

Secure Sub-committee

Tuesday, 9 July 2024

Present: Councillor A Newman (Chair)
Councillors J Kirwin, J Mudzingwa, O Scargill,
J Walker, Day, N Huscroft and C McGinty

In attendance: Councillor J Harrison, Cabinet Member for Housing,
P Colby, Head Policy, Performance and Research,
S Graham, Senior Licensing Officer, and
S Stewart, Democratic Services Manager

Apologies: Councillors Linda Bell and Louise Bell, and P
Mennell, Director of Housing and Property Services

S1/24 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

S2/24 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

S3/24 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 March 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair.

S4/24 Performance Overview - Secure theme of the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025.

The Secure Sub-committee received a report and presentation by the Head of Policy, Performance and Research on performance under the Secure North Tyneside theme of the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025.

On 23 September 2021, the refreshed Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025

was agreed by Full Council following consultation with residents and other key stakeholders. The Council Plan was updated following the Mayoral Election on 6 May 2021 to reflect the policy priorities of the incoming administration.

An Our North Tyneside Plan Performance Report had been developed to monitor progress against the Council Plan priorities and objectives. This report was produced annually to the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination and Finance Committee and was supplemented by Performance and Financial Management Reports produced bi-monthly providing an overview of service activity levels and linked financial monitoring.

The latest Our North Tyneside Plan Performance Report would be presented to Cabinet on 29 July 2024 and to Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination and Finance Committee on 11 September 2024. The Secure North Tyneside performance in detail, as well as relevant comparator information, was appended to the report. The report included some highlights under the objectives of the Secure North Tyneside Theme headings: -

- Council wardens will work in partnership with Northumbria Police to prevent and tackle all forms of antisocial behaviour;
- We will invest an additional £2m per year on fixing our roads and pavements; - double-checking methodology;
- We will maintain the Council Tax support scheme that cuts bills for thousands of low-income households across North Tyneside;
- We will tackle health and socio-economic inequalities across the borough including through our Poverty Intervention Fund to tackle food poverty;
- We will provide 5,000 affordable homes.

During discussion, Members sought points of clarification in relation to:

- a. Tackling health & socio-economic inequalities with regard to the term 'low income' as described in the appended performance report: It was explained that in relation to i.e. child benefit and adult social care there were two main measures set by the Department of Work & Pensions (WDP) namely - Relative and Absolute measures.
- b. Tackling health & socio-economic inequalities with regard to the start-

finish delivery times for providing 5,000 affordable homes, including those at Murton Gap, and whether the homes related to people in need or in general: It was explained that this was set out in the Our North Tyneside Plan and was dependent on the progress of the Affordable Homes Programme 10-year delivery plan.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments and suggested that rather than engaging in detailed discussions today, further welcomed the sub-committee's views on whether a dedicated meeting in relation could be included in the work programme (for later in the year).

The Chair thanked the Head of Policy, Performance and Research for the report and presentation.

It was **agreed** that the contents of the report and presentation be noted.

**S5/24 Gambling Act 2005 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling)
2025-2028**

The Sub-committee was presented with details of the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling) and final proposals would be presented to this Committee as required. Thereafter, the final proposals would be presented to Cabinet on 14 October 2024, together with comments, if any, from Members of this sub-committee and details of any engagement responses, followed by full Council on the 21 November 2024.

On 24 June 2024 Cabinet received a report from the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in relation to the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling) that must be published by the Licensing Authority under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 and be in force by the 31 January 2025. The revised Policy will replace the existing Policy that came into force on the 31 January 2022. Following Cabinet's approval of the initial proposals for the draft Policy to be subject to a 6-week period of engagement commencing on 8 July 2024. The 6-week period of engagement was considered appropriate for a document that formed part of the Authority's policy framework. Members of the public, members of the trade, all North Tyneside MPs and Councillors would have an opportunity to comment on the draft Policy statement.

As the Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling) formed part of the Authority's Policy Framework, the process set out in the Authority's Constitution for the preparation, consideration and approval of such plans must be followed. With that in mind, the initial proposals were presented to Cabinet on 24 June 2024.

The Sub-committee was invited to consider the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling), and if necessary, make recommendations and observations to Councillor Karen Clark, the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing on the draft Policy.

Appendix 1 – Report to Cabinet 24 June 2024 – this was available to view on the Council's website via the following link:

[Statement of Licensing Policy \(Gambling\) Cabinet report](#)

Appendix 2 – Draft Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling) – this was available to view on the Council's website via the following link:

[Draft Statement of Licensing Policy \(Gambling\)](#)

The Chair welcomed the Sub-committee's opportunity to consider the draft Policy and thanked the Senior Licensing Officer for presenting the report.

It was **agreed** to note the contents of the report and any recommendations and/or observations on the draft Policy to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

S6/24 Introduction to Scrutiny and Work Programme Report

A report was received which set out a proposed approach to the work planning for the Secure Sub-committee 2024-25, together with an initial information base which the sub-committee could utilise in considering and deciding on its outline work programme for 2024-25.

The Authority's Scrutiny arrangements had been reviewed by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) in 2023/24. The CfGS was a national body which specialised in promoting governance excellence within local authorities.

The CfGS recommended the following as good practice in Scrutiny work planning:

- (a) Involvement of all Committee members in work planning: – the CfGS highlight that work planning was key to ensuring that Scrutiny stayed focussed on strategic issues where it can make an impact, whilst making the best use of time and resources. Accordingly, all members of each scrutiny sub-committee should have a chance to influence that sub-committee’s work programme; and further, sub-committee members should lead development of their committee’s work plan, in order to have influence and ownership over committee activity.
- (b) Sufficient flexibility: – the CfGS note that work planning was an on-going process and not just a one-off event. Whilst identification of a list of topics and priorities is sensible there will need to be flexibility in the work plan and time set aside to regularly revisit the relevance of topics in meetings as the local context changes.
- (c) Involvement of Cabinet Members, and Senior Officer Support: – in their 2023/24 review, the CfGS commended the desire of the Elected Mayor and Chief Executive to fully support the scrutiny process. As part of that commitment, a link Cabinet Member, and a lead SLT officer, had been nominated to support each Scrutiny sub-committee.
- (d) ‘Less is More’: – the CfGS stated that “there is evidence that when scrutiny focuses on fewer things of greater importance, more is achieved.” This would be worthwhile to consider when developing the scrutiny work plan. The CfGS also recommended considering the introduction of selection criteria to identify appropriate topics for the work plan and bringing discussion of the work plan to the beginning of meetings, so emerging or changing priorities could benefit from considered discussion.

Scrutiny tended to be most successful when it set clear objectives for its work, and when it focused on strategic matters which were likely to make a real difference. Taking these Ideas Forward:

- The Secure Sub-committee’s remit, agreed by Council on 16 May 2024, was attached at Appendix A.
- An extract from the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021–25, showing the priorities under ‘A Secure North Tyneside’ theme of that Plan, was included at Appendix B.

- It must be emphasised that it was for the Secure Sub-committee to determine its work programme. However, to aid the Sub-committee in this process, some initial activity to identify potential work plan topics had been undertaken, outlined below.
- For each Scrutiny Committee the links with lead Cabinet portfolios and Directorates of the Authority had been identified. These links were summarised in the diagram of Scrutiny Support Arrangements attached as Appendix C. For the Secure Sub-committee, the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing would be the link Cabinet Member. The Director of Housing and Property Services would be the link Senior Leadership Team (SLT) officer to provide ongoing and regular officer support to the Sub-committee.
- These Cabinet members and SLT officers would meet regularly throughout the year with the Chair of the sub-committee to provide information and suggestions on policy topics which the sub-committee may wish to consider when planning and revising its programme of work for 2024/25. A potential menu of work topics, which the sub-committee may wish to utilise when considering and deciding its work programme for 2024/25, was summarised in Appendix D.

The Chair invited members of the sub-committee to put forward topics they may wish to see brought to the sub-committee or to be added to the work programme, alternatively, they could contact Councillor Newman after tonight's meeting with any suggestions they wished to be considered.

During discussion, Members put forward the following suggestions as potential topics (and reasons) for consideration in the outline work programme for the year:

- Affordable Housing – A broad overview including timelines, targets, funding and projects to see if current plans were on track and if they were appropriate.
- Equally Well Strategy – A look at the action plan underpinning Section 8 of the Equally Well Strategy “Our lifestyle and behaviours”, on whether the actions that had been conducted over the past three years were making a

difference.

- Anti-Social Behaviour – A review of the activity, success and failures during 2024 with a view to shape the way in which 2025 would operate and improve (for consideration at the end of this year or start of next year).
- Licensing of Professional Wrestling in North Tyneside – This was a statutory requirement, however, every local authority did it differently and had different requirements. A review was suggested on whether this Authority had the relevant safeguards in place to protect the public and those working on shows at these types of events.

It was **agreed** to (1) note the remit of the Scrutiny Sub-committee, as agreed at the Annual Council meeting on 16 May 2024, set out at Appendix A; and the extract from the agreed Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25, relating to the 'A Secure North Tyneside' theme, set out at Appendix B;

(2) note the information set out in the report regarding Scrutiny work planning (including good practice guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) and that Scrutiny tends to be most successful when it sets clear strategic objectives for its work;

(3) note that a link Cabinet member and a lead Senior Leadership Team officer had been identified to actively support the work and information needs of the Secure Sub-committee in the coming year, summarised at Appendix C;

(4) note that a menu of potential policy topics, which the Sub-committee may wish to consider when planning its initial programme of work for 2024/25, was included in the report for the Sub-committee's consideration at Appendix D; and

(5) using this information and the views of Sub-committee members, decide an outline work programme for the year; and agree that work programming would be included as a standard agenda item at each future meeting of the Sub-committee in order that the work programme could be flexed, as necessary, in response to emerging policy matters as the year progressed, so that all Sub-committee members could be involved in development of the work programme, be agreed.

S7/24 Date and time of next meeting

6.00pm on 24 September 2024.

