial year. Where a school cannot do this and therefore wishes to set a licensed deficit, it must have permission

from the S151 officer to do so.

The respective duties and responsibilities of schools and local authorities are determined by local schemes of delegation, prepared in line with statutory guidance. These schemes confirm the arrangements for delegation to governing bodies, but also give authorities powers to monitor school budgets and determine whether a school is allowed to set a licensed deficit. The scheme also sets out the procedure for dealing with schools causing concern, including the power to require schools to provide budget plans and, in extreme cases, to suspend financial delegation. Schemes also prohibit authorities from writing-off the deficits of schools with deficit balances, in order that authorities cannot favour one school over another by allowing one to overspend and write- off the deficit.

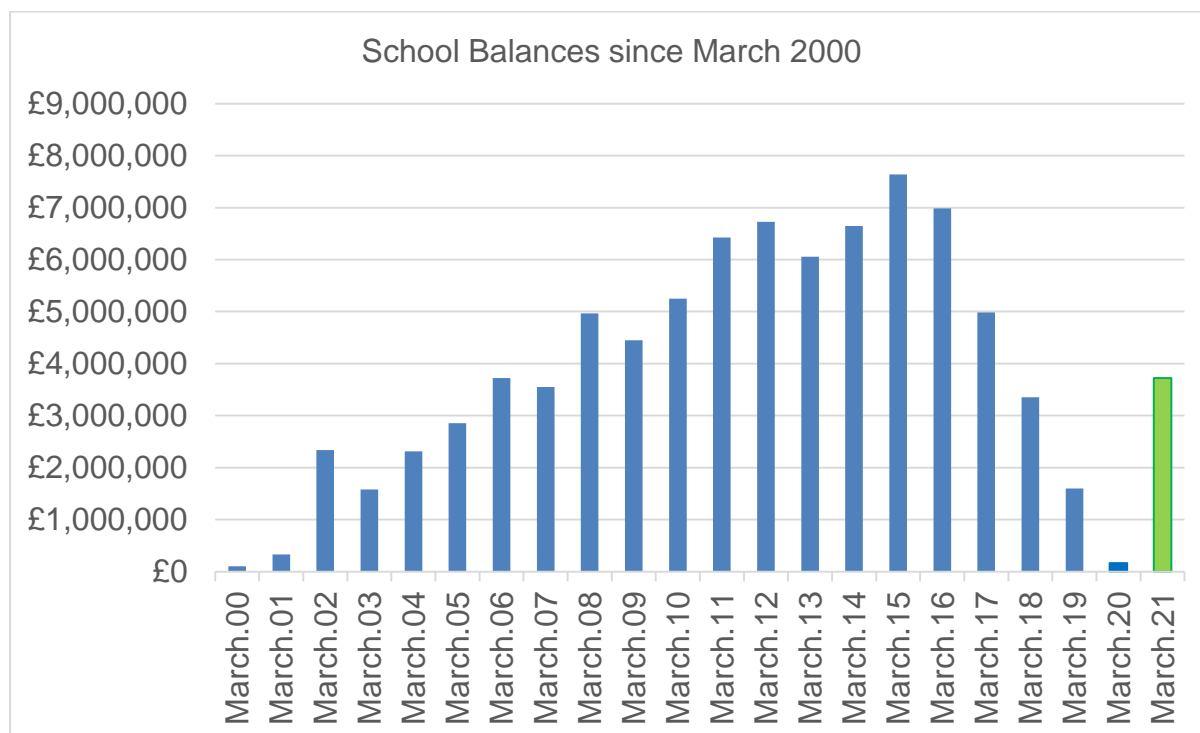
School Balances – Summary of reduction since 2015/16

Cabinet will be aware that schools' balances are monitored annually and movements in balances are reported in the Authority's Statement of Accounts, budget monitoring reports and are reported to Schools Forum. Net school balances at the end of the 2014/15 financial year were £7.615m, since then school balances have reduced by £3.894m and at the end of 2020/21 school balances were £3.721m. The reduction has been due to the level of deficit balances held by a minority of schools. Table 1 below shows the annual reduction in balances by school phase since 2015/16: -

Table 1 – Annual Movement in Balances 2015/16 – 2020/21

Phase	2015/16 Reduction in Balances £m	2016/17 Reduction in Balances £m	2017/18 Reduction in Balances £m	2018/19 Reduction in Balances £m	2019/20 Reduction in Balances £m	2020/21 Increase in Balances £m
Nursery / Primary	0.240	(0.299)	(0.668)	(0.518)	0.573	3.099
Middle / Secondary	(0.701)	(1.428)	(1.714)	(1.217)	(1.834)	0.548
Special / PRU	0.011	0.032	0.268	(0.022)	(0.173)	(0.092)
Total	(0.450)	(1.695)	(2.114)	(1.757)	(1.434)	3.555

The following chart shows the change in school balances over the last 21 years: -



Whilst schools' balances have fallen since 2014/15, it is important for Cabinet to note that the majority of schools in North Tyneside continue to set balanced in-year budgets and operate within the financial frameworks which govern schools' finance. Most schools continue to hold a level of reserves which allow them the flexibility to manage financial risks, or one-off in year financial requirements.

Table 2 below shows the breakdown between surplus and deficit school balances by phase held at the end of the 2020/21 financial year: -

Table 2: 2020/21 breakdown between surplus and deficit school balances by phase

Phase	2020/21 Surplus Balances £m	2020/21 Deficit Balances £m	2020/21 Net Balance £m
Nursery / Primary	7.766	(0.296)	7.470
Middle / Secondary	5.650	(10.214)	(4.564)
Special / PRU	1.058	(0.243)	0.815
Total	14.474	(10.753)	3.721

There are 74 maintained schools in North Tyneside including 6 special schools, 68 of those schools ended the 2020/21 financial year in surplus totalling £14.474m. There were 6 schools with a deficit balance at 2020/21 year end totalling £10.753m and these are shown in table 3 below:

Table 3: 2020/21 Year end deficit school balances

Phase	School	2020/21 Outturn £m
Nursery / Primary	Greenfields Primary	(0.131)
	Ivy Road Primary	(0.165)
Nursery / Primary Total		(0.296)
Middle / Secondary	Longbenton High	(2.334)
	Monkseaton High	(4.815)
	Norham High	(3.064)
Middle / Secondary Total		(10.213)
Special / PRU	Beacon Hill	(0.244)
Grand Total		(10.753)

At the year-end Greenfields Primary and Ivy Road Primary school remain in deficit in 2021/22 and have received a licenced deficit agreement. Marden Bridge Middle school did not require a licenced deficit agreement in 2021/22 and is no longer in deficit.

All of the secondary schools in deficit at year-end remain in deficit for 2021/22. Longbenton High school has submitted a 3-year Budget plan which shows the school having an in-year balance in year 2 of their plan (2022/23) with the potential to start replaying the deficit from 2023/24. Marden High school continues to make significant progress and no longer require a licenced deficit agreement in 2021/22.

Monkseaton High School

The financial position for Monkseaton High school continues to be challenging, whilst the Governing Body are managing a considerable structural deficit. The 3-year budget plan submitted by the school in May 2021 showed that the overall deficit position is projected to be in the region of £6.925m by 2023/24, rising by around £0.880m per year.

Whilst officers are working with the School to manage the financial position Governors remain unable to bring about an in-year balanced budget. An independent review of the school's financial position indicated that the sixth form was not financially viable given its current occupancy. However, because the school sits within the three-tier system any reduction in age range would compromise the wider educational viability of the school.

Surplus capacity within the school is proving the most challenging aspect of setting an in year balanced budget due to significant under occupancy as a result of parental choice. Based on current pupil projections the surplus capacity at Monkseaton High school for the next 3 years is estimated to be around 56%. Leaders have made some attempts to reduce staffing costs at the schools, although too much of the school's budget continues to be spent on staffing.

Table 4 below shows the schools current estimate of pupil numbers from 2021/22 to 2023/24, the overall capacity of the school and the estimated budget deficit.

Table 4: Pupil projections, Capacity and estimated Budget Deficit

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Pupil Projections	381	410	420
PAN	240	240	240
Capacity	955	955	955
% Surplus	60%	57%	56%
Budget Deficit	(5,688,966)	(6,390,337)	(6,925,472)

Norham High School

The academy order from 2015 remains in place and attempts to find an academy sponsor were unsuccessful due to concerns raised around the financial viability and longer-term future of the school. The school continues to be judged as 'Inadequate' and an academy order from 2015 remains in place. Attempts to find an academy sponsor were unsuccessful due to concerns raised around the financial viability and longer-term sustainability of the school.

The appointment of a new headteacher in September 2019 has seen a change in fortune with an interim monitoring visit in December 2019 indicating effective action is being taken to remove special measures. A further two Ofsted remote monitoring visits during the academic year 2020/2021 were equally positive. Such efforts are seeing increases in the proportion of parents identifying Norham as their school of first choice. In September 2020, only twenty-six pupils did so, this has almost doubled to 46 for September 2021, but remains well below the school's Published Admission Number (PAN). The school awaits a full Ofsted inspection when it is hoped the inadequate judgement will be removed.

Local Authority officers continue to work productively with school leaders and Governors to remove the special measures. All departments have improved the quality of their schemes of work and there is now a whole school approach to developing pupils' literacy skills. Behaviour has improved considerably and respect in the school is restored.

The financial position for Norham High school continues to be challenging, whilst the Governing Body are managing a structural deficit. The 3-year budget plan submitted by the school in June 2021 showed that the overall deficit position is projected to be in the region of £5,256m by 2023/24. The headteacher has completed a staffing restructure and implemented a faculties model of leadership to take effect from September 2021. Thus, significantly reducing the staffing costs for the school. This should bring about an in year balanced budget for 2022/23. Based on current pupil projections the surplus capacity at Norham High school for the next 3 years is estimated to be around 21%.

Table 5 below shows the schools current estimate of pupil numbers from 2021/22 to 2023/24, the overall capacity of the school and the estimated budget deficit.

Table 5: Pupil projections, Capacity and estimated Budget Deficit

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Pupil Projections	315	336	355
PAN	90	90	90
Capacity	450	450	450
% Surplus Capacity	30%	25%	21%
Budget Deficit	(3,969,410)	(4,676,248)	(5,255,962)

An in-depth financial review has been undertaken, and reports have been produced for Members and the Senior Leadership Team in relation to both schools. The Terms of Reference that were agreed between the Authority and the Governing Bodies of both schools were as follows:-

- 'Deep Dive' analysis on the financial position
 - Full understanding of the challenges that the school face;
 - Review of the leadership and staffing structure;
 - Integrated curriculum financial planning;
 - Benchmarking information against schools of a similar size;
 - Fully costed models for specific options in conjunction with the school;
 - Review of the schools Budget setting process;
 - Ofsted assessments;
 - School Development Plan;
 - Premises Improvement Plan;
 - Review of school organisation, staffing, departments, premises; and
 - Special Education Needs.

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: Bus Partnership

Portfolio: Deputy Mayor	Cabinet Member: Councillor Carl Johnson
Report from Service Areas:	Regeneration and Economic Development
Responsible Officer:	John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development Tel: (0191) 643 6091
Wards affected:	All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Local Plan and the North Tyneside Transport Strategy state that the Authority will work with partners to maintain and enhance bus provision as part of an integrated public transport network. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent Government advice to stay at home and avoid unnecessary travel has had a profound effect on bus travel since March 2020. Reduced bus patronage has meant that, in common with other regions, the North East’s bus network is now being heavily supported by Government funding.

The Government announced in March 2021 that funding for bus services would be dependent on authorities’ and bus operators’ participation in new arrangements. The National Bus Strategy set out the Government’s requirement for each area to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan by 31 October 2021, and to have an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators in place by 1 April 2022. This is a requirement of Government in order to receive ongoing future funding support. Noting that the National Bus Strategy and funding support provide an opportunity to start delivering the objectives set out in the North East Transport Plan, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) has issued formal notice of its intent to prepare an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes for bus services and has begun working with local bus operators to pursue this.

Public engagement, billed as the ‘Big Bus Conversation’, has been carried out over the Summer on the JTC’s Vision for Buses, and feedback from this engagement will inform the preparation of the region’s Bus Service Improvement Plan. The plan will show how transport bodies and bus operators will work with local highway authorities and local communities to plan and deliver a bus network where buses are better coordinated and easier to understand and use.

The development of the partnership is expected to involve local authorities making certain commitments to support the use of buses, e.g. commitments to deliver bus priority or enforcement measures. Once the Enhanced Partnership is created, such commitments are legally binding on local authorities. The Authority's engagement with Transport North East and bus operators during the development of the Enhanced Partnership will help to ensure that any such commitments reflect North Tyneside's strategies and policies on such matters.

Recognising that the work initiated by the JTC to develop an Enhanced Partnership represents an opportunity to deliver aspects of the Authority's and the region's transport objectives and to secure ongoing Government funding for bus services, Cabinet is invited to support the JTC's creation of an Enhanced Partnership and agree to receive further reports on its development and the implications for North Tyneside.

This approach is in line with that of other local authorities which comprise the JTC which have also sought support from their respective Cabinets to support the establishment of an Enhanced Bus Partnership.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. fully supports and endorses the creation by the North East Joint Transport Committee of an Enhanced Bus Partnership for the region in accordance with the National Bus Strategy; and
- ii. agrees to receive further reports on the progressive development of the Enhanced Bus Partnership and its implications for North Tyneside.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 6 August 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to a number of priorities in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2020 to 2024, in particular:

- Our places will:
 - Recognise the climate emergency by further reducing the Borough's overall carbon footprint
 - Have an effective transport and physical infrastructure

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

There were approximately 5.9 million miles of bus journeys made within North Tyneside in 2018/19. Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, buses have continued to provide a vital service, however passenger numbers have been substantially lower than before.

The Local Plan and the North Tyneside Transport Strategy state that the Authority will work with partners to maintain and enhance bus provision as part of an integrated public

transport network. The regional North East Transport Plan also aims to improve bus travel and attract more passengers.

The North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy states that the Authority aims to support improved safety for public transport users and the Network Management Plan notes that using technology to support bus priority is an important part of managing the Authority's highway network. As a low-carbon form of transport, bus services are also a vital part of realising the aims of the Authority's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

1.5.2 Bus services post-Covid

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent Government advice to stay at home and avoid unnecessary travel has had a profound effect on bus travel since March 2020. Bus patronage in Tyne and Wear fell to below 15% of its former level in March- April 2020; between Summer 2020 and Spring 2021 it varied between around 25% and 50% of pre-Covid levels and has since showed some further recovery.

This reduction in patronage has meant that, in common with other regions, the North East's bus network is now being heavily supported by Government funding. The unparalleled level of Government financial support has enabled operators to continue delivering almost the full bus network. The Government has announced a further £226.5m of recovery funding for operators to retain bus services at or near to pre-Covid levels until 31 March 2022. Beyond this date, authorities and bus operators are expected to have new arrangements in place as described below.

1.5.3 Regional and national context

In March 2021, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) agreed to work with bus operators to consider how a voluntary bus partnership could be progressed, building on the shared objectives and principles of the JTC and the regional bus operators' association, NEBus, to increase bus patronage.

The Government announced, also in March 2021, that ongoing funding for bus services would be dependent on authorities' and bus operators' participation in new arrangements. The National Bus Strategy, 'Bus Back Better', set out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services through greater local leadership. The strategy stated that the existing model of bus service delivery was not working and outlined the Government's desire to enable a post-Covid recovery in bus patronage and to ensure that buses were more frequent; cheaper; faster and more reliable; more comprehensive; easier to understand; easier to use; and better integrated.

The National Bus Strategy set out a more formal framework for partnership working between authorities and bus operators and instructed each area to implement a statutory Enhanced Partnership under the Bus Services Act 2017. This is a requirement to receive Government funding for bus services, including any of the £3bn allocated funding for bus improvements.

Each area was required to:

- i. by 30 June 2021 – commit to establishing an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators;
- ii. by 31 October 2021 – publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan, setting out its desired outcomes to be delivered through the Enhanced Partnership; and
- iii. by 1 April 2022 – have negotiated and implemented an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators.

1.5.4 The North East's Vision for Buses

This matter was discussed by the JTC at its June 2021 meeting. Members appreciated that views had been expressed by local groups and individual residents in favour of alternative approaches which could provide further local control of bus services, such as bus franchising. It was noted that this is something which the JTC does not have the automatic powers to establish and which would need permission from the Secretary of State for Transport in order to proceed. However, the establishment of Enhanced Bus Partnerships along the lines proposed represents a strong starting point from which to further improve bus services for residents, businesses and visitors.

It was noted that the Government has announced funding of £3bn nationally to support the policies set out in the National Bus Strategy and had been clear that funding would not be available to authorities and local bus operators who did not develop an Enhanced Partnership. The National Bus Strategy and funding support provided the JTC with the opportunity to start delivering the objectives set out in the North East Transport Plan.

The JTC agreed at its June meeting to issue formal notice of its intent to prepare an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes, begin consultation with local bus operators to pursue this, and establish a project team within Transport North East to deliver this. Key milestones for its delivery are shown in Appendix 1.

At its July meeting, JTC approved a Vision for Buses as a basis for public engagement. The document is based on the aims of the regional North East Transport Plan which, following public consultation, was approved in March 2021. The Vision for Buses proposes ten key solutions, including an enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand, improved safety and security, and a first-class customer experience.

Public engagement on the Vision for Buses, billed as the 'Big Bus Conversation', commenced on 29 July with a closing date of 10 September 2021. Feedback from this engagement will inform the preparation of the region's Bus Service Improvement Plan. The plan, to be published by 31 October 2021, will show how transport bodies and bus operators will work with local highway authorities and local communities to plan and deliver a bus network where buses are better coordinated and easier to understand and use.

1.5.5 Infrastructure measures

To ensure it delivers improvements for bus operators and the travelling public, a key part of any Enhanced Partnership scheme is commitments from local authorities, which manage the highway network in their areas. These could relate, for example, to the provision of new facilities, e.g. new bus lanes or bus gates, or could involve policy measures, such as commitments to enforce against illegal parking on specific routes or restrict the number of roadworks on key bus corridors.

It should be noted that, where the Enhanced Partnership includes the provision of highway facilities or the making of a Traffic Regulation Order, it will be a requirement for the local authority to be a formal party to the statutory Enhanced Partnership scheme and the delivery of any such commitments will be legally binding on the local authority.

The Authority's engagement with Transport North East and bus operators during the development of the Enhanced Partnership will help to ensure that any such commitments are in accordance with the delivery of bus service improvements for residents,

businesses and visitors and with the Authority's statutory duty to manage the efficient operation of the highway network in the borough.

1.5.6 Next steps

Recognising that the work initiated by the JTC to develop an Enhanced Partnership represents an opportunity to deliver aspects of the Authority's and the region's transport objectives and to secure ongoing Government funding for bus services, Cabinet is invited to support the JTC's creation of an Enhanced Partnership and agree to receive further reports on its development and the implications for North Tyneside.

1.6 **Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

To approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 2

Not to approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 **Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

Approving the recommendations in paragraph 1.2 will clearly indicate the Authority's support for the development of an Enhanced Partnership, which represents an opportunity to deliver aspects of the Authority's and the region's transport objectives and to secure ongoing Government funding for bus services.

1.8 **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Key milestones for Enhanced Partnership delivery

1.9 **Contact officers:**

Paul Dowling, Service Manager Regeneration and Transport, 0345 2000 101
Nicholas Bryan, Highway Network Manager, 0191 643 6622
Andrew Flynn, Integrated Transport Manager, 0191 643 6083
John Cram, Integrated Transport Officer, 0191 643 6122
Cathy Davison, Principal Accountant Investment (Capital) and Revenue, 0191 643 5727

1.10 **Background information:**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#) (approved by Cabinet on 8 May 2017)
- (2) [North East Transport Plan](#)

- (3) [North Tyneside Network Management Plan](#)
- (4) [North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy](#)
- (5) 'Vision for Buses': appendix to item 9 at [North East Joint Transport Committee](#) 13 July 2021
- (6) [Bus Back Better: the national bus strategy for England](#)
- (7) [Department for Transport Guidance – Bus Services Act 2017: Enhanced Partnership creation](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial and resource implications directly arising from this report. Any expenditure which cannot be contained within existing budgets will be reported to Council / Cabinet, as appropriate for a decision before any expenditure is incurred or committed.

2.2 Legal

Specified transport functions of the Authority must be exercised through the North East Joint Transport Committee which is a joint committee of the Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Combined Authority (known as the “North East Combined Authority”) and the Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (known as the “North of Tyne Combined Authority”) established in accordance with the Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018. Some of Authority’s transport functions are exercised through the Joint Transport Committee’s Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee. The Authority works with the Joint Transport Committee and its Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee on a range of transport-related matters.

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority in supporting and endorsing the creation by the Joint Transport Committee of an Enhanced Partnership plan or scheme for bus services at this stage. However, any future Enhanced Partnership scheme would oblige the Authority to take the measures set out in the scheme by a specified date unless the scheme is formally postponed, or the Authority is temporarily unable to meet its obligations for reasons outside its control. Each local authority is able to shape the development of such facilities and measures as part of the development of an Enhanced Partnership.

The development of an Enhanced Partnership follows a statutory framework under the Bus Services Act 2017, requiring legal notices and formal agreements. Specialist legal advice has been sought on behalf of the Joint Transport Committee in support of the project, particularly in relation to subsidy control and competition law matters.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Internal consultation has involved the Deputy Mayor, the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development and the Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure.

2.3.2 External Engagement

External engagement has been carried out by Transport North East as described in section 1.5.4.

2.4 **Human rights**

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 **Equalities and diversity**

There are no equalities and diversity issues directly arising from this report. The Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership are to be developed in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

2.6 **Risk management**

There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report. Strategic and operational risks associated with transport matters are assessed via the established corporate process.

2.7 **Crime and disorder**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

2.8 **Environment and sustainability**

There are no environment and sustainability issues directly arising from this report. There are potential positive implications from the introduction of an Enhanced Partnership as this is expected to support the greater provision of zero-emission buses and new ticketing products which may incentivise bus travel in preference to car travel.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X

Appendix 1 – Key milestones for Enhanced Partnership delivery

The table below shows the North East Joint Transport Committee's (JTC) key milestones for the delivery of an Enhanced Partnership for bus services, as set out in the JTC's Vision for Buses.

Date	Milestone
June 2021	JTC and bus operator confirmation submitted to Government to develop an Enhanced Partnership in line with the National Bus Strategy requirements
July-September 2021	Working with bus operators and other stakeholders, and listening to people across the region to develop our plans
October 2021	North East Bus Service Improvement Plan submitted to Government
November 2021	Heads of Terms of Enhanced Partnership Agreed
December 2021	Draft Enhanced Partnership Agreed for public consultation
March 2022	Enhanced Partnership is officially signed
April 2022	Enhanced Partnership begins

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2021 – 2025

Portfolio(s): Housing	Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Steve Cox
Report from Service Area: Environment Housing and Leisure	
Responsible Officer:	Phil Scott, Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure (Tel: (0191) 643 7295)
Wards affected:	All Wards

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Authority is required under Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy. This document must clearly set out the Authority's expectations to registered providers of social housing on the type of tenancies to be awarded in the Borough.

North Tyneside's existing Strategy covers the period between 2013 -2018. Since then, new legislation and significant welfare reform changes have been introduced. These changes mean that affordable and secure homes are a greater priority for those households where renting is the only option available to them.

It is a requirement of any Tenancy Strategy review that the Authority must carry out a consultation exercise with registered providers of social housing within the Borough.

On 25 January 2021 the draft Tenancy Strategy was presented to the Cabinet, Cabinet approved further consultation with our residents to seek their views on the strategy. The consultation exercise has now concluded, and this report provides details of the results.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) Acknowledges the consultation exercise responses at Appendix 3 of this report; and
- (2) Approves the Tenancy Strategy 2021 – 2025 at Appendix 1 of this report.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 13 August 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan 2020 - 2024:

Our Places will:

- Be great places to live by focusing on what is important to local people;
- Offer a good choice of quality housing appropriate to need, including affordable homes that will be available to rent or buy; and
- North Tyneside Council's housing stock being decent, well managed and its potential maximised.

In addition to Our North Tyneside Plan 2020-2024 the current plans and strategies in the Framework are as follows:

North Tyneside Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021 'a great place to live'

This strategy has four strategic objectives, of which two support this strategy:

- More and better homes; and
- Better housing, better health, and wellbeing.

North Tyneside Allocations Policy

This policy aims to help people access secure, suitable, and affordable social sector homes within North Tyneside.

North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2021

This strategy has four priorities. Priority Two: meeting local housing and Priority Three: supporting households to secure and sustain an affordable home complement this strategy.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 The objective of the revised draft strategy is to ensure that best use is made of affordable housing stock to:

- Meet local housing need
- Benefit vulnerable households
- Contribute to strengthened communities
- Enable households to make realistic choices based on their own circumstances.

1.5.2 Background

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local housing authorities in England to publish a tenancy strategy, that sets out their expectations that registered providers of social housing must have regard to when formulating policies relating to:

- The kind of tenancy to be granted

- The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind.
- Where they grant tenancies for a term, the length of the terms; and
- Other circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

1.5.3. The tenancy strategy must summarise those policies or explain where they may be found.

1.5.4 A local housing authority must have regard to its tenancy strategy when exercising its own housing management functions.

1.5.5 A local housing authority must keep its tenancy strategy under review; and may amend or replace it from time to time.

1.5.6 When amending or replacing the strategy, the Authority must consult with registered housing providers who operate in the Borough.

1.5.7 In addition to the duty placed on local authorities to review, revise, and consult on its Tenancy Strategy, significant welfare reform and legislative changes must be considered.

1.5.8 Since the last strategy was approved the following legislation changes have been introduced:

- Welfare Reform Act 2012;
- Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016;
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017; and
- Green Paper: a new deal for social housing 2018.

A review of the new legislation was carried out and reflected within the new strategy. These changes make having an affordable, secure home a greater priority for those households where renting is the only option available to them.

1.6 Consultation

As agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 25th January 2021 an extension of the Tenancy Strategy consultation needed to take place to seek the views of our residents.

The consultation was carried out over a 6-week period between 10 May 2021 – 20 June 2021 and was widely promoted most notably through:

- the Authority's website
- "Have your Say"
- Direct email correspondence, with hard copies available on request.

The following responded to the survey:

- A Registered provider = 5
- An Owner occupier = 11
- A Council tenant = 7
- A Private landlord = 1
- A Leaseholder = 1

No responses were received from any registered provider tenants, private rented tenants, or leaseholder tenants.

There were four questions:

- Is the purpose of the document clear?
- Are the aims of the document clear?
- Do you think North Tyneside Council should use the private rented sector as an alternative to social housing?
- Do you think there is a need for more affordable homes in North Tyneside?

In total 25 responses were received to the consultation. Out of the 25 responses received the feedback received did not highlight any concerns that required amendments to the draft strategy.

The key issues raised from the consultation were in relation to the terminology of the strategy - *"Need to explain in layman's terms not in legal jargon"*. However, due to the nature of the document the terminology is a requirement for a legislative document.

Details of the outcomes and response to the strategy consultation can be found in Appendix 3.

1.7 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet

Option 1

The Authority is required to formulate and publish a Tenancy Strategy based on the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. This strategy must be kept under review and amended or replaced from time to time. This includes consultation with registered providers who operate in the Borough.

Cabinet is requested to acknowledge the consultation exercise results and approve the draft Tenancy Strategy 2021 – 2025.

Option 2

Cabinet may reject the strategy; however, the Authority could be at risk of failing to meet its duty in formulating and publishing a Tenancy Strategy, that is kept under review and amended or replaced from time to time.

Option 3

Cabinet may request further information prior to approval of the Tenancy Strategy 2021 - 2025.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.8 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

It is a statutory requirement that local authorities publish a Tenancy Strategy. This strategy provides guidance to registered providers of social housing in North Tyneside on the Authority's preferred approach to tenancies.

When amending or replacing the strategy, the Authority must consult with registered providers of social housing who operate in the Borough. The Authority extended this to residents of North Tyneside to capture those who may already be a social housing tenant or who may become a social housing tenant in the future.

The feedback received following the consultation with the wider audience did not highlight any concerns that required changes needed within the draft strategy.

1.9 Appendices:

'Appendix 1: North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2021 – 2025'.

'Appendix 2: Engagement Plan'

'Appendix 3: Consultation Exercise'

1.10 Contact officers:

Paul Worth, Senior Manager, Housing Operations, tel: (0191) 643 7554

Toby Hartigan Brown, Manager Housing Services, tel: (0191) 643 7736

Fiona Robson, Housing Policy and Development Manager, tel: (0191) 643 6212

Darrell Campbell, Senior Business Partner, tel: (0191) 643 7052

1.11 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

[North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2013-18](#)

[North Tyneside Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021](#)

[The Housing Act 1996](#)

[The Homelessness Act 2002](#)

[The Localism Act 2011](#)

[Equality Impact Assessment \(EIA\)](#)

Consultation Exercise

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial implications arising from the consultation exercise.

2.2 Legal

The Localism Act 2011 (sections 150 - 151) places a duty on all local authorities to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy. The strategy must set out the matters to which registered providers of social housing in its district are to have regard to in formulating policies relating to tenancies and should contain the following:

- The kind of tenancies they grant;
- The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
- Where they grant tenancies for a term certain, the lengths of the terms; and
- The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

Before adopting a Tenancy Strategy or modifying it, local authorities must:

- Send a copy of the draft strategy, or proposed modification, to every private registered provider of social housing for its district;
- Give the private registered provider a reasonable opportunity to comment on those proposals; and
- Consult such other persons as the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe.

The Authority must also have regard to:

- Its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996; and
- Its current homelessness strategy under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Cabinet Member for Housing and internal partners were able to participate in the wider consultation exercise

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

The consultation exercise was open for six weeks and available to all registered providers who provide social housing in North Tyneside, residents, and any other relevant stakeholder. It ran from 10th May 2021 – 20th June 2021. Information was available through:

- 'Have your Say' on the Council's website;
- Email to Resident's Panel and engaged tenants; and
- Direct communication with Registered Housing providers

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this strategy.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

All equality and diversity implications that may arise from this Strategy have been considered. These are highlighted in the Equality Impact Assessment which forms part of the background information.

2.6 Risk management

Any risks associated with this strategy have been considered. The Tenancy Strategy provides guidance to registered providers of social housing in North Tyneside on the Authority's preferred approach to tenancies. Without such a strategy in place, there is a risk that providers would not know the Authority's preference, and their tenancy offer may not meet local housing need.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from approval of the proposed strategy.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this strategy. An expected outcome of the Tenancy Strategy is a balance of flexibility in social housing promoting settled, sustainable, and mixed tenure communities.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X

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North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2021 - 2025



Date: March 2021

Version: 7.0

Author: Fiona Robson



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2. North Tyneside key facts
3. National and local context
4. Tenancies
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7. Monitoring and review

1. Purpose and aims of a Tenancy Strategy

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on local authorities to produce a tenancy strategy that sets out the Authority's expectations for social housing landlords, including their own landlord function in relation to:

- The kind of tenancies granted;
- The circumstances in which tenancy of a particular kind will be granted;
- Where they can grant tenancies for a term certain, the lengths of terms; and
- The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

The purpose of the strategy is to provide guidance to registered providers who provide social homes in a local authority area, including the Authority's own landlord function to:

- Ensure housing stock meets local housing need;
- Benefit vulnerable households;
- Enable households to make informed housing choices based on their individual circumstances;
- Strengthen and maintain successful and sustainable communities; and
- Prevent homelessness.

In developing this strategy, regard has been given to the following legislation:

- The current allocation scheme under Section 166A of the Housing Act 1996; and
- The current homelessness strategy under Section One of the Homelessness Act 2002.

From January 2018, the regulation of social housing providers in England is the function of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The RSH is a stand-alone agency, which fulfils one part of the role of the former Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

All social housing providers are required to be registered with the regulator, including local authorities, housing associations, housing co-operatives, profit making organisations and any other form of housing provider.

As part of the framework for the regulation of social housing providers, the regulator of social housing sets standards which registered providers of social housing must meet. These include a Tenancy Standard. Registered Providers must have a clear tenancy policy setting out the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of housing.

The Authority has no regulatory powers to determine which tenancy terms Registered Providers may offer in North Tyneside; but expects social housing providers who operate in the borough to have regard for this Tenancy Strategy when developing their tenancy policies.

A stable, secure home and environment is the foundation to a person's life chances. It impacts on our ability to secure and sustain employment, educational attainment and overall health and wellbeing. Expected outcomes from registered housing providers of social housing include:

- Tenancies offered provide a level of security for the tenant;

- Ensuring that prospective tenants receive comprehensive advice and information on what service to expect from their housing provider;
- Affordable rents contribute to the delivery of new homes; and
- A balance of flexibility in social housing promoting settled, sustainable and mixed tenure communities.

This strategy supports the Council's commitment to championing equality and ensuring procedures are in place, so all residents are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Authority is working to reduce any disadvantage caused by isolation and social exclusion.

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out to ensure the housing needs of all, including those with a protected characteristic are met.

2. North Tyneside key facts

North Tyneside is in the North East of England. It is bordered by Northumberland to the North, the North Sea to the East, the River Tyne to the South and Newcastle upon Tyne to the West.

The borough is approximately 82km². It is well served with public transport links and main access roads.

The borough has a population of 207,913¹. This equates to 94,394 households².

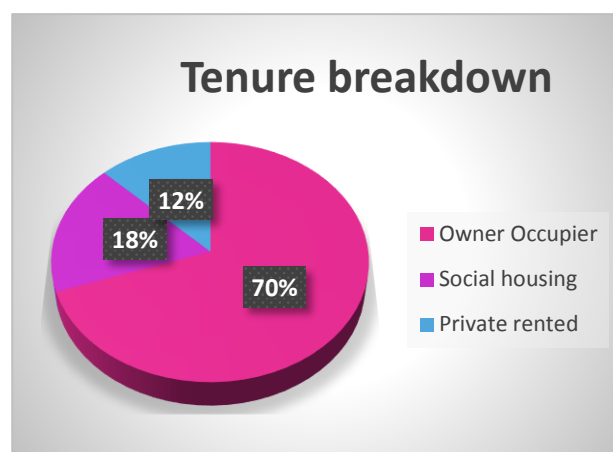
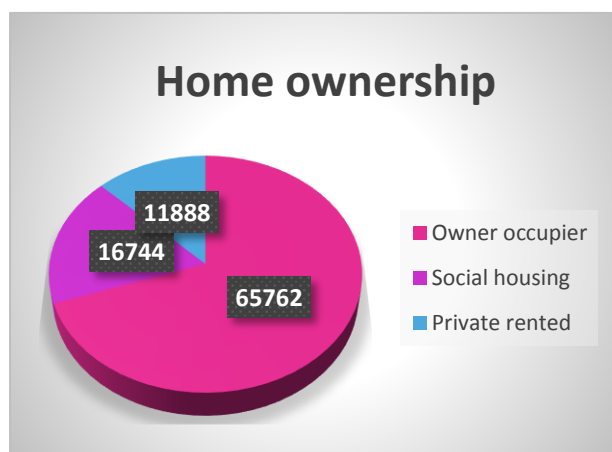


In 2019, North Tyneside was ranked 128 out of 317 local authorities for the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The borough has continued to improve and move up the rankings, but there are still some areas that fall within the most deprived in England. 19,019 (9.3%) residents live in neighbourhoods considered to be the 10% most deprived in the country, with 24,219 (11.8%) residents living in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods predominately fall within the ward boundaries of Riverside, Chirton and Wallsend

¹ (ONS sub national estimate 2019)

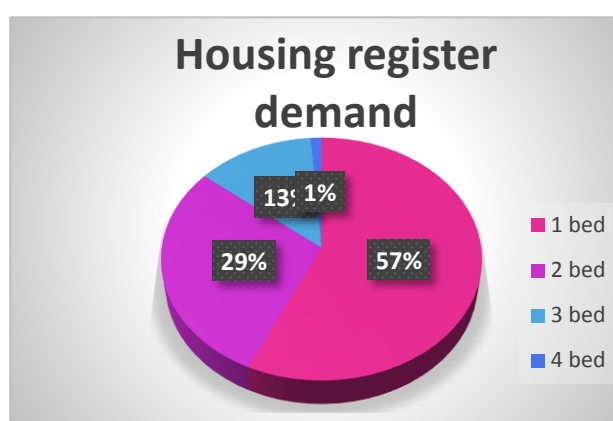
² (ONS sub national estimate based on 2016 population)

Ownership of homes is broken down as follows:



*One bed includes sheltered accommodation

Housing need and supply	
Gross housing need:	957
Net housing need:	740
Affordable housing need:	490
Housing register (April 2020):	3546
Empty homes:	3492
Long term empty (six months +):	1292
Demand for the private rented sector or market sales is not known.	



Within the North East region, North Tyneside is the only local area to have seen a growth in house prices, increasing by almost 4%.

3. National and local context

3.1 National context

The effect of tenancy failure to tenants, their families and their housing provider landlord is huge, with rising costs to the public purse if families become homeless; or move to an insecure tenancy.

Significant welfare reform changes since 2012 have made an affordable, secure home a greater priority for those households when renting is the only option available to them. These changes include the way in which social housing is provided and managed to enable tenants to sustain their homes. At a national level this includes:

Welfare Reform Act 2012: wide ranging set of reforms to the welfare system including:

- Introduction of Universal Credit, bringing together a range of benefits to a single monthly payment with housing costs paid direct to the tenant;
- Reduction of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, although recent government announcement for social housing not to be capped at LHA rates is a positive change for social housing rent levels;

- Personal Independence Payments to replace Disability Living Allowance; and
- Housing Benefit reductions for working age tenants under occupying their home.

Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016: additional reforms including:

- 1% rent reduction for social housing per annum for four years;
- Further lowering of the Benefit cap;
- Four-year freeze on the main working age benefits;
- Reduction in the level of payments for the first child; and
- Greater responsibility for claimants with young children to fulfil their work-related activities or face the possibility of sanctions.

Housing and Planning Act 2016: changes to actively promote homeownership, including:

- Duty on Local Planning Authorities to increase the supply of starter homes;
- The end of secure lifetime tenancies in local authority housing;
- Further changes to succession rules that restrict the right to succeed the tenancy to spouses and partners only, irrespective of the original tenancy date; and
- Voluntary extension of Right to Buy to housing association tenants.

White Paper: fixing our broken housing market 2017: proposals in this paper sent out Government's intention to boost housing supply and in the long term create an efficient housing market to deliver housing outcomes that met the needs and aspirations of all households:

- Plan for the right homes in the right places;
- Build homes faster; and
- Diversify the housing market.



Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: introduced April 2018, this Act places greater emphasis on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness for all who present regardless of priority need at an earlier stage.

Green Paper: a new deal for social housing 2018: has five principles to underpin a new fairer, housing deal for tenants:

- A safe and decent home;
- Improving and speeding up how complaints are resolved;
- Empowering residents and ensuring their voices are heard so landlords are held to account;
- Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities; and
- Building the social homes needed, and for them to act as a springboard to home ownership.

3.2 Local context

At a local level, regard is given to the following strategies and plans:

North Tyneside Housing Strategy 2016 -2021 'a great place to live':

The strategy has four priorities:

- More and better homes;
- Great places to live;

- Better housing, better health and wellbeing; and
- Better housing, more independence.

North Tyneside Allocations Policy

The policy and service are designed to:

- Offer choice;
- Meet housing need;
- Deliver a fair and transparent service;
- Support and assist our customers;
- Create more sustainable communities; and
- Make efficient use of all resources.



North Tyneside Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2021

The strategy has four priorities:

- Successful implementation and delivery of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
- Meeting local housing need;
- Supporting households to secure and sustain an affordable home; and
- Effective communication and robust partnership working.

Our North Tyneside Plan 2020 – 2024

This plan sets out the Council's ambition to make the borough an even better place to live, work and visit. It has three key themes:

- **People:** ensuring our residents are listened to, cared for and supported, ready for school, work and life with the right skill set and encouraged to be more independent;
- **Place:** our places will be great places to live and visit, focusing on what is important to residents and visitors, regeneration work will continue, a good choice of affordable homes will be on offer, and areas will be clean, green and safe; and
- **Economy:** this will benefit from the delivery of the ambitious vision for the borough, it will grow by encouraging new businesses, supporting existing ones and further investment in business parks, town centres and retail centres.

16 priorities span across the themes, including the provision of more new homes and quality, affordable homes.

4. Tenancies

The Authority supports the use of long-term tenancies for social housing in the borough. Registered Providers and our own Housing Services should take account of the following tenancy types when determining the tenancy to be offered:

Starter/Introductory Tenancy: this should be offered to those households who have never held a social tenancy before.

Periodic Secure and Assured Tenancies: these tenancies are normally offered to:

- Existing and new tenants whose starter/introductory tenancies have been successful;

- Tenants who have had a secure or assured tenancy before 1 April 2012 and who are transferring to another social rented home. This is not applicable to those transferring to an affordable rented home, unless the move is a required one;
- Those who are the beneficiary of a succession or assignment of a secure or assured tenancy. Previously under the Localism Act 2011, as well as spouses, partners, civil partners, those living together as a couple, other family members may be eligible to succeed the tenancy, but only if the original tenancy started before April 2012. Where the original tenancy started after April 2012 successions are restricted to spouses and partners etc. and exclude other family members, however the Housing and Planning Act 2016 restricts the right to succeed to a secure 'lifetime' tenancy to spouses and civil partners and those who live together as a couple irrespective of the date the tenancy started. Other family members living within tenancies will no longer have a statutory right to succeed the tenancy;
- Existing tenants who are undertaking a mutual exchange, provided they held a periodic or assured tenancy prior to 1 April 2012. This would not apply if the exchange was to an affordable rented home, or a home with a fixed term tenancy of less than two years, unless the landlord chooses to grant a secure or assured tenancy.

Demoted tenancies: introduced through the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, this enables housing providers to respond to anti-social behaviour, through the demotion of a tenancy. The tenancy will normally remain demoted for a period of one year and will then revert to a secure tenancy. However, if there are any further breaches during the initial 12 months demotion, and the landlord issues a notice of proceedings for possession, the tenancy will remain demoted until one of the events in subsection 143B (4) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 occurs.

Fixed term (flexible) tenancies: there may be occasion when a fixed term tenancy will help make best use of housing stock. This may include where the house is now too large for the family (under occupation) or the home is needed short term to meet regeneration objectives (demolition).

If a fixed term tenancy is introduced, then the effect of it should be monitored to ensure communities remain stable and settled. Such tenancies should not be offered to deal with existing issues, such as rent arrears or anti-social behaviour. Any breaches should be dealt with through the tenancy agreement.

A fixed term tenancy must be offered as the requirements set out in the Localism Act 2011. A review and appeals process must be available.

Where a fixed term tenancy is offered, it should be for a **minimum period of five years**. In the case of regeneration schemes, the minimum period should be two years.

Where a fixed term tenancy is offered, and the accommodation forms part of a housing pathway for current and former rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, and support is received, the tenancy should be for a **maximum period of two years**.

A review of a fixed term tenancy should take place six to nine months before it is due to end. Housing providers should seek to renew the tenancy unless there are specific grounds not to do so. These grounds must be clearly set out and be published in Tenancy Policies and/or Allocation Policies and must include details of how to appeal against a decision.

Where a fixed term tenancy is not to be renewed, housing providers are expected to provide support, advice and assistance to enable the tenant to find alternative accommodation. This aspect may have a cost implication and housing providers should give due regard to the cost of issuing fixed term tenancies.

Mortgage Rescue, Equitable and Family Intervention Tenancies: should be offered based on individual household circumstances.

Access to the housing register

North Tyneside's Allocation Policy has been designed to ensure that we:

- Offer choice;
- Meet housing need;
- Deliver a fair and transparent service;
- Support and assist our customers;
- Create more sustainable communities; and
- Make efficient use of all resources.

The policy has six bands:

- Band One: urgent and high housing need (applicants with a local connection);
- Band Two: high housing need (applicants with a local connection)
- Band Three: medium housing need (applicants with a local connection)
- Band Four: applicants with a reasonable preference but who do not have a local connection;
- Band Five: applicants with a general housing need and a local connection; and
- Band Six: applicants with a general housing need and no local connection.

On occasion there may be some exceptions to the allocation of a property that sits outside of the allocation scheme and bandings. By law the local authority is permitted to do this in certain circumstances.

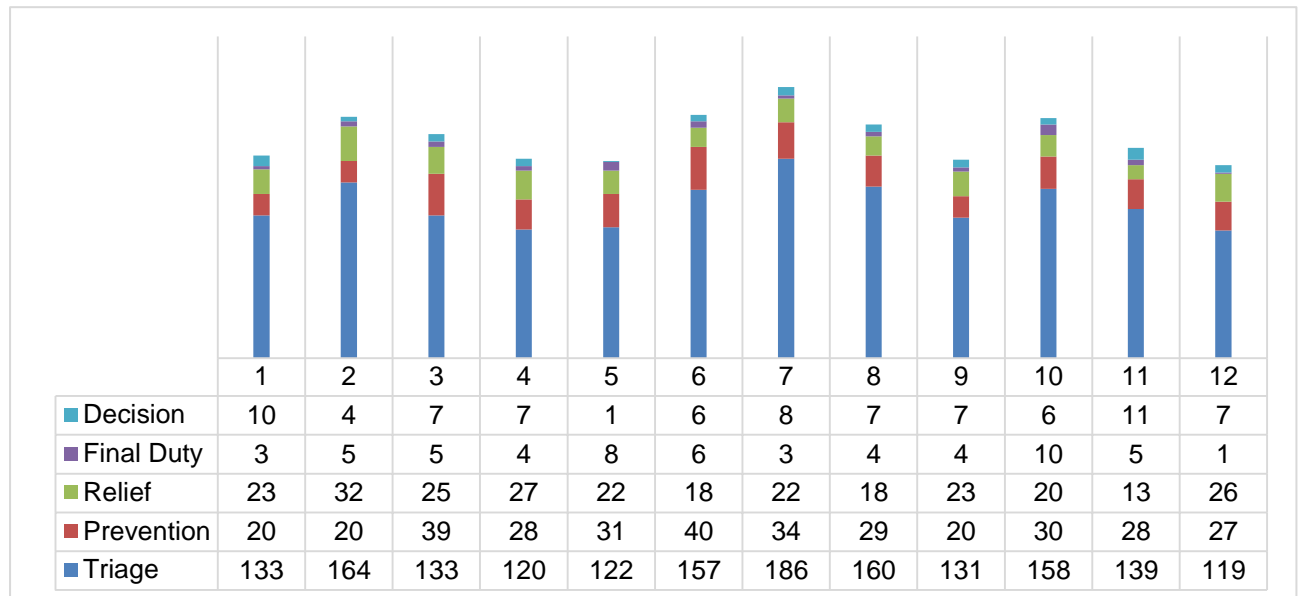
Discharge of homelessness duty with an offer of private rented housing

This is an option available to the local authority. As the end of an assured short-hold tenancy continues to be the one of the main reasons for households presenting as homeless the Authority would need to be satisfied that use of this duty would not result in repeat homelessness.

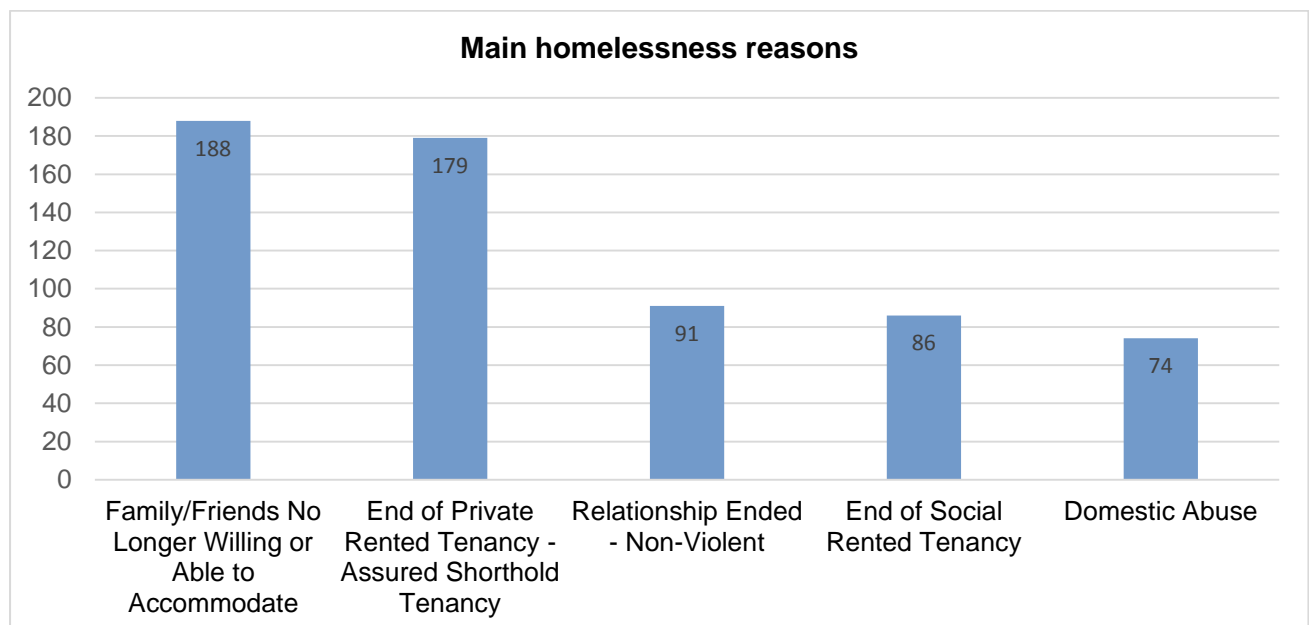
An offer in the private rented sector would only be made once the household had been assessed as suitable for such a tenancy, the property was affordable to their income, the property is of a good standard and is available on a minimum 12 month tenancy.

5. Homelessness

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has changed the way in which local authorities respond to homeless presentations, with a greater emphasis on prevention and relief. For 2019 – 2020, there were 2,476 presentations to the Housing Advice Team. From those presentations, the chart below shows at what stage the homelessness was resolved.



The main reasons for homelessness have changed in recent years. Family and friends no longer willing to accommodate did not feature as a main reason for several years but is now one of the top five reasons. End of a social housing tenancy has also recently appeared.



6. Affordability

The average house prices in North Tyneside have risen over recent years and now stand at:

All property types	Detached houses	Semi-detached houses	Terraced houses	Flats and maisonettes
£ 161,274	£ 287,082	£ 176,525	£ 151,760	£ 98,832

Source: Land Registry 2020

District	Lower Quartile House Price	LQ Gross Earnings per week	Annual Gross Earnings	LQ Income to House Price ratio
North Tyneside	£ 118,965	£ 425	£ 22,110	5.38

Sources: Land Registry Price Paid 2019; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2019

In North Tyneside in 2019, full-time employees could typically expect to spend around 5.38 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. Coupled with the requirement for large mortgage deposits, buying a home is still unattainable for some households.

Renting in the private sector is an alternative option for households to consider. The average rent for a flat is £489 per month and for a house it is £659 per month, with an average monthly property rent of £556.

Beds	Count of rents	Mean	Lower quartile	Median	Upper quartile
1	170	£ 442	£ 390	£ 425	£ 475
2	930	£ 530	£ 450	£ 518	£ 575
3	390	£ 679	£ 575	£ 650	£ 775
4	70	£ 909	£ 700	£ 900	£ 1,100
All	1,570	£ 571	£ 450	£ 550	£ 650

Source: VOA, 2019

Private tenants who are on a low income may be eligible to receive local housing allowance to help with their rent costs. Criteria does apply. For 2020/21 the following rates apply for North Tyneside:

Number of bedrooms	Weekly amount	Calendar monthly amount
Shared accommodation/under 35	£70.19	£304.99
1 bedroom	£97.81	£425.01
2 bedrooms	£109.32	£475.02
3 bedrooms	£126.58	£550.02
4 bedrooms	£182.95	£795.00

With housing options limited for some, it is critical that social and affordable rent tenancies must be affordable for existing and prospective tenants. Housing providers must work with applicants to ensure that the tenancy offered is affordable to them, through the completion of robust financial assessments. Tenants must be able to meet their rent payment contribution for the duration of their tenancy. In some circumstances, it may be possible to apply for a discretionary housing benefit payment. This is a temporary measure only.

Prior to 2016, the rent policy was set at the discretion of the local authority following government guidance. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 introduced a compulsory 1% rent reduction on existing social rent levels for four years. This period has now ended, with social rent levels reverting back to CPI + 1% increase each year.

Social rent	Council	Registered provider
Bedsits	£56.83	£65.38
One bedroom	£65.65	£71.65
Two bedrooms	£73.31	£81.96
Three bedrooms	£80.88	£90.42
Four bedrooms	£86.08	£98.89
Five bedrooms	£90.56	£106.87
Six or more bedrooms	£107.17	£142.23
All dwellings	£74.51	£81.17

Source: LAHS 2019 and NROSH 2020

Despite reduced rental income, housing providers have continued to provide quality social housing, maintained to a good standard.

The Authority supports the use of affordable rents where they form part of a framework agreement with Homes England to deliver affordable housing. However, social housing landlords should be able to evidence an understanding of how this will meet the needs of tenants and have clear policies for ensuring tenants can afford and sustain this rental product and are not trapped into benefit dependency.

An affordable rent is defined as 80% of the open market rent. The number of homes available for affordable rent in North Tyneside has increased over recent years, as housing providers have used Homes England grant funding programmes to support the delivery of new homes.

Affordable rent	Council	Registered provider
Bedsits	£0.00	£69.06
One bedroom	£80.61	£83.62
Two bedrooms	£96.79	£99.47
Three bedrooms	£107.34	£112.53
Four bedrooms	£0.00	£117.80
Five bedrooms	£0.00	£0.00
Six or more bedrooms	£0.00	£0.00
All dwellings	£94.50	£101.61

Source: LAHS 2019 and NROSH 2020

7. Monitoring and review

All housing providers who operate in North Tyneside should monitor the effects their policies and any individual reviews have on their tenants, the impact of decisions made to individual households and the availability of their stock.

The Authority will review this strategy one year after it has been adopted, and subsequent reviews will complement reviews of relevant strategies and policies. Monitoring will include identifying any trends in:

- Housing need;
- Homelessness;
- The effectiveness of the Allocations Policy;
- Registered Provider activity in the borough;
- New home developments, including affordable homes;
- Rent levels across all tenures, including affordable rents.

Current Engagement Template

(This document should be completed to detail all new engagement activities, prior to uploading onto the new engagement hub)

No decision has been taken concerning changes to the specific service we are seeking views on. Feedback from this engagement exercise will be a key consideration in arriving at a decision although not the only one.

Organisation: Housing Services

Engagement Subject: North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy 2021 – 2025

Published on: (07th May 2021)

Service Lead and Contact Details: Toby Hartigan Brown, Housing Services, 0191 643 7736 Toby.Hartigan-Brown@northtyneside.gov.uk

Description and Next Steps:

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on local housing authorities in England to publish a tenancy strategy that sets out their expectations that Registered Providers of social housing must have regard to when formulating policies relating to:

- The kind of tenancy to be granted;
- The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
- Where they grant these tenancies for a term certain, the length of the terms; and
- Other circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing strategy.

The key aim of the tenancy strategy is to provide guidance to registered providers who provide homes in North Tyneside to:

- Ensure housing stock meets local housing need;
- Enable households to make informed choices based on their individual circumstances;
- Strengthen and maintain successful and sustainable communities; and
- Prevent homelessness.

Expected outcomes from registered providers of social housing include:

- Tenancies offered provide a level of security for the tenant;
- Affordable rents contribute to the delivery of new homes; and
- A balance of flexibility in social housing promoting settled, sustainable and mixed tenure communities.

The existing strategy has been reviewed and revised to reflect national welfare reform changes that have been introduced in recent years, and national and local policies and plans.

Views are now being sought on this document through some questions. These views will be taken into consideration, and where appropriate, amendments may be made to the strategy.

When: *(07th May for a 4 week period ending 04th June 2021 and will be via the Council Digital Engagement Hub)*

Details of Public Access: due to Covid 19 there will be no public facing events. Information will be available on the Council's website. If requested a copy can be posted to a household.

Summary Comments and Report: following the end of the consultation period, the comments submitted will be reviewed and taken into consideration as to whether amendments need to be made to the document. A summary report will be produced

Additional Documents: An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced.

Data Protection: If you would like to know how we use your personal information when you engage with North Tyneside Council, read our [Privacy Notice here](#)

North Tyneside Tenancy Strategy: 2021-2025

Survey Results

In light of new legislation and significant welfare reform changes, which mean that affordable and secure homes are a greater priority for those households where renting is the only option available to them, it was timely to review and consult on proposed changes to North Tyneside's Tenancy Strategy.

It was agreed that a survey should be undertaken to seek residents' views on the proposed changes, the survey ran between 10 May – 20 June 2021 and was widely promoted including through the Authority's website, including the "Have your Say" pages, and direct email correspondence, with hard copies available on request.

26 responses were received from the following types of respondent:

An Owner occupier	11
A Council tenant	7
A Registered provider	5
A Private landlord	1
A Leaseholder	1

No responses were submitted by registered provider tenants, private rented tenants or leaseholder tenants

Respondents were asked:

1. Is the purpose of the document clear?

22 respondents said it was, but four said it was not. Those who felt the purpose of the document was clear said:

- 'Explained in simple terms'.
- 'It explained what it set out to do'.
- 'Detailed, clear and informed'.
- 'Clear plain language throughout'.
- 'It's straightforward and easy to read and understand'.
- 'Clarity and concise nature helps to understand clear purpose'.
- 'Document well explained'.
- 'It is helpful to have the list of contents, so I know where to look for different information.'
- 'Informative and explains legislation feeding review'.
- 'Easy to understand however you need to explain in layman's terms for residents to understand the changes and strategy. Also to expand to ensure residents i.e. tenants in social housing have secure tenancies for life and a secure home unless area is part of a capital programme'.

- 'Not completely positive because a lot of ground is covered in this document which may be to some , confusing. I could understand it but hopefully each section could be more simplified. Legal jargon is not always easy to understand'.
- 'It seems clear, but I wish good old English is used so that the common person can understand it a lot better'.

While those who felt the document's purpose was not clear said:

- 'I think it would benefit from having an executive summary which details the outcomes of the strategy'.
- 'Too officious, needs to be simplified'.
- 'To someone like myself that has spent 80 years without the need to be involved in any of this type of legislation I don't really fully understand it, but I do feel it has been 100% investigated to arrive at this document. I feel that those involved will in the main understand and the parts not clear to them they will know where to go to solve their problems'.

2. Are the aims of the document clear?

Again, almost all respondents (20 out of 26) felt the document was clear. Their comments included:

- 'Informative and explains legislation feeding review'.
- 'The aims are what is needed in these times'.
- 'NT have always excelled at providing good reports by using excellent graphics'.
- 'There is a good use of data and evidence about how the housing situation is currently being dealt with, plus a plan with support for those at risk of rough sleeping/homelessness'.
- 'I was able to input to the draft and feel NTCs document should be on the whole spot on. All I hope that no doubt when a problem does pop up it isn't kicked into touch but thoroughly investigated'.
- 'Yes, but let's hope this is not just a paper exercise with the council. They will do something if . If not, this is a waste of time'.
- 'Somewhat ... for instance what happens when/if a tenant has partner/family occupying e.g. council house - if a person is guilty of ASB what happens to the family / part not concerned in whatever occurs. Often partner or spouse retains tenancy then person evicted returns to the premises.

While those who disagreed highlighted the following:

- 'Whilst I think the aims are listed under the statement of purpose, this is not clear and should have a heading clearly identifying them, so there can be no misinterpretation'.
- 'Could benefit from sentence similar to that explaining purpose, although aims are there just not so spelled-out'.
- 'Too much emphasis on historical information and not enough detail that outlines clear aims and objectives'.
- 'Complex documentation needs to be simplified'.
- 'Need to explain in layman's terms not in legal jargon'.

3. Do you think North Tyneside Council should use the private rented sector as an alternative to social housing?

14 respondents said the Authority should use the private rented sector as an alternative to social housing, but 7 disagreed; 5 did not know whether the Authority should do this.

Comments from those who agreed with the proposal included:

- 'NTC should explore all options to meet diverse housing needs in a strategic approach with a strong private sector housing team'.
- 'Council can work in partnership with the private sector as a back-up, but not as a complete replacement/alternative'.
- 'As there is a shortage of houses, rents have to be the same as the council charges it's tenants'.
- 'Large pool of stock so long as standards are managed'.
- 'There's a lot of private empty houses about'.
- 'Because there are plenty buildings which can be used. Also empty shops could be turned into flats or houses'.
- 'If the housing stock is already full to capacity, there should be the ability to use the private rented sector as an alternative. If this is NOT done, then these individuals face being homeless/rootless/disenfranchised and an even greater 'burden' (though I don't like to use that word) on the social purse'.
- 'In certain circumstances where adequate provision of social housing has not been made or that on offer fails to meet need'.
- 'It gives for choice and options for customers. It may also provide a better product and a better start than the empty shell RP's provide. Also, the private sector may have more availability of certain house types / property sizes as opposed to wait with social landlords. It can also help to build aspirations and can therefore be better for peoples' wellbeing and prospects, especially if it gets them into a better area for opportunities. More so for areas where there is minimal social housing. Where tenancies are successful and communities

sustain, it could also be a great contribution to tackling stigma of certain customer groups who are seen as 'social tenants'.

- 'This provides greater alternative and can be managed with existing support contracts where applicable'.
- 'The main reason is it will be a great asset to the housing situation'.
- 'Helps get homeless people into housing'.
- 'Likely to see private rented sector stock under-utilised'.

While those who disagreed stated:

- 'Use own resources for social housing or sheltered accommodation'.
- 'No unless they have secure tenancies'.
- 'Private tenancies are costly and insecure for the tenant'.
- 'I believe that the private rented sector contributes towards long-term in-work poverty or dependency on benefits for those members of the community on a low-income. Social housing should play an essential role in addressing this. I also think that the length of tenancies for private rented accommodation contributes to an unstable environment within which family life can struggle to thrive'.
- 'In order to establish themselves in the community, and make a living, people need a stable home, and a significant number cannot afford to buy, including increasing numbers of young folk. The purpose of social housing, is to provide homes for anyone who needs one. The purpose of the private sector is to make a profit. If there are not enough homes, the private sector gets to make more profit, on the basis of supply and demand, but that does not house all who need a home, and thus ends up destabilising not just individual lives, but labour markets, as employees struggle to find and keep a home within reach of work, and communities'.

Those who did not know explained:

- 'Private rented will lean towards maximum rent'.
- 'I'm not sure the council isn't being fleeced by rental charges etc. Also some private rental people object to those sort of people "put here" as they say. Looks ok on paper but difficult in practice'.
- 'Well it depends on how much the private sector would charge the council. Surely that's common sense'.

4. Do you think there is a need for more affordable homes in North Tyneside?

19 respondents felt there is a need for more affordable homes in North Tyneside, two felt not and five said did not know.

Those who agreed commented:

- 'A lot of people wish to own their own homes especially the young but there is no chance of that if affordable homes aren't there to give them the chance of ownership'.
- 'We have a large number of low income jobs, especially service and leisure jobs, and those who do them will never be able to afford a mortgage. They need to have homes near their work. Younger people also need affordable homes, they need to be able to be near their families, or else there is no chance of developing communities'.
- 'Absolutely YES!!! My own daughter would not be able to live in the town where she was born and educated if the housing market remains out of reach for her and her generation'.
- 'People on low incomes can be getting priced out of the area. Also, where do children move on to when ready to leave home, what options will they be able to afford? I therefore feel from the stats in the strategy that further affordable housing is needed'.
- 'The comments on affordability make a strong case to increase affordable housing stock and it can address special needs also'.
- 'All housing should be available to people whether they can afford to rent or buy'.
- 'Affordable social homes managed by council not affordable homes built by the private sector and turn out unaffordable for the shareholders profits'.
- 'Too many private companies building houses to buy, not enough to rent'.
- 'Need to address imbalance of mix. Ongoing demand for good quality rented properties'.
- 'I think the council and society could charge a smaller rates and smaller deposits till people can get on their feet. Some people are living in poverty'.
- 'To me it always is a yes but to me it's that all our house building is passed as acceptable. It should be big kitchen/triple glazing etc'.

No comments were made by those who disagreed or who selected the don't know option.

5. Do you agree with the information to be collected for the monitoring and review of the strategy?

18 respondents agreed with the information proposed to be collected for the monitoring and review of the strategy, four did not and three did not know.

Those who disagreed stated:

- 'It should also include monitor areas with social housing and in order to review the impact of policies on those tenants'.

- 'Regeneration I agree with but to demolish for private development of site for affordable homes for sale no. Unless the council build social housing for rent by the council by using the government housing capital scheme for social housing'
- 'Those suggested fine, but could special and diverse unmet needs be monitored also to ensure fine-grain information, along with any changes in government policy?'

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 20 September 2021

Title: Complaints Service Report 2020-21

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor Deputy Mayor Adult Social Care Children, Young People and Learning	Cabinet Member(s): Norma Redfearn Councillor Carl Johnson Councillor Anthony McMullen Councillor Peter Earley
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Report from Service Area: Law & Governance

Responsible Officer: Bryn Roberts, Head of Law and Governance (Tel: 643 5339)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the Authority's closed complaints, for the year 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, and to ensure compliance with the requirement to publish an annual report on complaints under the relevant statutory complaints legislation. This report covers all complaints made to the Authority, including those made under social services arrangements, and those made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO). The LGSCO have recently produced their annual summary of complaints for all local authorities and North Tyneside Council remains the lowest within Tyne and Wear.

The number of complaints continues to be very low compared to the number of transactions the Authority undertakes every year. Overall, the number of formal complaints to the Authority in 2020-21 was lower than 2019-20. This was due to complaints registering being placed on hold at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic between April and June 2021. This action was following guidance from the LGSCO. Of the 519 complaints the Authority received, only 29 were referred to the Ombudsmen for consideration, and of those 29, only 6 complaints were upheld.

Effective complaints handling is very important and learning from the outcomes is an excellent way to improve service delivery.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes the complaint related activity during 2020-21 as set out in the Annual Complaints Report (Appendix 1);
2. approves the above Report for publication by the Head of Law and Governance; and
3. receives the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints concerning North Tyneside Council for 2020-21 (Appendix 2).

1.3 Forward plan:

28 days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 19 August 2021.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan "Our People" and "Our Places", as lessons learned from complaints are a key driver in service improvement and ensuring best value for money.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The Authority undertakes millions of transactions with its 204,000 residents and 6 million visitors to the Borough, throughout the year. Against that background, the number of complaints received by the Authority remains consistently low, reflecting the excellent services our customers receive and the Authority's ability to resolve swiftly any issues that do arise at the first point of contact.

The number of formal complaints during 2020-21 remained static compared to the previous year as the Authority continues to take a proactive approach to encouraging our residents and service users to provide feedback. The Authority's complaint leaflet entitled "How to complain about Council services" is widely available in the Authority's buildings and to download from the Authority's website. It is also now very easy for our customers to contact us on-line, and Social Care Service users are provided with a complaint leaflet at the first point of contact.

Customer satisfaction with the complaints process remains relatively high and the Authority continues to resolve the vast majority of complaints at Stage One. The Authority welcomes complaints as valuable feedback from its customers and complaint outcomes provide valuable lessons learned to further improve and enhance the Authority's services and procedures.

The Authority operates statutory complaint procedures for Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's Services and Public Health. It also provides a Corporate Complaints Procedure for all other services. The Senior Complaints Officer is the Authority's main contact with the offices of the LGSCO and HO. This involves responding to initial enquiries, gathering information, and arranging access to files and interviews of staff under the instruction of the LGSCO and HO

investigators, and providing advice and assistance to the Authority's Officers who may be the subject of a complaint.

1.5.2 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

During 2020-21 the Authority responded to LGSCO enquiries in a timely fashion and was well within the required timescale for response of 28 days. The LGSCO's Annual Review of complaints concerning North Tyneside Council for 2020-21 is at Appendix 2.

1.5.3 Complaints Report

The Authority's Complaints Annual Report for 2020-21 is attached at Appendix 1. Cabinet is invited to note that the overall number of formal complaints to the Authority in 2020-21 was lower in comparison to 2019-20 (519 complaints and 1069 complaints respectively). As detailed in 1.1, this was due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.5.4 Corporate Complaints

There were 967 Corporate Complaints received during 2019-20, the figure during 2020-21 was 451, it is noted that the registering of complaints was placed on hold in line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's recommendations during April – June 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Authority recognises that it is important to deal with complaints well as this is central to providing a good customer service. Services seek to address complaints and learn from these complaints so that the Authority can continually improve services.

The results are set out in detail in Section 3, Table 8 of the Report at Appendix 1.

1.5.5 Social Care Complaints

The number of Social Care complaints (relating to both Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's Services) was 102 in 2019-20 and 68 in 2020-21. This equates to 30 cases in Children's Social Services and 38 cases in Adult Social Care.

The results are set out in Section 2, Tables 2 to 6 of the Report at Appendix 1.

1.5.6 Future Developments

The Authority has established a Customer Services Programme that aims to further improve customer services, and to demonstrate that "we listen; we care". This programme has four parts: Customer Promise, Brilliant Basics, Customer Focussed Services, and Better Never Stops – a continuous improvement culture.

The Better Never Stops theme will, amongst other things, examine how the Authority collects queries, feedback and complaints. It will look at the quality and consistency of the Authority's responses and how the feedback is used to gather and inform ongoing service delivery. The Authority will also develop the way its employees act to drive up the standard the Authority has set itself and how to recognise and celebrate good customer service.

A key aim of the complaint process is 'learning' from complaints and connects with the Better Never Stops programme. There have been several changes to procedures and practice during 2020-21 as a result of resolved complaints, examples of these have been listed on page 10 of the Report.

1.5.7 Conclusion

Complaints are now widely recognised as integral to the provision of quality services at both individual and strategic levels. The Authority's successful history and current good practice in effective complaint handling will be an integral service improvement driver in the current rapidly changing culture. The demands of maintaining, and increasing levels of customer satisfaction, coupled with organisational changes across public and partner sectors, will be well supported by the current robust complaint handling procedures and electronic system in place.

The Report will be published on the Authority's website and will be available on request from the Senior Complaints Officer.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Note the content of the Annual Complaints Report and approve publication of the Report and receive the LGSCO report.

Option 2

Cabinet refers the Annual Complaints Report back to officers and request that further analysis and information is provided.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reason:

All local authorities providing 'social service functions' including the Authority are legally required to publish an annual report on complaints received. Publication of a Report also supports community engagement and promotes transparency and opportunities for organisational improvement.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: North Tyneside Council Complaints Service Report 2019-20.

Appendix 2: The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints about North Tyneside Council 2020-21.

1.9 Contact officers:

Bryn Roberts, Director of Law and Governance, tel 643 5339

Eilidh Cook, Senior Complaints Officer, tel 643 5361

Claire Emmerson, Senior Manager Financial Strategy and Planning, tel 643 8109

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- The Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 and Guidance (Children)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1738/contents/made>
- The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and Guidance (Adults)
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/DH_120361
- North Tyneside Council Corporate Complaints Procedure
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/479/complaints-procedure>
- The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities Regulations 2012
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/3094/introduction/made>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial or other resource implications arising directly from this report. The delivery of the service is provided for from existing budget provision. Compensation payments are funded from existing budgets in the relevant Service areas.

2.2 Legal

As a 'responsible body' under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 the Authority must make arrangements for handling and considering complaints concerning the provision of social services in accordance with the 2009 Regulations.

The Regulations specify what should be included in the complaints handling arrangements and also require the Authority to prepare an annual report for each year which must specify the number of complaints which the Authority has received; specify the number of complaints which the Authority decided were well-founded and specify the number of complaints which the Authority has been informed have been referred to the LGSCO and HO.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Internal Consultation

The Report has been circulated to, the Chief Executive, the Elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Children, Young People and Learning.

No community engagement has taken place.

2.4 Human rights

The service promotes equal access to complaint services and opportunities to contribute to service improvement.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The service promotes equal access to complaint services and opportunities to contribute to service improvement. Material is available in different formats and Officers actively provide assistance for people with individual needs as required. Equality monitoring is undertaken so that the service can ensure it meets the needs of people with protected characteristics across all of the borough's communities.

2.6 Risk management

A risk assessment has taken place. All risks identified can be managed through North Tyneside Risk Process and will be added to the Authority's Risk Register.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Assistant Chief Executive

COMPLAINTS SERVICE REPORT 2020-21

Date: August 2021

Author: Eilidh Cook

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North Tyneside Council

COMPLAINTS SERVICE REPORT

1 APRIL 2020 – 31 MARCH 2021

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Authority's closed complaints, for the year between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. It covers complaints under the Children Act 1989 and the Local Authority Social Services NHS Complaint Regulations (England) 2009, which are often referred to together as the 'social services' procedures. It also includes other 'corporate complaints' about other services provided by the Authority and Complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman (HO). This report has been produced using data from complaints that were closed during 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

The Authority always aims to provide high quality services and customer care at all times. However, it recognises there are occasions when people may wish to register dissatisfaction with those services. When this happens, the Authority wants to hear about people's experiences and, where something has gone wrong, to put it right, so far as is possible and this process in turn drives improvements generated from complaints. Therefore, we have a comprehensive complaints service that covers not only the statutory Social Services arena, but also all other services of the Authority under a Corporate Complaints Procedure.

We also welcome comments, compliments and suggestions to provide a broad, balanced and reflective picture of people's experiences of our services.

Executive Summary

The number of complaints continues to be very low compared to the millions of transactions the Authority has with approximately 204,000 residents and approximately, 6 million visitors to the area every year, the overall number of formal complaints to the Authority is lower compared to last year when 1069 complaints were registered in comparison to 979 during 2020-21, this was due to complaints registering been placed on hold at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic between April and June 2021. This action was following guidance from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaint leaflets are widely available in the Authority's buildings and to download from the Authority's website. It is also now very easy for our customers to contact us online and this is very quickly becoming, the preferred method of communication.

In keeping with the principle of resolving problems as quickly as possible, the proportion of Corporate Complaints resolved at Stage 1 remains high at 83% in 2020-21 and 83% for Children Social Care Complaints. Adult Social Care complaints have a one stage process and if the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may complain to the Local Government

and Social Care Ombudsman, resulting in all such complaints being resolved at Stage 1 of the statutory complaints procedure.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman undertook 8 detailed investigations during this period and upheld six. The Authority fully complied with all recommendations made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Procedures

Overview

The Authority aims to respond positively to all complaints and other representations so that it can help resolve individual issues and learn from experience how to improve services. We aim to provide comprehensive complaint services, which are widely understood and easily accessible to all. The whole Authority, staff and Members, are committed to effective complaint handling and problem solving as an integral part of customer focussed services and responsive performance management.

There are three separate procedures for Corporate, Children's and Adult Social Care. Wherever possible, before the 'formal' complaint procedures are used, efforts are made at an operational level to resolve any difficulties.

Corporate Complaints

Once the formal procedures are entered into for Corporate Complaints, there are, in essence, three stages:

1. The complaint is referred to a Team Leader or Manager, of the relevant services area, to try to resolve within 15 working days.
2. If not resolved to the customer's satisfaction, they can ask for it to be reviewed by a more senior Manager and this will be done within a further 15 working days; and
3. Ultimately, the Regulation and Review Committee, consisting of up to five Ward Councillors, make the final decision but prior to progression to this stage, the matter is fully considered by the Senior Complaints Officer.

Children Social Care Complaints

In Children Social Care cases, the statutory complaints process is governed by the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006. Stage 1 should be responded to within 10 working days and can be extended to 20 working days; at Stage 2 the response is due within 25 working days and may be extended to 65 working days for complex complaints with the complainant's approval; and Stage 3, the complaint is referred to an Independent Review Panel.

The Authority engage Independent Investigators and Independent Persons for Children Social Care Complaints at Stage 2 as set out in the Regulations. Other independent roles, e.g. members of Independent Complaint Review Panels, are also engaged by the Authority's Complaints Service when required.

Children Social Care staff ensure that all children, of an understanding age, who are new to the care system are in receipt of a complaints leaflet.

Adult Social Care Complaints

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 were introduced in April 2009. Under these provisions, the characteristics of individual complaints are assessed and specific plans of how to address the complaint are agreed with the complainant. The approach focuses on the complainant and enables organisations to tailor a flexible response that seeks to resolve the complainant's specific concerns. It is based on the principles of good complaints handling:

1. Getting it right
2. Being customer focused
3. Being open and accountable
4. Acting fairly and proportionately
5. Putting things right
6. Seeking continuous improvement

This statutory procedure has no fixed timescales, other than a maximum period of six months for handling the complaint and is a one stage process, however, locally, the Authority aims to respond within 20 working days.

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made in a number of ways, e.g.

- By talking to the staff involved, to let them try to sort the problem out
- By writing to or telephoning the Customer and Member Liaison Office:
Customer and Member Liaison Office
Quadrant
The Silverlink North
Cobalt Business Park
North Tyneside
NE27 0BY
Tel. 0191 643 2280
Email: cmlo@northtyneside.gov.uk
- A complaint form is available on line
at: <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>
- By personal visit to any of the Authority's Customer First Centres
- By telephoning the Authority's Contact Centre on 0345 2000 101

Help and support

The Customer and Member Liaison Office is independent of service departments and offers information, advice and help to complainants and staff responding to complaints. The primary role of the Customer and Member Liaison Office is to ensure all complaints are investigated properly and any lessons learned are adopted.

Independent advocacy is available for people wishing to make Social Services complaints, especially children and vulnerable adults. Other assistance can be arranged to suit individual requirements.

Copies of this report and other material can be made available in other formats or languages on request to the Customer and Member Liaison Office.

Who can make a complaint?

Under the Corporate Complaints Procedures, any user of the Authority's Services can complain. This includes residents and visitors. It also includes relatives and carers acting on someone's behalf, e.g., a person living outside the area representing a relative living in North Tyneside.

In the Social Services arena, people can make a complaint if they are someone for whom the Authority has a power or duty to provide, directly or indirectly, a social service and his/her needs for that service have come to the attention of the Authority. This is extended to cover someone acting on his or her behalf, e.g., a relative or carer.

Limited exclusions do apply:

- when other more appropriate processes already exist, e.g. formal appeal procedures, legal proceedings;
- when the matter occurred more than 12 months before the complaint was made (unless there is good reason for the delay in bringing the matter to the Authority's attention); and
- when the matter has already been properly examined.

It should be noted that where a complaint is made on someone else's behalf, authorisation to act will be obtained from the person the complaint is about.

External review

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) look at complaints about Local Authorities in a fair and independent way and their service is provided free of charge. They are independent of all Government Departments and have the same powers as the High Court to obtain information and documents. If they find the Authority has done something wrong, they will make recommendations to put things right.

The Ombudsmen play a vital role for people wishing to make a complaint. It is usual for them to refer a matter to the Authority to examine, if it has not done so previously; they class this type of complaint as "premature".

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Advice Team can be contacted on:

Tel: **0300 061 0614** Text 'call back' to **0762 481 1595** at: www.lgo.org.uk
or write to: **The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**, PO Box 4771,
Coventry CV4 0EH

The Housing Ombudsman Advice Team can be contacted on:

Tel: 0300 111 3000 Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

or write to: **Housing Ombudsman Service**, Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London, E14 9GE

Operational liaison with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman is undertaken by the Senior Complaints Officer.

In the Annual Letter for 2020-21 from the LGSCO they indicated that in total, 29 complaints about North Tyneside Council had been received during the year. The HO does not provide an annual report for each Authority so similar information is not available from the HO in relation to complaints they have received regarding provision of housing and housing services by the Authority.

Of the 29 complaints received, advice was given by the Ombudsmen on two occasions, 5 were referred back to the Authority for local resolution, 9 were closed after initial enquiries, two were not upheld, six were upheld and two were invalid. The Ombudsmen has emphasised that their statistics reflect the data they hold and may not necessarily align with the data we hold. For example, their numbers include enquiries from people they signpost back to the authority, some of whom may never contact us.

The LGSCO Annual Letter is available on their website and a copy is available from the Senior Complaints Officer.

Set out below are details of the complaints received by the LGSCO in relation to neighbouring authorities. In comparison with previous years, it is apparent that levels of contact with the LGSCO remain constant highlighting that the majority of complainants are satisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the Authority.

Complaints referred to the LGSCO in Tyne & Wear	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Gateshead	51	51	51	36
Newcastle upon Tyne	66	67	65	39
North Tyneside	46	56	50	29
South Tyneside	49	49	40	40
Sunderland	67	67	74	34

Care Quality Commission

In the Adult Social Care arena, the Care Quality Commission also plays a similar role within its wider remit of regulation of social care. The Commission can be contacted at CQC, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA, telephone: 03000 616161 or via an online form on their website www.cqc.org.uk.

OFSTED

For Children Social Care and across Children Young People and Learning, OFSTED plays a similar role to Care Quality Commission. They can be contacted at: OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD, telephone: 0300 123 1231 or via email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Management and Operation

The management and operation of both the corporate and social services processes is provided by the Customer and Member Liaison Office, which is based within the Law and Governance Department of the Authority. The Customer and Member Liaison Office is also the main point of contact for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman.

The Office not only managed many individual complaints but also monitored the correct use of the procedures in the various service departments. It did not investigate complaints as service areas were responsible for examining complaints about their own services.

Individual complaints were referred to relevant service managers to examine and respond to the complainant.

The Complaint service is supported by a bespoke Customer Relationship Management system.

Performance Indicators

The Complaints Annual Report is presented to the Authority's full Cabinet meeting. The Report is also presented to the Authority's Regulation and Review Committee to update Members with the number of complaints that have been received the previous year and to advise Members if the recommendations from any Stage Three Corporate complaint hearing have been undertaken.

The Authority carries out an in-house survey of people who have used the complaints process. These show that 78% of respondents said they found it easy to find information about the complaints process; 45% were happy with the time taken to respond to complaints; 45% thought the process was good and 56% were satisfied with the outcome.

There are currently approximately 204,000 residents in North Tyneside. Voluntary diversity monitoring of complainants was introduced several years ago. The following table compares the results of the survey against the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Mid Year Population estimate for 2017 in relation to gender and age, and the latest data in relation to disability, ethnic origin and religion, which is taken from the 2011 Census.

%	O.N.S.	NTC	%	O.N.S.	NTC
Gender			Ethnic Origin		
Female	51.7	66.6	Asian	1.9	0
Male	48.3	34	Black	0.4	0
Declined			Other Ethnic	0.6	0
Age			Mixed	0.9	0
16-24	11.1	0	White British	95.4	100
			Other White	1.2	0
25-34	14.9	11	Chinese	0.5	0
35-44	16.1	11	Declined	-	0
45-54	18.1	22	Religion		
55-64	15.9	11	Christian	63.8	33
65-74	13.1	44	Hindu	0.3	0
Over 75	10.8	1	Buddhist	0.2	0
Declined	-	0	Muslim	0.7	0
			Sikh	0.2	0
With a disability			Jewish	0	0
Yes	20.6	44	Other	0.2	0
No	-	33	None	28.1	34
Not given	-	23	Declined	6.4	33

Numbers and analysis of complaints

The number of complaints for 2020 -21, together with previous years for comparison, is shown in the tables at the end of this report.

This information is made available for consideration by individual service areas, as part of performance management throughout the year. This helps identify any themes or trends and so informs service improvement initiatives. The Senior Complaints Officer met with various service management teams to discuss any implications arising from themes or trends in complaints.

The total complaints related activity is set out in Table 1.

Corporate complaints resolved at Stage 1 remained high at 83% and 83% of Children Social Care complaints closed during the period were resolved at Stage 1. This reflects the commitment of Managers and Supervisors to resolve complaints at an early stage.

All complaints concluded and closed off on the Complaints Database create a prompt to enter any lessons learned as a result of the complaint. Several changes, generated by complaints, were made to procedures and services during the year. A few examples of such improvements are set out below.

Department	Lessons Learned
Children's Services	<p>Through the complaints process, it was recognised that the importance of consistency of workers for young people within residential mental health settings and the need to consider this during allocation. Also, the need to ensure family members are kept informed wherever possible in accordance with a young person's views.</p> <p>It has also raised our awareness in respect of discharge planning regarding the complexities around this and the importance of liaison with adult and mental health services as a young person transitions from Children's Services to Adult Services.</p>
Adult Social Care	<p>Following a complaint in respect of the payment of care home fees, the Authority are looking at a process for dealing with those clients placed by NTC prior to Financial Assessment and if we should pay the home and charge the client if NTC are involved.</p>
Planning	<p>Following a complaint, a change has been made to ensure a process is put in place by the communications operator to ensure the Local Planning Authority is notified of proposals correctly.</p>
Housing	<p>Through the complaints process, the Authority established there had been a failure when a fencing contractor wrongly removed and disposed of a private fence. Consequently, it was agreed that better communication was needed between the Authority and contractors.</p>
Commissioning and Investment	<p>Through the complaints process the Authority determined that greater clarity was required in letters relating to the school meal payment system in respect of refunds.</p> <p>Ensure the process for refunds is addressed as part of the new system to allow parents to withdraw their own funds rather than rely on refunds being managed by the LA</p> <p>Ensure communication with parents is clearer.</p>
Parking	<p>In response to a complaint, it is recognised that unique circumstances have contributed to the delays in processing</p>

	parking applications. It is also acknowledged that the temporary process has led to difficulties in contacting staff due to the volume of telephone calls that it is generating. A new permit management software solution was introduced in June 2021 which will address the issues.
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Developments

North Tyneside Council continues to change rapidly. This change process will continue and remain a challenge for effective complaints handling as service users experience changes and the organisation evolves internally as a result of changing priorities from central Government and more limited resources being available to the Authority.

There are significant examples of change within the Authority. The Authority currently has partnership arrangements with Engie and Capita to provide a range of services and for the past ten years, housing repairs and maintenance were undertaken by a partnership organisation, Kier North Tyneside. However, in April 2019, this changed, and the housing repairs and maintenance is now undertaken internally by the Housing Property and Construction Group.

The overall focus of attention continues to be very much centred on 'learning' from complaints and this will be a core driver in all future developments by the Authority.

Conclusions

In the Our North Tyneside Plan, the Authority has made a commitment to listen and to work better for residents. As part of this commitment, Cabinet agreed in May 2019, a programme to improve customer service across all its services. This programme has four key elements and one of these, "Better Never Stops", will introduce a clearer focus on a continuous improvement culture across the organisation.

The rapidly changing culture and demands of increased customer satisfaction coupled with organisational changes across public and partner sectors means that complaints services must be continually kept up to date. The Authority's successful history and current good practice in effective complaint handling cannot be taken for granted.

Therefore, part of the customer service improvement programme will include a review of how we handle complaints to ensure that the Authority has the best structure and systems in place to enable complaints to be dealt with effectively, sensitively and in a timely manner. The Authority already delivers a good level of service as set out in this annual report, but this review as part of the customer service improvement programme will identify where there might be any other improvements that could be made.

The underlying principles when dealing with complaints will tie into a new set of customer service standards, a "Customer Promise" that will be developed as part of the Customer Improvement Programme and will continue to include the following.

- To aim to respond to complainants in a proportionate manner, understanding the perspective of the person making the complaint and wherever possible resolve matters at an early stage.
- To continue to work alongside and support managers and other partner organisations to ensure that complaints are responded to concisely and in a timely manner.
- To continue to work within our policies, procedures and legislative guidelines throughout the complaints processes.
- To provide training to staff to ensure complaints are handled effectively and efficiently.
- To continue to focus on handling enquiries promptly to try to prevent unnecessary escalation and dissatisfaction.
- To continue to learn from our outcomes and make changes to improve our services.

By the very nature of this area of work, the complaints services will never satisfy all of the people all of the time. However, the survey of complainants indicates a good level of satisfaction with the service overall.

The Authority is committed to providing effective complaints services for the benefits of individual customers, the Authority and the community alike. Complaints are now widely recognised as integral to the provision of quality services at both individual and strategic levels and will continue to be so in the coming years.

Background

Statistics

This part of the report is broken down into the following sections: -

- 1) Overall number of complaints across the Authority
- 2) Social Services Complaints
- 3) Corporate Complaints
- 4) Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- 5) Informal Complaints and Enquiries

1. Overall number of complaints across the Authority

The volume of formal complaint related activity for the period April 2015 to March 2019 is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Social Service Complaints	126	97	102	68
Corporate Complaints	1070	973	967	451
Total	1196	1070	1069	519
Local Government & Housing Ombudsman complaints received by NTC	38	56	50	29
Formal total	1234	1126	1119	548

Pre-Complaint and general enquiries dealt with by the Customer & Member Liaison Office	685	1105	1107	914
Total complaint related activity	1919	2231	2226	1462

There has been a lower number of complaints and general enquiries dealt with by the Customer and Member Liaison Office during 2020 - 2021. This is due to the break in accepting complaints between April and June, during the initial stages of the Covid 19 Pandemic, this was following guidance from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The Customer and Member Liaison Office continued to make sure that as many enquiries as possible are directed to the most appropriate service at the first point of contact. This ensured customers were given more responsive replies and reduced the inefficiencies inherent in redirection of enquiries within the Authority. All enquiries received by email into the Customer and Member Liaison Office were acknowledged by email, the majority on the same working day. The customer was also notified of who their enquiry had been sent to and that they should expect a response direct. Enquirers by telephone or letter were also provided with a receipt setting out the same information.

2. Social Services Complaints

Social Service complaints dealt with under the relevant statutory processes are split into Children's and Adult Services, as shown in Table 2. In addition, there are complaints regarding Children's and Adult Services which were dealt with under the Corporate procedure (see Table 8).

Table 2 Social Services by Division	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020 -21
Children's Social Care	64	42	49	30
Adult Social Care	62	55	53	38
TOTAL	126	97	102	68

Overall, there has been minimal increase of complaints about Social Care Services during the last year.

Within Children Social Care, complaints have been categorised as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Children & Families Services Categories	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020 -21
Adoption/Fostering/LAC	14	5	4	2
Safeguarding	31	19	33	17
Child Protection	2	0	0	0
Front Door	9	2	7	3
Commissioning and Investment	3	0	0	0
Children with Disability Team	5	3	4	0
Other	0	13	1	8
TOTAL	54	64	42	30

Children who are looked after, receive a complaints leaflet to use if they wish to raise any point about their care or circumstances generally. Acknowledging that making a complaint can be difficult, young people are encouraged to have the assistance of a mentor or advocate if they want to make a complaint. The units for children with a disability have specially trained advocates to help those who have communication difficulties.

In the child protection system users may feel they have little power to make a complaint and this is acknowledged. To capture issues of user concern, the review process and other meetings are forums in which matters that are a worry to the user can be tackled. In this way the user's view can be heard and services influenced. In addition to the numbers reported above there were 25 complaints about Children Services dealt with under the Corporate Complaints procedure.

Within Adult Social Care, categories are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Adult Services Categories	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020 -21
Safeguarding	3	5	4	2
Commissioning	2	4	6	5
Personalisation / Social Work	40	34	33	23
Integrated Services	9	5	7	6
Other	8	7	3	2
TOTAL	62	55	53	38

In addition to the numbers reported above there were 8 complaints about Adult Services dealt with under the Corporate Complaints Procedure during 2020 – 21.

Tables 5 and 6 show the proportions of upheld complaints for Children's and Adults Services over the year.

Table 5 - Children Social Care complaint outcomes	2017-18 %	2018-19 %	2019-20 %	2020 -21 %
Not Upheld	55	40	46	30
Upheld in Full	8	31	20	10
Upheld in Part	37	29	34	60

Table 6 - Adult Social Care complaint outcomes	2017-18 %	2018 - 19 %	2019-20 %	2020 -21 %
Not Upheld	44	48	55	42
Upheld in Full	0	9	7	11
Upheld in Part	56	43	38	47

Problem solving at the earliest opportunity is a key aim of effective complaint handling. This is not only of value to the complainant but also to the Authority in optimising use of resources and enhancing customer care.

Table 7 shows early resolution at Stage 1 of Children's complaints only. From April 2009 a one stage process was introduced for Adult Social Care complaints.

Table 7 – Children’s Social Services complaints resolved at stage:	2018-19 %	2018-19 %	2019-20 %	2020-21 %
One	94	93	88	83
Two	1.5	7	10	10
Three	4.5	0	2	7

3. Corporate Complaints

Table 8, below, shows a breakdown of corporate complaints received from 2017-18 for comparison purposes.

Table 8 – Corporate Complaints					
Department	Service Area	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Chief Exec & Financial Services	Finance & Resources	11	14	5	0
	Law & Governance	7	5	14	11
	Other (inc Street Lighting)	1	7	13	0
	Total	19	26	32	11
Revs, Bens & Customer Services	Benefits	51	30	28	16
	Council Tax	69	99	101	25
	Customer Services	37	42	22	6
	Total	158	171	151	47
Adult Social Care					
	Total	14	20	23	8
Children, Young People & Learning					
	Total	16	24	20	27
ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND HOUSING:					
Department	Service Area	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Leisure	Indoor Sports & Leisure	21	9	9	1
	Cultural Services Other	8	1	1	0
	Total	29	10	10	1
Environment	Parking	52	46	52	25
	Planning/Building Control	21	19	18	14
	Highways	87	59	42	11
	Environmental Health	19	7	13	8
	Other	20	3	0	5
	Street Environment	80	61	61	31
	Property	7	8	5	2
	Waste Management	30	15	3	4
	Recycling/Wheeled Bins/Special Collections	116	156	152	50
	Trees/Shrubs	15	9	6	7
	Winter Maintenance	0	0	2	0
	Bereavement Services	3	0	1	1
	Total	447	380	355	158

Housing	Debt Recovery/Income	20	18	13	5
	Day-to-day Repairs	10	22	11	3
	Allocations/Letting	26	31	23	17
	Housing Estates	76	47	53	6
	Empty Homes /Voids	10	12	8	6
	Quality Homes for Older People	4	1	0	0
	Homelessness / Advice	9	12	16	3
	Housing Investment	10	17	4	11
	Safer Estates	4	22	23	23
	Leasehold	3	0	3	1
	Other	10	6	2	5
	Total	182	188	156	80
Housing, Property and Construction	Day-to-day Repairs	148	99	158	98
	Gas Services	20	10	27	6
	Housing Investment	20	11	31	11
	Empty Homes / Voids	12	7	3	0
	Other	0	2	0	0
	Total	200	129	219	115
Business & Economic Development	Business & Economic Development	4	1	0	3
Public Health	Public Health	1	1	1	1
	Grand Total	1070	973	967	451

The number of formal Corporate Complaints registered during 2019-20 has remained similar to last year.

Table 9 shows the proportion of corporate complaints upheld or not.

Table 9: Corporate complaints outcomes	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	%	%	%	%
Not Upheld	46.5	49	54	52
Upheld in Full	27	30	24	25
Upheld in Part	26.5	21	22	23

Table 10 shows the stage at which corporate complaints were resolved, again indicating a high level of early problem solving overall and again is consistent with previous years.

Table 10: Corporate complaints resolved at Stage:	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	%	%	%	%
One	87	85	88	83
Two	13	14	12	17
Three	<1	<1	0	0

Policy complaints

Complaints about the policies of the Authority are recorded and responded to at Stage 1 but not considered further within the complaints process.

4. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman

The next stage after the Authority's complaints procedures is consideration by the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman or Housing Ombudsman.

Table 11 groups the breakdown by the Authority's Service Areas as recorded by the Authority:

Table 11: Complaints to the LGSCO & HO	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Environmental & Cultural Services	4	9	4	2
Highways, Transport & Planning	7	3	10	6
Revenues & Benefits	4	11	5	2
Housing	8	15	3	6
Education & Children Social Care	5	10	17	10
Adult Social Care	8	4	6	3
Other	2	9	5	0
Total	38	61	50	29

Table 12 gives the decisions made by the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman in the given years as recorded by the Authority.

Table 12: LGSCO		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total	Complaints Received	38	56	50	29
Not Investigated	Outside Jurisdiction	7	10	8	2
	Closed after initial enquiries	8	10	13	9
	Premature referrals	3	19	16	8
	Discontinued Investigation	5	0	0	2
	Signposted to HO		5	1	0
Total Not Investigated		18	44	38	21
Investigated	Not upheld	10	5	4	2
	Satisfied with LA's actions	0	0	0	0
	Maladministration and injustice	3	6	7	4
	Maladministration, no injustice	1	0	1	2
	Ongoing	1	1	0	0
Total Investigated		15	12	12	8

5. Informal complaints and enquiries

As has been indicated previously, the 'headline' figure of the number of formal complaints does not reflect the number of concerns or problems reported to the Authority, and satisfactorily dealt with by staff via social media, telephone and email contact and via the Members Enquiries System.

The Customer and Member Liaison Office also monitored the number of enquiries and informal complaints, or 'pre-complaint enquiries' dealt with by its staff during 2019-20, and these figures are shown in Table 13. This information has already been helpful on a number of occasions as early indicators of developing issues in some service areas.

Table 13 - Pre complaint & general enquiries processed by CMLO	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Children, Young People & Learning	20	8	29	29
Adult Social Care	15	22	14	21
Cultural Services	23	27	26	14
North Tyneside Homes	91	110	264	233
Kier North Tyneside	23	57	0	0
Environmental Services	404	805	615	514
Customer Services, Revs & Bens	41	36	89	61
Law & Governance	20	19	23	12
Finance & Resources	35	6	3	5
Other	13	15	44	25
TOTAL	685	1105	1107	914

It is noted that the pre-complaint/general enquiry numbers have remained very similar to that of last year.

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21 July 2021

By email

Mr Hanson
Chief Executive
North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Mr Hanson

Annual Review letter 2021

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

Complaint statistics

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

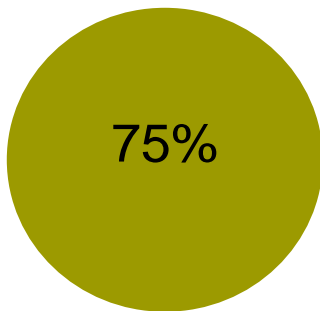
An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Yours sincerely,



Michael King
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld



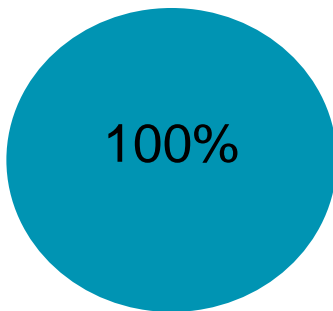
75% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of **72%** in similar authorities.

6
upheld decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 8 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations



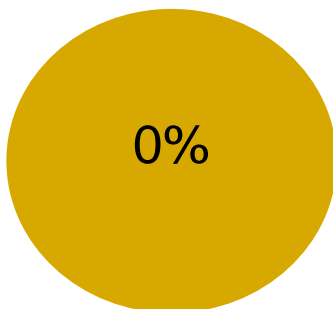
In **100%** of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.

This compares to an average of **100%** in similar authorities.

Statistics are based on a total of 5 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

- Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An authority with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority



In **0%** of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of **11%** in similar authorities.

0
satisfactory remedy decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 8 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

NOTE: To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

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Reference	Authority	Category	Received
20000189	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	26 May 2020
20000438	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	10 Jul 2020
20001290	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	09 Jul 2020
20001434	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	10 Jul 2020
20001472	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Highways & Transport	13 Jul 2020
20002654	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	31 Jul 2020
20004055	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	27 Aug 2020
20004297	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	02 Sep 2020
20004335	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	03 Sep 2020
20004592	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	08 Sep 2020
20004661	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	09 Sep 2020
20004880	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	15 Sep 2020
20005106	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	21 Sep 2020
20005473	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	28 Sep 2020
20006941	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	23 Oct 2020
20007164	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	19 Jan 2021
20008414	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	23 Nov 2020
20010201	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	07 Jan 2021
20010676	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	14 Jan 2021
20012645	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	23 Feb 2021
20003696	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	09 Nov 2020
20008505	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	27 Nov 2020
20008611	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	26 Nov 2020
20008931	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	05 Jan 2021
20010397	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	11 Jan 2021
20012507	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	31 Mar 2021
20012726	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	24 Feb 2021
20013316	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	05 Mar 2021
20013627	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	12 Mar 2021

Reference	Authority	Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy	Service improvement recommendations
19005287	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	30 Jun 2020	Not Upheld	no mal		
19011486	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	18 Aug 2020	Upheld	mal & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Improved BinJ remedy	
19011521	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Highways & Transport	02 Feb 2021	Upheld	mal no inj		
19011780	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	22 Feb 2021	Upheld	mal & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Financial Redress: Quantifiable Loss	
19019064	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	03 Apr 2020	Closed after initial enquiries	At request of complainant		
19019965	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	24 Apr 2020	Closed after initial enquiries	Sch 5.1 court proceedings		
20000189	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	09 Oct 2020	Upheld	mal & inj	Financial Redress: Quantifiable Loss,Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	
20000438	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	10 Jul 2020	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
20001290	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	03 Aug 2020	Closed after initial enquiries	Sch 5.1 court proceedings		
20001434	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	03 Feb 2021	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure		
20001472	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Highways & Transport	06 Aug 2020	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure		
20002654	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	31 Jul 2020	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
20004055	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	07 Jan 2021	Upheld	mal & inj	Provide training and/or guidance,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Apology,Provide services	The Council has agreed to provide training/guidance to staff dealing with complaints, including the importance of addressing all points raised at the first opportunity and ensuring a response is provided to any subsequent related complaints.
20004297	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	06 Jan 2021	Not Upheld	no mal		
20004335	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	03 Sep 2020	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
20004592	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	08 Sep 2020	Advice given	Signpost - go to complaint handling		
20004661	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	05 Feb 2021	Upheld	mal no inj	Procedure or policy change/review	The Council will update its guides for admission appeals going forward whether they are face to face virtual or by written submissions so appellants are aware they should speak to the Council if they feel they might have difficulties in submitting their cases.
20004880	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	15 Sep 2020	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised		
20005106	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	21 Sep 2020	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
20005473	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Adult Care Services	28 Sep 2020	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised		
20006941	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	03 Dec 2020	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure		
20007164	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	23 Feb 2021	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure		
20008414	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Planning & Development	14 Jan 2021	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(b) appeal to Minister		
20010201	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	07 Jan 2021	Advice given	Signpost - go to complaint handling		
20010676	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	18 Feb 2021	Closed after initial enquiries	Sch 5.5A/5.5B Social housing landlord		
20012645	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	23 Feb 2021	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		

Reference	Authority	Category	Decided	Remedy	Remedy Target Date	Remedy Achieved Date	Satisfaction with Compliance
19011486	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	18-Aug-20	ApologyFinancial redress: Avoidable distress/time and troubleImproved BinJ remedy	15-Sep-20	25-Sep-20	Remedy complete and satisfied
19011780	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Housing	22-Feb-21	ApologyFinancial redress: Avoidable distress/time and troubleFinancial Redress: Quantifiable Loss	03-Mar-21	03-Mar-21	Remedy complete and satisfied
20000189	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	09-Oct-20	Financial Redress: Quantifiable LossApologyFinancial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	06-Nov-20	13-Oct-20	Remedy complete and satisfied
20004055	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	07-Jan-21	Provide training and/or guidanceFinancial redress: Avoidable distress/time and troubleApologyProvide ser	08-Feb-21	08-Feb-21	Remedy not complete but satisfied
20004661	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	Education & Childrens Services	05-Feb-21	Procedure or policy change/review	05-Apr-21	29-Mar-21	Remedy complete and satisfied

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