

## **Cabinet**

**Monday, 28 March 2022**

**Present:** Councillor C Johnson (Deputy Mayor) (in the Chair)  
Councillors C Burdis, K Clark, S Cox, P Earley,  
S Graham, A McMullen and M Rankin

**In Attendance:** M Godfrey (Young Mayor)  
S McKenzie (former Young Mayor)  
R Fry (Voluntary and Community Sector)  
Y Probert (Age UK)  
K Goldfinch (Business Sector)  
R Layton (North Tyneside Joint Trades Union Committee)

**Apologies:** Mrs N Redfearn (Elected Mayor), Councillor S Day and  
M Adams (NHS North Tyneside CCG)

### **CAB106/22 To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted**

No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.

### **CAB107/22 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 February 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **CAB108/22 Report of the Young Mayor**

The former Young, Suzie McKenzie, attended today's Cabinet meeting at the invitation of the Elected Mayor, as she was unable to attend her final meeting as Young Mayor. Suzie explained that since then, the election had concluded with over 5000 young people voting, and our new Young Mayor was Max Godfrey, and the new elected Member of UK Youth Parliament was Hannah Clark-McKeran.

Suzie explained that the young people's conference would be held this Thursday where students from middle and high schools would participate in activities which would help Youth Councillors' focus on the most important issues for young people. The conference would conclude with a handing over to Max newly elected Young Mayor, and Suzie confirmed she would be staying on the youth council for a while yet to support our new representatives.

Before she passed over to the new Young Mayor, Suzie thanked everyone for all their support during her time as Young Mayor. She also thanked the Elected Mayor and the Chief Executive too, as both of their support had meant a lot to her and Abi Tang.

The Young Mayor reported on the following activities in which he and Young Cabinet Members and/or Youth Councillors had been involved:

- The Young Mayor had attended his first Climate Emergency Board meeting and was

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impressed and reassured to know that North Tyneside Council was already doing such a lot and looking forward to working alongside the board members in achieving his pledge, which was to: Work to improve the local environment of North Tyneside and to fight climate change by getting the schools to sign up to the Eco-School Green Flag award and putting more bins in public places and in schools.

- The Young Mayor had been involved in the tree planting at Richardson Dees Park, although he was unable to attend the unveiling of the first Reflection area at the Biodiversity Park, Suzie had attended in his place.
- Newly elected MYP Hannah Clark-McKeran had pledged to work on improving PD/PSHE lessons to prepare students with the necessary skills for the future such as courses on basic first aid skills or education surrounding how to apply for a mortgage etc. Hannah was keen to ensure that there was mental health assistance for students too. Hannah's work would be driven by the national campaigns. The Make Your Mark Ballot count showed, of the eight issues that were on the ballot paper, that the top issues for North Tyneside Young Voters were:

Health and Wellbeing with a close second being Jobs, Money, Homes and Opportunities and the third issue was the Environment! Hannah would ensure that she represented the issues for the young people in North Tyneside when she joined the wider forums and hopefully was able to speak in the House of Commons. As a Youth Council they would also be working locally on these top issues.

- The annual International Woman's Day event with North Tyneside Women's Voices was successfully held online on 8 March with students from several schools, which explored the theme of sexism, and some of the initiatives already happening in the borough.
- Youth Councillors had participated in an engagement activity which had helped to shape the application by the Regeneration Team with Tyne & Wear Museum partners, in successfully securing MEND funding from the Arts Council for repairs such as new lift, plant replacement, roof repairs etc, at Segedunum. The Regeneration Team had also been invited to submit an application for lottery funding for the wider works which the Youth Council looked forward to further engagement on the next phase.

The Deputy Mayor, on behalf of the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet, took the opportunity to thank Suzie for the valuable work she did during her time as Young Mayor and wished her all the best for the future. Those Cabinet Members present also welcomed Max to his first Cabinet meeting and praised the work of the young people for their amazing work.

### **CAB109/22 2021/22 Financial Management Report to 31 January 2022**

Cabinet considered the fifth monitoring report outlining the 2021/22 financial position. It provided the latest indication of the potential revenue and capital financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2022.

The report covered the forecast outturn of the Authority's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget including management mitigations where issues had 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 were

recommended for approval.

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 £4.537m of savings to be achieved, all of which had been identified in previous years.

The forecast overall pressure for the General Fund Revenue Account was estimated at £2.902m against the approved net budget. This was made up of a forecasted pressure of £0.675m on normal activities and £2.227m relating to the impact of Covid-19. The pressure on normal activities in the service was driven mainly by Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding at £6.557m, reflecting the continued pressures in Children's Services, partly mitigated by the contingency balances that had been created as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process and continued to be held centrally to reflect the on-going pressures in social care being felt locally and nationally.

Included in this projection was £4.996m of pressures in Corporate Parenting and Placements and £1.317m in Integrated Disability and Additional Needs. The drivers for these pressures continued from 2020/21 and were outlined in the report.

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

The figures recorded to the end of January 2022 included a projection of £0.716m of costs relating to the recent storms that had hit the region. It was expected that these costs would be met from the insurance Reserve.

With regards to the impact of Covid-19, the main drivers behind the £19.737m impact on services were also within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding where £12.243m was for increased costs to the Authority. Significant Covid-19 related pressures also existed in Environment, Housing and Leisure (£3.056m) and in Commissioning & Asset Management (£2.999m).

The report outlined the revenue grants which had been received during December 2021 and January 2022.

In addition to the £2.655m of revenue grants the Authority had also received £6.385m of brownfield grant funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

The latest position in respect of Schools Funding was provided in the Annex to the report. Schools were required to submit their rolling three-year budget plan by 31 May each year. The total planned deficit for 2021/22 was £3.902m. The Authority had been working with schools for a number of years with regard to long-term strategic issues of surplus secondary places and the associated financial pressures, which continued to be compounded by rising employment costs. The outturn for the year ended 31 March 2021 showed a surplus of £3.721m, which revised the trend of deficits over the previous few years.

As well as school balances being forecast to reduce overall, some individual schools continued to face significant financial challenges. There were six schools with deficit

budget plans for 2021/22, all of which continued to be deficit following 2019/20. The High Needs Block ended 2021/21 with a pressure of £8.880m. The latest forecast of the budget position for 2021/22 indicated an anticipated in-year pressure of £4.533m reflecting a further rise in demand for special school places.

The Housing Revenue Account was forecast to have year-end balances at 31 March 2022 of £3.807m, assuming all identified Covid-19 related costs and income shortfalls were covered centrally. The balances were £0.795m higher than budget which had been set at £3.012m, due mainly to an in-year estimated underspend of £0.748m, against an in-year budget of £1.943m, as well as a prior year brought forward improvement on balances of £0.047m.

Universal Credit had been fully implemented across North Tyneside on 2 May 2018. As of the end of January 2022, 3,753 North Tyneside Homes tenants had moved on to Universal Credit and a team was working proactively with tenants to minimise arrears. This position would be closely monitored as the year progressed to identify any adverse impacts on the budget position.

The approved 2021-2026 Investment Plan totalled £292.639m (£87.528m 2021/22) and was detailed in the Annex. The Annex also set out the delivery progress to date, planned delivery for 2021/22, reprogramming and other variations identified through the Investment Programme governance process.

The monthly monitoring of the Investment Plan had resulted in proposals for variations of £0.796m and reprogramming of (£9,304m) of which more details were set out in the Annex to the report. The revised Investment Plan stood at £87.469m for 2021/22 and to the end of January 2022 spend of £43.360m had been incurred which represented 55.26% of the revised plan.

In terms of treasury management, the Bank of England had raised base rate from 0.10% to 0.50% in two increments. A rise in December 2021 from 0.10% to 0.25%, followed by another rise from 0.25% to 0.50% in February 2022. The rise in bank rate was a response to the increased levels of inflation driving domestic cost and price pressures, which was forecast to peak to over 7% in April 2022. The Bank of England committee updated their forecast anticipating base rate to rise to 1.50% by mid-2023.

The report also outlined progress against the 2021-2025 Our North Tyneside Plan which set out the overall vision and policy context within which the Financial Plan and Budget were set.

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

In Adult Social Care, as with most local authorities, and in line with the national picture, North Tyneside had seen costs continue to rise. Along with the number of adults supported increasing over the last few financial years, the individual needs of those residents had increased due to people living longer with multiple complex conditions. Supporting those needs required more intensive packages of care which were more expensive to provide. In addition to older people, younger adults with learning disabilities

and physical disabilities were also living longer, often with multiple complex issues.

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

Over recent years, there had 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 required supervision after leaving care continued to generate a significant financial pressure. Data suggested that, whilst fluctuating, there was a general trend of a steady increase in numbers of LAC, but there was a wide range of levels of care provided, with more complex cases now being faced.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to accept the recommendations as set out in Section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations.

**Resolved** that (1) the forecast budget monitoring position for the General Fund, Schools' Finance and Housing Revenue Account as at 31 January 2022, as set out in the Annex to the report, be noted;

(2) the receipt of £2.655m new revenue grants be approved;

(3) the receipt of £6.385m brownfield grant funding be approved;

(4) the Authority's Investment Plan spend of £43.360m to 31 January 2022 and the financing of the Plan to the end of the year, as set out in the Annex to the report, be noted; and

(5) the variations of £0.796m (£0.245m for 2021/22) and reprogramming of (9.304m) for 2021-22 within the 2021-2026 Investment Plan, as set out in the Annex to the report, be approved.

(Reasons for decision: 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.)

### **CAB110/22 Land at Newsteads Drive, Monkseaton**

Cabinet received a report to consider public representations made in response to press notices confirming the Authority's intention to dispose of an area of public open space at Newsteads Drive, Monkseaton, in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Resolved** that the Land at Newsteads Drive, Monkseaton, be deferred to the next meeting of Cabinet to allow further consideration of representations made.

### **CAB111/22 Procurement and Commercial Strategy**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the Authority's Procurement and Commercial Strategy 2022-2025.

The Procurement and Commercial Strategy 2022-2025 attached at Appendix 1 to the report sets the framework in which the Authority would work to ensure that procurement delivered value for money and contributed to the achievement of the Authority's priorities.

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The Authority was committed to developing relationships with good employers who reflected the Authority's own values of 'We Care, We Listen, We are Good Value for Money, and We are Ambitious' and the principles of fairness, transparency and integrity in procurement.

In developing the new Strategy, the opportunity was taken to complete the National Procurement Strategy Toolkit. The toolkit identified the following as key areas of strength and good practice within the Authority, and officers would continue the good work in these areas:

- Culture – we act as a single team when dealing with external partners;
- Tendering – our tenders are bespoke to the opportunity, we approach this on a commercial basis to ensure value for money for the Authority; and
- Forward planning – contracting will form part of the Authority's budget setting process. The team contribute ideas for savings and income generation.

The following areas were highlighted as areas where improvement could potentially be made:

- Change control – no standard process in place for approving changes to contracts;
- Contract management – currently not deemed an essential skill across the Authority; and
- Social value – no senior oversight for reporting social value.

The Strategy proposed a mechanism to strengthen these areas.

In 2021, the Local Government Association published a revised National Procurement Strategy for Local Government. This sets out a vision for local government procurement and encouraged all local authorities to deliver outcomes in three key areas: Social Value; Commercial and Procurement Delivery; and Skills and Capability for Procurement. These key areas underpinned the strategic direction of the Strategy, which supported the 'Our North Tyneside Plan'. Specific actions were set out in the Action Plan included at the end of the document and the outcomes were described in more detail in the report.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 required local authorities to consider securing economic, social or environmental benefits when procuring services. To comply with the 2012 Act local Authorities must think about how and what they were going to buy, or how they were going to buy it, and if this process could add social value benefits. Within the Strategy was the Authority's revised approach to Social Value. Experience had taught the Authority, and engagement told the Authority it can further improve the policy. The Authority currently had no formal mechanism of monitoring social value provided for in bids. Social Value would be monitored, measured and reported to Cabinet as a minimum on an annual basis as described in Annex 1 to the Strategy.

It was proposed that the weighting associated with Social Value was increased to 20%, 5% would be allocated to the 'greener' priority as this would align with the Authority's priority to be carbon net-zero by 2030 and 5% would be allocated to the 'caring' priority. This would align with the Authority priority to reduce inequalities within the borough. The remaining 10% would be discretionary across the 'thriving', 'secure' and 'family-friendly' priorities. The

weighting would align to the content of the opportunity.

Social Value weightings may vary between the procurement exercises and the priorities and measures chosen would be appropriate and proportionate to the contract. The weightings would be clearly published with the procurement documentation. It was proposed that the weightings were reviewed annually. All contracts which were tendered would consider Social Value as part of the evaluation criteria. The Authority's approach would need to be flexible where it was obtaining funding with conditions attached and would also need to adapt to the requirement of any existing frameworks which the Authority wished to use.

Through the Strategy the Authority expected to achieve the following strategic aims and ambition -

- Value for money
- Working Towards a Net Zero Carbon Future
- Social Value
- Buying from ourselves
- Capability and Capacity
- Commercial and Procurement Delivery

An action plan was contained within the Strategy, again progress against the action plan would be reported to Cabinet on an annual basis.

The Strategy was prepared following engagement with organisations within the waste, construction, social care sectors, and the voluntary and community sector, being the Authority's largest areas of influenceable spend. Feedback was also sought from the Authority's strategic partners and Trades Unions as well as officers within the Authority who undertaking procurement and commissioning activity. Feedback received was positive on the Strategy. The feedback taken into account when finalising the Strategy was detailed in the report. Previously potential bidders had indicated that the procurement process was complex, lengthy, and sometimes was a disadvantage to smaller, local businesses. The procurement team had worked with various markets through engagement events to ensure that bidders were 'tender ready' and able to submit quality bids. As part of NEPO bespoke training had been delivered and 1-2-1 support provided to local businesses.

Monitoring and reducing inequalities was a priority for the Authority. Currently the Authority did not monitor or manage the supply chains data around diversity and inclusion. It was proposed that each contractor submit data on its organisation and supply chain. This would give the Authority information as to which sectors and specific organisations it needed to work with to reduce inequalities.

The Authority had adopted a zero-tolerance approach towards all forms of modern slavery and commits to preventing modern slavery within the borough by embedding the Modern Slavery Act 2015 into its corporate activities. The Authority continued to rely upon its local strategic partnerships with the following external organisations to mitigate the risk posed by modern slavery to North Tyneside: NHS Northumbria; NHS North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group; Cumbria, Northumberland, and Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation; Northumbria Police; and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue. The Authority also commits to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of modern slavery as required by Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

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Monitoring and managing modern slavery within its supply chain was essential. The Authority would undertake a risk assessment on the goods and services to manage those which were higher risk as best practice. The Authority would work with the supply chain which were highlighted as high risk to monitor and mitigate any potential risk to the Authority.

The needs of the community would be fundamental to the decisions the Authority made with innovative and agile procurement practices adopted to support the local economy and deliver more sustainable outcomes. To maintain the Authority's reputation and reflect the expectations it had of its suppliers, all procurement activity would be undertaken to the highest standards of probity and professionalism. Members and officers would not only be fair and ethical but would avoid conduct that was capable of being placed under adverse interpretation.

Procurement would therefore be undertaken in compliance with the principles set out in the Responsible Procurement Charter as attached at Appendix 2 to the report. This would be embedded in the Authority's procurement documentation.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, *or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations.*

**Resolved** that (1) the Procurement and Commercial Strategy 2022-2025 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;  
(2) the Responsible Procurement Charter as set out at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved;  
(3) the approach to social value as set out at paragraph 1.5.2 of the report, be approved; and  
(4) it be agreed to receive bi-annual reports setting out the Authority's Procurement Plan and reporting the benefits secured through social value.

(Reasons for decision: The Strategy builds on the previous Procurement Strategy and feedback provided by stakeholders as the Strategy was developed. The Strategy recognises the role of procurement activity in helping to secure optimum value for money and maximise the benefits social value can bring to the residents.

If Cabinet decides not to approve the Strategy, then the Authority will not have a clear vision and direction for procurement for the next three years.)

### **CAB112/22 Procurement Plan 2022-2023**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the Authority's Procurement Plan 2022-2023 to proceed with the relevant procurement exercises throughout the financial year and award contracts in accordance with UK public procurement legislation to the most advantageous tenders.

The Authority continued to spend a considerable sum on third party goods and services. The Authority's constitution required that prior to any procurement commencing which exceeded £500,000 Cabinet approval must be obtained. Following the return of the Procurement Service to the management of the Authority the opportunity had been taken to review and improve reporting practices. To date individual reports were previously

presented for Cabinet approval; once the budget was approved by Council the third-party requirements were known. The procurement exercises which would commence in the financial year 2022/2023 had been identified and were set out at in an amended Appendix 1 to report, the contract start date may be in the subsequent year due to the procurement lead in time. This approach would ensure timely procurements whilst continuing to maintain value for money. The Local Government Association issued the National Procurement Strategy in 2021, this guidance advised that local authorities should develop a pipeline of procurements, this would help the market place prepare to tender for opportunities as they arise.

The Authority adopted its Procurement Strategy in 2017. Utilising the social value principles within the Procurement Strategy, the Authority would gain commitments of local employment and apprenticeships whenever applicable. This would contribute to the economic recovery of North Tyneside in the wake of the Covid crisis. The Authority's tendering process would be streamlined, and better information would be provided to the market. Where appropriate, lower value tenders would be issued. The Authority has seen an increase in the number of Small and Medium Enterprise's (SME's) and local suppliers it was procuring with. In 2020/21 the Authority spent with 1932 SME's and 752 suppliers within North Tyneside, whereas in 2021/22 the Authority spent with 2021 SME's and 801 suppliers within North Tyneside. The procurement exercises due to commence in 2022/23 would continue to give SME's and local suppliers the chance to work with the Authority, again enabling and encouraging smaller businesses. Working with the Business Forum and North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO), bespoke workshops would be developed to support SME's. The principles set out in the Authority's Responsible Procurement Charter would be embedded in the tender requirements. If approved, the Procurement Strategy 2022-2025 would underpin the principles of the procurement process.

The relevant service area would develop tender packages and robust specifications to ensure that the Authority was protected in terms of financial and commercial risk. The majority of procurements would be carried on an open basis as defined within the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Any pre-existing regional frameworks would be utilised as appropriate. The duration of the contract would be considered to help shape new and emerging markets; lessons learned from any previous contracts would be considered when developing the tender package. Relevant existing frameworks would be explored if appropriate to the contract. Collaborative regional working would be explored if appropriate to the contract. The contract award criteria would be developed considering social value as appropriate. Packages would be developed to support the economy in the recovery of Covid-19.

Consultation prior to commencing a procurement exercise with the relevant Cabinet Members was key as this would ensure that the Authority Priorities were achieved through its contracting arrangements. The Authority's finance team would be engaged to identify any budgetary risks associated with the delivery of the service and any potential mitigations. The Authority's legal team would review the procurement process and the terms and conditions for each procurement to ensure the procurement complied with all UK procurement legislation and the Authority mitigated any commercial risk. Consultation and engagement with the market and any relevant associations would take place to ensure that the offer to the market was attractive and that a market existed to deliver the goods and services.

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An evaluation team consisting of subject matter experts and the procurement team would evaluate each bid received against the published award criteria and in accordance with UK public procurement legislation. Prior to award of any contract the evaluation result would be provided to the relevant Director to approve the award together with financial assurance that the contract value would remain within existing budgets.

The rationale behind the appropriate Director awarding contracts at the end of each procurement exercise would be duly recorded in compliance with the Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014.

Cabinet was asked to note the amendment made to Appendix 1 in the report (published to the Authority's website prior to the meeting), adding the contract for dark fibre to the Procurement Plan, this late addition was due to the transfer of services within ICT to the Authority.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations and to consider individual reports for each package of works and/or services. This may delay implementation of essential services and works being carried out.

**Resolved** that (1) the procurement of the goods and services as detailed in Appendix 1 (as amended to include the contract for dark fibre) to the Procurement Plan 2022-2023, be approved; and

(2) the relevant Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, Director of Resources and Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to commence the procurements identified and award contracts to those bidders who submitted the most advantageous tenders in accordance with UK public procurement legislation.

(Reason for decision: The Authority has a duty to obtain value for money. Tendering the opportunities identified in the report will meet the priorities contained within the Procurement Strategy and Our North Tyneside Plan.)

### **CAB113/22 Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 Performance Report**

Cabinet received an update report on progress in delivering the objectives of the refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 as set out in the 'Our North Tyneside Performance Report' attached to this report at Appendix 1.

The Council Plan was refreshed last year following the Mayoral Elections on 6 May 2021 to reflect the policy priorities of the incoming administration. Following consultation with residents and key stakeholders, Full Council agreed the refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 on the 23 September 2021.

A refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan Performance Report had been developed to monitor progress against the new priorities and objectives set out in the Council Plan.

This report when read in conjunction with Appendix 1 provided an overview of performance since the start of the plan and identified the agreed activities that the Authority would pursue in the future. In addition, it provided comparator information, such as national or regional performance, as there were several issues where North Tyneside was facing similar challenges as other parts of the country.

As with all areas, the COVID-19 Pandemic had understandably had an adverse impact on a range of different performance measures including the number of jobs available, new business start-ups, homelessness presentations and acceptances, waste and recycling collection, tourism and visitor levels to libraries and sport and leisure centres. Over time performance in these areas would improve as the borough recovered from the impact of the pandemic and the social restrictions placed on activity to control community transmission. The priorities and objectives in the refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan builds on the work carried out over the last 8 years and addressed the key challenges to build a better North Tyneside.

Performance against some of the measures set out in the Council Plan had been challenging over the last two years. The COVID-19 Pandemic had had an adverse impact on a range of different areas, just as it had in other local authority areas as well.

- In terms of the local economy; the number of jobs available and new businesses start-ups reduced.
- Tourism to the area had been negatively impacted by restrictions placed on the entertainment and hospitality sector to control community transmission.
- Visits to libraries and sport and leisure centres had been far lower than normal due to closures and restrictions placed on the services.
- There was an increase in the number of residents presenting as homeless and accepted as priority homeless due to the “Everyone In” Programme put in place to care for rough sleepers.
- Following the Authority’s best performing years for recycling and waste collection when alternate weekly waste collection was introduced, the pandemic had led to the highest volume of waste being collected from households in 2020/21 as residents spent significantly more time at home.

However, over time the Authority would see improvement in performance as the borough recovered from the impact of the pandemic and the restrictions placed on normal activity. The priorities and objectives in the refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan builds on the work carried out over the last 8 years and addressed the key challenges to build a better North Tyneside.

Some of the highlights of the Our North Tyneside Plan Performance Report were:-

- North Tyneside Council’s carbon emissions had reduced by 52%, ahead of the previous target to cut emissions by 50%, with plans being developed to deliver Net Zero 20 years earlier than the government’s national target.
- The Embedding Equality Programme was successfully launched in September 2021 with eight workstreams to reduce inequality and eliminate discrimination.
- Regeneration work was underway in North Shields, Whitley Bay and Wallsend, with a master plan being developed for the North West area of the borough.
- The Council Tax Support Scheme was extended to backdate claims up to 26 weeks rather than 4 to support more low-income families.

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- Work to address health and socio-economic inequalities were being delivered through a number of initiatives including the: -
  - Holiday Activities and Food Programme
  - Household Support Fund
  - Poverty Intervention Fund
- Delivery of the Affordable Homes Programme was on track and a 10-year Delivery Plan was agreed by Cabinet in February 2022.
- The Authority continued to support volunteering and build capacity with a number of initiatives.
- The education offer in the borough was strong compared to national and regional comparators, however an area of focus was to close the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Work to improve the working conditions of carers was underway including the introduction of a Social Care Academy and the national living wage increase was brought forward to December 2021 from April 2022, recognising the invaluable job that the Authority's social care sector did.

**Resolved** that the progress that had been made to deliver the updated objectives of the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025, be noted.

### **CAB114/22 Revised Housing Service Domestic Abuse Policy**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the revision of the current North Tyneside Housing Service Domestic Abuse Policy, that was published in 2019.

The report explained that post June 2019, the Housing Services' policy objectives in relation to domestic abuse formed part of the Authority's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

For the Authority's Housing Service to achieve accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), there was a requirement to create a 'standalone' Domestic Abuse Policy. In response to this requirement the Domestic Abuse Policy was developed and approved by Cabinet on 29 July 2019. DAHA accreditation followed in February 2020.

The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 prompted a review of the current Housing Service Domestic Abuse Policy. This review was carried out in partnership with the North Tyneside Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Steering Group. The review concluded that amendments to the 2019 Policy was required to ensure that the Policy remained fully compliant with new legislative requirements.

A review of the procedures that the Housing Services' teams followed when responding to domestic abuse disclosures had also been undertaken. The new process, an easy-to-follow flow chart for dealing with domestic abuse disclosures, was appended to the attached policy.

Having carried out a review of the Housing Service Domestic Abuse Policy, it was identified that some changes were required. These included:

- Inclusion of the statutory definition of "Domestic Abuse", as set out in Domestic Abuse Act 2021,
- Change of language when referring to people who have experienced domestic

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- abuse, adopting the term “survivor”,
- Inserting a section stating the intended outcomes of the Policy,
- Inserting a section stating the role of Housing Services in recognising the signs of domestic abuse, supporting survivors and reference to action taken in dealing with tenants who are perpetrators of domestic abuse,
- A timescale for reviewing the Policy.

In December 2019 the Government was elected with a manifesto commitment to “support all victims of domestic abuse and pass the Domestic Abuse Bill” originally introduced in the last Parliament. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was passed in April 2021 with the aim of ensuring that victims of domestic abuse had the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state, including local government, would do everything it could, both to support them and their children and pursue the abuser.

The Government’s Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021 set out the approach to tackling crimes which disproportionately affected women and girls. It included a set of ambitions that focused on Prioritising Prevention; Supporting Victims; Pursuing Perpetrators; and Strengthening the System.

Relationship education was made compulsory in primary schools, with sex and relationship education had been compulsory in secondary schools since 2020.

The Statutory Definition of Domestic Abuse under Section 1 of Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if: (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and (b) the behaviour is abusive.
- This includes physical, emotional, economic, sexual abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour.

‘Personally connected’ means: intimate partners, ex-partners, family members or individuals who share parental responsibility for a child. The expanded definition can be found at Appendix 1 of the updated Housing Services Domestic Abuse Policy.

Domestic abuse was still a largely hidden crime and happened in all communities, regardless of sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity. As a housing provider the Authority was well placed through its contact with its tenants to recognise the signs of domestic abuse.

The Authority would not tolerate domestic abuse. If a council tenant carried out or threatens to carry out any act of domestic abuse the Authority would take action against the tenant. If a council tenant reported abuse to the Authority they would be treated in a sympathetic, supportive, and non-judgemental way. The Authority also recognised that its staff may be experiencing domestic abuse and was committed to supporting them in accordance with the Authority’s Employee Domestic Abuse Policy.

The Authority’s customers should not live in fear of violence, abuse or harassment from a partner, former partner, or any member of their family. Domestic abuse often has consequences for the housing of survivors and their families who will frequently turn to the Authority’s Housing Services for help. The Policy aims were detailed in the report.

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The intended outcomes of the policy were to provide employees with clear and practical guidance to ensure the Authority supported and protected survivors of abuse. Survivors would have had information on what options were available to them to enable them to make informed decisions.

- The Authority would create a safe environment where survivors of abuse felt they could approach officers and be listened to by trained staff.
- Provide timely and effective guidance by working in partnership with relevant agencies to respond to any cases of domestic abuse that may arise. The Authority would seek to enhance the safety and security of those involved and support them to increase their confidence, resilience and empower themselves to live independently.
- Raise awareness of the impacts of domestic abuse.

Cabinet considered the following decision options:

Option 1: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

Option 2: to approve the revised Draft Housing Services Domestic Abuse Policy subject to amendments or conditions.

Option 3: Not to approve *the recommendations* as set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report and request Officers to consider the Authority's response to this matter further.

**Resolved** that the updated North Tyneside Housing Services Domestic Abuse Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(Reasons for decision: Approval of the updated Housing Services Domestic Abuse Policy reflects new legislation; Domestic Abuse Act 2021.)

DAHA Accreditation is due to expire in January 2023, as part of the assessment criteria the Authority must produce a stand-alone Domestic Abuse Policy that is revised regularly and reflects changes in national legislation. By approving the revised policy this will place the Authority in a good position when re-applying for DAHA Accreditation.)

### **CAB115/22 Transport and Highways Supplementary Planning Documents**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the formal consultation of the draft updated Transport and Highways Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Supplementary Planning Documents build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan. The purpose of the Supplementary Planning Document on Transport and Highways ("the SPD") was to provide direction and guidance for prospective developers so as to ensure that the transport implications of new developments were rigorously, and consistently, assessed and appropriate mitigation measures secured.

The current SPD, previously also referred to as Local Development Document LDD12, was last revised in 2017. The revised and updated draft SPD at Appendix 1 had been prepared with a clear eye on the national, regional and local policy context, which had substantially

developed since the SPD was last revised.

At national level, in 2020 the Government introduced an updated set of use classes, or categories of development used in the planning system, which replaced the previous use classes referred to in the current SPD; and in 2021 the National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these were expected to be applied, was also revised. At regional level, the North East Transport Plan was approved by the Joint Transport Committee in March 2021.

The Authority declared a climate emergency in 2019 and the 'Our North Tyneside Plan 2021 to 2025' commits to publishing an action plan of the steps the Authority would take and the national investment it would seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030. The North Tyneside Transport Strategy, updated in 2021, placed an emphasis in its objectives on progressing towards achieving carbon net zero and, as part of this, securing increased provision for more sustainable modes of transport. The North Tyneside Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Strategy, approved by Cabinet in November 2021, included a commitment to update the SPD and its requirements in relation to electric vehicle (EV) charging and associated measures.

As part of the review of the SPD, details of car parking and cycle parking standards had been reviewed and realigned to the new use classes. Focus had also been given to sustainable transport and additional detail provided on the provision of infrastructure for EVs. The revisions to the document had sought to ensure that the revised SPD would support development that was sustainable, made efficient use of land and resources and demonstrated good design, in accordance with relevant policy at national, regional and local level.

It was intended that the revised SPD, once finalised, would continue to offer effective direction and guidance to prospective developers and applicants in the borough, in accordance with the Local Plan and the North Tyneside Transport Strategy.

The revised draft SPD first covered sustainable transport, setting out specific requirements in relation to walking, wheeling, cycling, Public Rights of Way and public transport provision. It then sets out the Authority's requirements for the assessment of transport for new developments. This included details of a Travel Plan, which developers may be required to prepare to support accessibility by more sustainable modes; Transport Assessments and Transport Statements, which served to demonstrate that the transport impacts of new developments had been appropriately assessed; and parking control measures as they related to new developments.

The document proceeds to set out the Authority's specifications with regard to design quality, including links to its approach to tree planting and management; and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments, including requirements on developers to carry out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

The document then sets out requirements in relation to parking provision at both residential and non-residential developments, including enhanced detail of required arrangements regarding the provision of EV charging equipment and/or cable routes which facilitated the future installation of such equipment.

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It was anticipated that, subject to the recommendation being approved, stakeholder engagement would be carried out in May-June 2022 over a six-week period. It was proposed that the engagement would be open to any person who wished to respond; however, owing to the technical nature of the document, the engagement process would particularly seek to involve stakeholders such as developers, local and national voluntary sector organisations in the transport sector, neighbouring local authorities, Nexus, and Transport North East.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations.

**Resolved** that (1) a process of stakeholder engagement be carried out on the revised draft Supplementary Planning Document attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; (2) the Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure, be authorised to undertake all necessary steps in relation to undertaking the stakeholder engagement on the Supplementary Planning Document; and (3) the Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure present a further report to Cabinet at the end of the engagement process for Cabinet's approval of the Supplementary Planning Document prior to its publication, having regard to any stakeholder comments made during the engagement process.

(Reason for decision: Approval for the stakeholder engagement will allow the views of stakeholders to be considered as the updated SPD is finalised.)

### **CAB116/22 An Ambition for Wallsend**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the boundary for and scope of the Wallsend Plan.

At its meeting on 21 February 2022, Cabinet received an update report which identified that, in line with Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025, additional Masterplans had been added to the Council's regeneration strategy, and that a report on Wallsend would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

An officer team had been working with the Deputy Mayor and had engaged with the Ward Councillors for Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend to understand the opportunities and challenges in Wallsend. This had included reviewing the supporting data and to begin to engage with partners to frame the Authority's work to deliver this priority. This report sought Cabinet agreement to the first stage of that work and a set of policy priorities to inform the next stage.

The Authority's overall aim was to create a vision and a plan to implement it, that provided a vibrant and connected place. As part of this work, three key themes had been identified as policy priorities for inclusion within the plan: These were:

- Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend; in particular making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the masterplan area.
- Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live;

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improving the street scene, public spaces and working with partners to make sure people feel safe; and

- Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs; using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances.

In addition to the above and recognising the contribution Wallsend Town Centre and its environs made to the region's economy, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and North of Tyne Combined Authority had agreed to fund business case development work to inform master planning and research on the economic opportunities in the area. In parallel, the Government had announced further rounds of the Levelling Up Fund which may be of benefit to Wallsend.

In developing any future bids for funding the Authority would build on the recent success in securing just under half a million pounds of grant for repairs at Segedunum. The Deputy Mayor reported that the Authority had also been invited by the National Heritage Lottery Fund to submit a fully application for grant by February 2023 to transform the Museum's offer.

Cabinet was asked to note the work done so far and agree the approach to the next stage. Work had begun on developing the evidence base for a draft Wallsend Masterplan. Once sufficient thinking had been done to develop a policy narrative linked to potential practical steps to make it happen, the Masterplan was expected to be the basis of widening discussions with Ward Councillors, the Chamber of Commerce, Business Forum and the wider community.

While the technical study work would continue and funding bids to Government would be investigated, Cabinet was asked to agree the approach to the next stage of this work, specifically:

- Further and wider engagement, based on the three policy objectives and an emerging Masterplan to test the thinking done to date and seek input from the community in and around Wallsend; and
- Work to define specific projects and create a programme of activity based on the agreed regeneration strategy and the work already completed and coming next.

Subject to approval from Cabinet, it was anticipated that a draft Masterplan would be subject to engagement in summer 2022, prior to a final version being presented to Cabinet for adoption by autumn/winter 2022. The plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report showed the defined Masterplan boundary. It was the area of greatest need and would be the focus of the Authority's future interventions as it would have the maximum impact in achieving the Authority's policy objectives. The area included:

- The riverside (including Swans) running from Benton Way to Davy Bank,
- High Street East & West, Station Road (up to North Road) and the Forum,
- Segedunum Roman Fort & Museum,
- Housing areas to the south and north of High Street West, and

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- Richardson Dees Park and The Green Conservation Area.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report, or alternatively, to not approve the recommendations.

**Resolved** that (1) the work done so far on the Ambition for Wallsend, be noted; (2) the proposed policy priorities including the boundary and scope of the proposed Masterplan as outlined in the report, be approved; and (3) the next steps including wider engagement and to receiving further reports as required, be approved.

(Reason for decision: The scope aligns with the themes within the emerging Levelling Up prospectus and the Masterplan boundary enables the three themes of housing, employment and an improved built environment to be addressed.)

### **CAB117/22 Exclusion Resolution**

**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 it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

### **CAB118/22 Chief Officer Structure**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to a revised Chief Officer Structure comprising the adjustment of the current role of Director of Resources to include services currently within the Law and Governance Directorate; and to create a post to change the current arrangement whereby the Authority provided a Chief Finance Officer to the North of Tyne Combined Authority in accordance with Section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985 under a separate secondment agreement. The current secondment agreement comes to an end on 31 March 2022.

The Chief Officer structure was last considered by Cabinet at its meeting in August 2021. Changes in the Senior Leadership Team meant a revision was required.

The current Chief Officer structure and proposed revision was set out at Appendix 1 in the report.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: to approve the proposed structure; or alternatively, to not approve the proposed structure and ask for further work to be done.

**Resolved** that (1) adjustment to the role of Director of Resources, be approved; (2) the deletion of role of Director of Law and Governance, be approved; (2) the creation of a Chief Officer role – North of Tyne Combined Authority Chief Finance Officer appointed under Section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985 be approved; and (3) the intention to adjust the senior structure in Law and Governance as required, be noted.

(Reasons for decision: It represents a considered response to the leadership requirements of the Authority; It reflects consultation and discussion with the Senior Leadership Team;

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and It represents value for money.)

**CAB119/22 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

6.00pm on Monday 23 May 2022.

Minutes published on Thursday, 31 March 2022.

The decisions contained within these Minutes may be implemented (unless called in by 3 Non-Executive Members for consideration by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee) immediately following the expiry of the call-in period; i.e. 5.00pm on Thursday, 7 April 2022.