

Cabinet

13 October 2014

Present: N Redfearn (Elected Mayor) (in the Chair)
Councillors EN Darke, R Glindon, I Grayson,
F Lott, CB Pickard, LA Spillard and JJ Stirling

In Attendance: M Almond (Voluntary and Community Sector)
A Oghene (Young Mayor)
K Parkin (Business Sector)

CAB64/10/14 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors CA Burdis and JLL Harrison, A Caldwell (Age Concern North Tyneside), M Cushlow (North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group) and R Layton (JTUC).

CAB65/10/14 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

CAB66/10/14 Minutes

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2014, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB67/10/14 Report of the Young Mayor

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

- British Youth Council convention at Tyne Metropolitan College, when the result of the Make Your Mark initiative had been announced. The top three issues voted for by young people in North Tyneside were:
 - Everyone should be paid at least the Living Wage of £7.65 per hour (£8.80 in London).
 - Bring back exam re-sits in Maths and English, in English schools,
 - Work Experience.

These topics would be the focus of the Youth Council in the coming year.

- Talking Day event at Northumbria University on Saturday, which focussed on debating skills. Attendees had the opportunity to speak in the House of Lords at the Chambers debate in November.
- Attendance at the September Council meeting of North Tyneside Council
- National Citizens graduation at Wallsend Hall.
- Transport Forum in the North West of the Borough;
- North Tyneside in Bloom presentation evening.

It was noted that a small financial contribution from the Young Mayor's Community Fund had been awarded to North Tyneside Disability Forum to help their Young voices programme.

The Young Mayor was thanked for his report and was commended on the work he and his Young Cabinet were doing.

CAB68/10/14 Local Plan Sub-Group – Review of the Council’s Processes – Scaffold Hill Planning Application and Appeal (All Wards)

Cabinet received a report from the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee in relation to its Local Plan Sub-Group study into Review of the Council’s Processes – Scaffold Hill Planning Application.

The Local Plan Sub-Group had been asked to review the processes in relation to the Scaffold Hill planning application and subsequent planning appeal. This followed the agreement of a Motion that had been agreed by Council at its meeting on 14 March 2013 (Minute C165/03/13(i) refers).

As part of the review the Sub-Group had received background information from officers on the planning application and appeal.

The Sub-group had also had discussions with the highways consultant, appointed by the Council to support the appeal; considered written and verbal comments from relevant ward councillors; and met with representatives of the Holystone Action Group, a residents group that had campaigned against the development at Scaffold Hill and had attended the appeal hearing.

The Sub-Group’s recommendations, as amended by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, were as follows:

- (1) That the relevant Cabinet Member monitors the impact of the revised systems that have been put in place in relation to traffic modelling to ensure they are effective in preventing future errors occurring.
- (2) That Officers, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee, consider whether the transport model could be introduced as a visual aid at Planning Committee where it would assist Members of the Committee in understanding the traffic impacts of proposed large developments and aid the understanding of the possible cumulative impact any such developments would have on local amenities such as accessing education and health facilities in the borough;
- (3) That the relevant Cabinet Member explore with officers whether the transport model could be made available to developers on a fee basis as part of the planning application process.
- (4) That Cabinet review the Council’s consultation policy, particularly in relation to planning matters, and ensure that processes are transparent and that wider consultation is undertaken to include children and young people in addition to residents to have real input into the process and to observe that their contributions are being respected.
- (5) That the above recommendations are implemented within the next 6 months.

The full report detailing the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

Cabinet was asked to consider the recommendations and was required to provide a response to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee within 2 months.

The Deputy Mayor thanked the Sub-Group for the report and looked forward to providing a detailed response.

Resolved that the report of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee be noted and a detailed response to the recommendations be provided at a future Cabinet meeting, no later than December 2014.

(Reason for decision – to respond to the recommendations made by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.)

CAB69/10/14 Council Tax Support Scheme 2015-16 (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which detailed a proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015-2016, and requested that consultation on the scheme was undertaken, before it was presented to Council for approval.

The current Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) was means tested and allowed a maximum amount of Council Tax Support of 93% of the claimant's Council Tax liability depending on the claimant's income. This applied to working age claimants only. Pensionable age claimants still received support based on 100% of their Council Tax liability, as prescribed under national rules.

Any changes proposed to the scheme had to be consulted on before they were implemented, although the level and period of consultation was dependant on the level of any proposed change.

At the beginning of April 2014 there were 21,909 claimants receiving CTS. This was a reduction from 22,207 at the end of March 2014. This reduction was due to an increase in welfare benefits for some former claimants which meant they no longer qualified for support.

The reduction in claimants had been a steady trend over the last two years, which DWP had forecasted. The trend was being seen regionally. The current claimant caseload as at 15 September 2014 stood at around 21,800, with approximately 11,450 of those claimants being of working age.

In April 2014 the Authority had estimated the annual cost of the scheme for 2014/15 to be around £16.5m which was the cost of the scheme in 2013/14. However the reduction in the number of claimants and the reductions in entitlement had meant the forecast scheme cost for 2014/15 was currently around £15.9m.

The majority of CTS claimants lived in Band A properties and the weekly maximum 93% of liability was £17.69 for a couple or £13.26 for a single person. This left £1.33 to pay each week for a couple or £1.00 to pay each week for a single person.

If further reductions in support were passed on to claimants it would mean for each 1% of Council Tax that was not eligible for support the claimant would pay an additional 19p per week for a couple or 14p per week for a single person.

Based on the current working age caseload, for every 1% reduced from support it would generate an approximate additional £100,000 of income annually which would also need to be collected. Appendix 1 of the report provided a table of entitlement and savings. This gave an indication of the increase in liability for CTS claimants dependant on a % of reduction in support applied. It also provided an estimate of the additional income this would generate, although it did not take into consideration any transitional provisional protection.

There had been minimal reaction to the scheme both in year 1 and year 2, with no appeals being made to the Valuation Tribunal.

In-year collection of Council Tax for year 1 had fallen by 0.4% from 96.9% to 96.5% in 2013/2014 but this also included collection of an additional £1.3m debit for empty property discount changes.

General effects of a difficult economic climate and impacts of welfare reform which many on Council Tax Support had also been impacted by, were likely to have contributed to the reduction in collection. Additional information and comparisons with other north east councils were detailed in the report.

There were many options available to Cabinet to make proposals to revise the scheme, which could include changing the qualifying conditions of the scheme or the maximum level of Council Tax Support available. However the current scheme was based on the previous Council Tax Benefit Scheme which had provided financial assistance for many years. Collection rates were strong and this provided an encouraging sign that the majority of claimants were managing the increased liability placed on them. In comparison with other north east authorities on Council Tax collection rates, the Council Tax Support Scheme along with other discount changes implemented seemed to have performed well.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively to disagree with the proposals and refer the matter back to officers for further consideration of an alternative scheme.

Resolved that (1) the existing Council Tax Support Scheme remains in place for the financial year 2015 -16; and
(2) a consultation exercise be undertaken on the above resolution to enable Cabinet to make final proposals to Council on 22 January 2015 in relation to the 2015-2016 Council Tax Support Scheme.

(Reason for decision – It maintains the current scheme which Council Tax Support claimants and partner organisations are familiar with, and which there have been no Tribunal appeals against.

It continues with the current maximum Council Tax Support available of 93% for working age claimants with only 7% not eligible for support.

The recovery rate of the current scheme is encouraging, showing that the majority of Council Tax Support claimants now having to pay an increased contribution are able to meet their obligations.

Recovery by attachment of benefits within the financial year is still obtainable with Option 1 as the amount to be recovered is within the attachment of income limit.

The potential impact on the Collection Fund is kept to a minimum by keeping the percentage of Council Tax not available for support to a minimum.)

CAB70/10/14 Council Tax Discounts 2015-16 (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which requested consideration of suggestions for making changes to the empty property discounts for 2015-2016.

At its meeting on 16 January 2013 Cabinet had considered the options of discounts available and agreed proposals for submission to Council for approval (Minute CAB177/01/13 refers).

At its meeting on 24 January 2014 (Minute C122/01/13 refers), Council had agreed the following options, which had been implemented from 1 April 2013:

- a) Former Class A Exemption (unoccupied and unfurnished properties which are in need of or undergoing major repairs or structural alteration). The decision was taken to replace the previous 100% exemption with a 100% discount resulting in no impact on Council Tax payers and no additional debit created to collect.

- b) Former Class C Exemption (An unoccupied and unfurnished property. The decision was taken to replace the 100% exemption for 6 months with a 100% discount for 2 months.
- c) Empty Homes 50% Longer Term Empty Discount (This applied after the maximum 6 month empty exemption ceased). The decision was made to remove this discount entirely.
- d) Second Home Discount (this is where a second furnished property may be owned but not occupied). The decision was made to reduce the level of discount awarded from 10% to nil.

The changes implemented in April 2013 had resulted in the Council Tax debit increasing by £1.2m. If Council had chosen at that time to remove all discounts as it had the option to do, the total additional debit generated would have been £2.3m.

For the financial year 2013-14 there was £320,000 awarded for former Class A exempt properties, and £804,000 awarded for former Class C exempt properties.

The collection rate remained strong and had fallen by only 0.4% from 96.9% to 96.5% in year 2013-14 and this included the collection of additional debit due to the Council Tax Support scheme and the general effects of a difficult economic climate including the impacts of welfare reform.

There were a number of options available to Cabinet to recommend changes to the former Class A and Class C discounts for 2015-16. Regionally authorities offered varying levels of support and some had removed all support from former Class A and former Class C discounts. Appendix 1 of the report provided an overview to the discounts awarded by regional authorities, and their collection rates for year 1.

In relation to former Class A properties, the law did not allow the Authority to reduce the maximum period of discount but did allow a reduction in the level of discount awarded. The report outlined the additional Council Tax debit that could be generated by implementing various reductions.

In relation to former Class C properties, the law allowed the Authority to change both the level of the discount and the period the discount was awarded for. The report outlined the additional Council Tax Debit that could be generated by implementing various reductions.

If Cabinet wished to propose changes to the current empty property discounts, consultation would be necessary on any proposals made. It was suggested that if Cabinet did make proposals to change the current empty property discounts, a public consultation exercise was undertaken over a four week period starting in October 2014. The proposed consultation process was outlined in the report.

The report suggested that it was appropriate to still offer some support for those meeting the criteria of former Class A and former Class C properties, but at a reduced level for both. The following changes to the current empty property discounts were proposed:

- a) For those meeting the criteria for former Class A properties - reduce the current level of 100% discount for 1 year to 50% discount for 1 year.
- b) For those meeting the criteria of former Class C properties - reduce the current 100% level of discount for 2 months to 50% discount for 2 months.

The total overall Council Tax debit generated by these suggestions would be £562,000 based on the current Council Tax Rate.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively to disagree with the proposals and refer the matter back to officers for further consideration of an alternative suggestions.

Resolved that a public consultation exercise be undertaken on the proposals in relation to empty property discounts as referred to above and detailed in paragraph 1.5.9 of the report and the outcome of the consultation exercise be reported back to Cabinet to allow it to make proposals to Council at its meeting on 22 January 2015.

(Reason for decision – It still provides support for 2 months for those meeting the criteria for Class C which is the same period of time currently provided, although the support is reduced to 50%.

It still provides support for 12 months for those meeting the criteria for Class A which is the same as is currently provided, although the support is reduced to 50%.

It will generate over £550,000 of additional Council Tax debit based on the current Council Tax Rate, whilst still providing a medium level of support.

It encourages residents to still inform the Authority when they vacate a property and it becomes empty. If the discount was removed altogether residents may not inform the Authority of a vacation and continue to claim a single person discount.).

CAB71/10/14 Our North Tyneside Performance Report (Previous Minute CAB194/03/14) (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which provided an update on the progress that had been made to deliver the aims and objectives of the Our North Tyneside Plan.

Following the last report in March a number of measures had been updated to better reflect the aims of the Plan. These updates, which were detailed in the report, had been informed by the discussions at the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.

There were now seventeen measures within the Our North Tyneside Plan, thirteen of which were reporting new or updated information in the report. Where new data was not available, information within the service reports would provide additional detail on what was taking place throughout the year.

Performance against the Our North Tyneside Plan was showing that five measures were improving, five had declined and there were three new measures where only baseline information had been provided. There were four measures that did not have updated performance information. These would be updated for the next report in March 2015.

Appendix A of the report provided the full Our North Tyneside Performance Report

Cabinet considered the following decision option: to note the progress made against the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and that the measures will continue to be assessed to ensure that they are appropriate.

Resolved that the progress made against the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan be noted.

(Reason for decision – this forms part of the agreed performance management framework for the Our North Tyneside Plan.)

CAB72/10/14 North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership Quarterly Report (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which gave an update on progress of the North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership.

At its meeting on 23 July 2014, the Partnership had:

- received a presentation from Northumbria Police of an overview of their work and responsibilities and details of the structures for responses to emergency incidents - Bronze, Silver and Gold. The Partnership had welcomed the broad range of work underway and supported the need to continue to work in close partnership to address the ongoing risk of flooding across North Tyneside;
- noted the progress of the North Tyneside Flood Risk Management Strategy, which had been formally adopted at Cabinet on 14 July 2014. It was a statutory requirement to have such a strategy and the partnership had noted the local objectives and highlighted the importance of engaging with residents to efficiently target resources by priority;
- noted the progress of the Flood Risk Implementation Plan which highlighted the major and minor projects that had been completed, or were work in progress;
- considered a briefing note providing an overview of flood operations since April 2014, detailing any issues raised. During the period of 1 April to 23 July 2014, the Highways Operations team had undertaken flood response operations following weather warnings on three occasions;
- received a report giving an update of the Flooding Community Preparedness Sub – Group and a presentation about the Borough’s Community Flood Wardens, who were now operational.

A copy of the draft minutes from the meeting were appended to the report.

Members welcomed the report and the Mayor expressed thanks to those involved in achieving the completion of the gully scheme in the Dudley area ahead of schedule.

Cabinet considered the following decision option: to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report.

Resolved that the North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership Quarterly Update be noted.

(Reason for decision – so that the work of the Partnership can progress.)

CAB73/10/14 Safeguarding and Education Panel (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which detailed a proposal to establish a new Elected Member Panel to support Elected Members to fulfil one of their key statutory responsibilities of safeguarding children and adults and promoting their welfare.

Current scrutiny arrangements in North Tyneside for protecting and caring for both children and adults included the Health and Wellbeing Board; the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adult Board. These boards dealt effectively with challenges and issues that could be discussed publically. However they were open meetings and therefore, because of issues of sensitivity or confidentiality were subject to standard restrictions of discussion.

In order to provide appropriate challenge to service support and delivery it was proposed, in line with best practice, that a closed panel be established made up of experienced and specially trained elected members. The Panel would be serviced by senior staff from Adult Services and Children, Young People and Learning.

The Panel would provide members with the opportunity to scrutinise issues in depth relating to the performance of children and adults safeguarding services. It would include but not be limited to:

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- The quality and effectiveness of social work practice in safeguarding vulnerable residents.
- The quality and effectiveness of commissioned services in complying with safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- Allegation management in relation to staff members and members of the wider children and adult workforce.
- Significant incidents of concern or those attracting media attention.
- Local partnership and safeguarding arrangements.

The Panel would also have within its terms of reference:

- accountability of underperforming care providers in relation to the welfare and safeguarding of vulnerable users and residents; and
- accountability of underperforming schools in relation to issues of wellbeing and care of children and young people.

It was proposed that the Panel would report directly to Cabinet and would have the power to recommend urgent action if it had concerns about the effectiveness of local services. It would also formally report to the Health and Wellbeing Board requesting that the board consider matters it had judged to be of concern. It would also advise the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adult Board of its work and seek advice and guidance from the chairs of the respective boards where necessary. The Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees, including the Children, Education and Skills Sub Committee and the Adult Social Care Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee would be formally appraised of the Panel's work and the progress made against any recommendations and priorities.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively to disagree with the proposals and request officers to identify alternative options to provide for member involvement.

Resolved that (1) the Authority establishes a Safeguarding and Education Panel and; (2) the Head of Children, Young People and Learning and Head of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, be authorised to finalise the terms of reference of the Panel and the necessary administrative arrangements to establish the Panel.

(Reason for decision – This will lead to strengthened accountability through more effective monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding practices.)

CAB74/10/14 North Tyneside Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which sought approval of the new North Tyneside Syllabus for Religious Education.

The Authority had a statutory responsibility to review its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education every five years.

This had been undertaken by the North Tyneside Standing Advisory Conference for Religious Education (SACRE) which had established a process for reviewing the syllabus, as required by law.

The process agreed, based on thorough consultation with schools in North Tyneside, was to work with practitioners to amend the existing syllabus, reflect changes in the local population as well as the content for all phases of education and ensure that the final document was accessible and easy to use by teaching and support staff in schools.

This process took into account Ofsted's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and that the religious traditions in the United Kingdom were mainly Christian but needed to reflect all six major religions. This included Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sikh, Jewish and Hindu faiths.

A draft syllabus had been shared with schools in the summer term for consultation and some modifications had been made in response to that feedback. The syllabus would enable schools to develop their own religious education curriculum alongside the current review of the whole curriculum. The draft document, which was appended to the report, was fully supported by members of the SACRE Committee.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively to disagree with the proposals.

Resolved that the Religious Education Syllabus for use in North Tyneside schools be approved.

(Reason for decision – The new syllabus has been drawn up following thorough consultation with the needs of children and young people at the heart of the proposals).

CAB75/10/14 Independent Fostering Agency Regional Procurement Proposal (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which sought approval to participate in a collaborative procurement exercise that would establish a regional framework for letting contracts with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).

The Authority required the services of IFAs when 'in house' foster provision could not meet a particular need or the specific needs of a child.

In April 2011 Newcastle City Council had taken the lead to bring together seven councils, known as the "NE7", (Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Northumberland, Gateshead, Durham and Sunderland) to carry out a collaborative procurement exercise which had resulted in a regional framework for letting contracts with IFAs. Following an options appraisal in 2013, the NE7 consortium had agreed unanimously to exercise the 12 month option to extend. Current arrangements were due to expire on 31 March 2015 therefore it was imperative that a new collaborative arrangement was in place for then.

The NE7 local authorities had achieved what they had set out to do in the first three years of the current framework in terms of financial savings; consistency of quality across providers; consistency of service to local authorities; opportunities to develop positive relationships with providers to enable open and transparent communication; the imbalance of 'market share' that had previously seen a small number of providers having a significant majority of the placements across the NE7 local authorities had been addressed; and clear commissioning information to enable existing providers to expand their presence in the NE7 region and enable new providers to enter the local market had been provided

During the life of the current contract, participating local authorities had established excellent working relationships with both on and off framework providers. This had been achieved as the result of planned, on-going provider engagement and consultation. As part of the options appraisal carried out in 2013, it had been felt that any future commissioning would need to build upon these positive achievements and the 'lessons learned' throughout the life of the contract. Key outcomes for the new arrangement would be:

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- clear descriptors for banding levels within the core cost specification to ensure appropriate type of placement was made against assessed needs of children and young people and that purchasing authorities pay an appropriate fee for these placements;
- continuation of shared governance and quality monitoring systems;
- increased number of providers achieved through engagement activity during the contract development stage;
- a standard approach to enable outcomes for individual children and young people to be gathered and monitored.

The NE7 local authorities would ensure that the views of children and young people were taken into account in any future commissioning.

In the current climate of financial austerity, positive relationships were of particular importance when it came to negotiating terms, conditions and costs for existing and new commissioning arrangements. Negotiations would ensure:

- positive and improving outcomes for looked after children and young people;
- value for money for purchasing authorities;
- sustainability of provision.

Commissioning and contract officers believed that the recommended option offered the best opportunity to achieve in all three areas.

North Tyneside Council currently had ten children placed with framework IFAs. The Authority also spot purchased eleven placements from a number of providers who were not on the current framework agreement. Placements were always sought in the first instance from framework IFAs, but if they were unable to offer a placement that met the needs of a child, a placement would then be sought from an off framework IFA.

The costs to the Authority over the last three full financial years for both framework and off framework IFAs were set out in the report.

Each of the off framework IFAs had continued to engage in market development exercises and had given a strong indication that they would bid for the new framework arrangements when advertised. Based upon placements as at July 2014, the potential first year savings for the Authority if all off framework providers joined the framework were estimated to be in the region of £92,000. Any price reductions were likely to take effect from 1 October 2015, so the potential saving for the financial year 2015/16 was estimated to be in the region of £46,000. Details of the procurement process were set out in the report.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree the recommendations as set out in section 1.2 of the report, or alternatively to disagree with the proposals.

Resolved that (1) the Head of Children, Young People and Learning, in consultation with the Elected Mayor, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning, the Strategic Manager for Finance and the Head of Law and Governance, be authorised to proceed with the procurement exercise being led by Newcastle City Council that will establish a regional framework for letting contracts with Independent Fostering Agencies, for a period of three years, with an option to extend for a further year; and (2) the Head of Children, Young People and Learning, in consultation with the Strategic Manager for Finance and the Head of Law and Governance, be authorised to award any framework agreements and subsequent call off contracts under the framework agreements.

(Reason for decision – This joint collaborative agreement is in keeping with regional priorities leading to more efficient service delivery.)

CAB76/10/14 North Tyneside Local Development Scheme Update 2014 (All Wards)

Cabinet considered a report which provided an update on the actions to date within the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) approved by Cabinet on 10 June 2013 (Minute CAB23/06/13 refers), and requested approval to update the LDS including a revised timetable for production of the North Tyneside Local Plan.

The current LDS identified the production of a single Development Plan Document (DPD) for North Tyneside, the North Tyneside Local Plan, merging the previous attempted production of a Borough-wide Core Strategy, and Area Action Plans for Wallsend, North Shields and the Coast, into a single document.

The LDS 2013 set out a programme and timetable for production of the Local Plan, which was detailed in the report. To date publication and public engagement on the Local Plan Consultation Draft had been carried out in accordance with this timetable. The Consultation Draft had been prepared in consultation with and following the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 2 September 2013 (Minute OV 27/09/13 refers), and considered and approved by Cabinet on 14 October 2013 (Minute CAB101/10/13 refers). It had been published on 6 November 2013 and public consultation had concluded on 6 January 2014.

The Local Plan Consultation Draft 2013 had been based on a determination by the Authority to listen to the views of all and had provided residents and stakeholders with an opportunity to consider and respond on a wide range of alternatives for the volume of housing growth and the full range of potential development sites that might be appropriate to meet the growth requirements.

Before preparation of the final 'Publication Draft' Local Plan, the benefit of a further, additional stage of public consultation to identify the Authority's preferred development sites and growth options had been recognised. This would ensure that the preparation of the Local Plan could clearly demonstrate engagement by the Authority with residents and stakeholders on alternative options and the preferred strategy for growth and development. At an Examination in Public an Inspector would also check that the Local Plan had emerged from an open and transparent process that demonstrated on what basis alternative options had been considered and discounted and how the preferred Strategy had been reached.

The Authority had also been working to ensure that the Local Plan was based on the best and most up to date evidence so that the right decisions could be taken and it could provide a strategy to meet North Tyneside's needs for homes and jobs whilst providing an attractive, safe and sustainable Borough. The Local Plan had to set out a locally derived Objectively Assessed Need; this was an evidence based assessment of the level of housing, employment and retail growth. To ensure that the North Tyneside Local Plan was based on suitable, robust and justified evidence, further work had therefore taken place during 2014, and had included support for the proposed housing and employment growth in the Local Plan including strengthening the Employment Land Review, producing more specific and detailed North Tyneside Population and Household Forecasts, and completing the preparation of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Completion of all of these documents, in accordance with the most recently published Planning Guidance was central to ensuring the Local Plan addressed the Authority's Objectively Assessed Need for growth.

It was proposed to update the Local Development Scheme through revising the development programme for the Local Plan to include an additional stage of public consultation on the preferred options and to account for the time required to strengthen the Borough's evidence base. The report detailed the proposed revised Local Plan timetable.

The overall impact of the further work would result in the adoption of the Local Plan later than in the previous timetable. The proposed timetable would now enable consultation and evidence gathering based on best practice and guidance published over the last 12 months. The programme would ensure the Authority had the time to respond to the issues raised and strengthen the likelihood of the Local Plan being found sound on examination.

The Local Development Scheme also detailed other formal planning policy documents in addition to the Local Plan. As these documents were specifically linked to the preparation of the Local Plan, their production timetables would therefore require updating. A revised timetable for their proposed adoption was detailed in the report.

The Localism Act 2011 required that authorities published up to date information about the progress of development plan documents and adherence to the programme approved by each authority.

The Local Development Scheme programme was a robust assessment of when each stage of the Local Plan was capable of being brought forward. Some flexibility would be required in the programme, for example in the detailed programming of specific consultation events, or where new national policy or guidance that must be considered was published. Also following submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State, the programme for Examination in Public and adoption would require agreement with the Planning Inspectorate.

Where more significant changes arose that would alter the overall programme for preparing the Local Plan, and had to be addressed to ensure the Local Plan was sound and capable of adoption, it would be necessary to prepare a revision to the Local Development Scheme and seek Cabinet approval.

Cabinet considered the following decision options:

Option 1 – Approve the recommendations contained in the report;

Option 2 – Approve the updated Local Development Scheme work programme but with modifications to the documents to be produced or the timetable for their production;

Option 3 – Approve the updated Local Development Scheme work programme but with modifications to the documents to be produced or the timetable for their production.

Resolved that (1) the revised Local Plan timetable, as detailed in the report, be approved; (2) the updated Local Development Scheme 2014, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and (3) the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment and Head of Law and Governance, be authorised to publish the updated Local Development Scheme incorporating the work programme, issue updates on the adherence to the programme as set out in the report, and publish amendments to the Local Development Scheme programme where these do not affect the overall timeframe for delivery of the documents programmed.

(Reason for decision – The Local Development Scheme needs to be revised to ensure that the North Tyneside Local Plan is based on suitable, robust and justified evidence and that public consultation on the preferred options should be a transparent process that demonstrates how the preferred strategy was selected in consultation with the public and other stakeholders. The documents contained in the programme are either required by statute or, where discretionary, reflect the priorities of the Council relating to infrastructure provision, design, heritage, sustainability and transport issues.)

CAB77/10/14 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 that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB78/10/14 Strategic Properties (Whitley Bay and Chirton Wards)

The Elected Mayor had agreed to an urgent report being considered at this meeting in relation to Strategic Properties.

In accordance with the urgency provisions contained in the Council's Constitution, approval had been obtained from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the report being considered as a matter of urgency and from the Chair of Council that the decision would not be subject to call-in.

The reason for urgency was to enable proposals to be taken forward as soon as possible to reduce the risk of the empty properties, which were the subject of the report, being damaged or targeted by vandals and to enable the Authority to conclude a development agreement which would help the Authority's strategic plans for Whitley Bay.

The report sought approval to manage the disposal of six properties currently owned by the Authority, which were now considered to be surplus to the Authority's requirements, in a way as to achieve best value for the Authority and in accordance with the details contained within the report.

In relation to the former Avenue Public House, Whitley Bay, it was noted that in addition to the option of marketing the site as a development opportunity, there was also an option for the Authority itself or in partnership to develop the site.

Cabinet considered the following decision options:

Option 1 – Approve the recommendations and agree to the proposals for each of the six properties detailed in the report.

Option 2 – Approve some of the proposals relating to the properties detailed in the report;

Option 3 – reject all of the proposals relating to the properties detailed in the report.

Resolved that (1) the properties detailed in the report be declared surplus to the Authority's requirements;

(2) the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Chief Executive (as Section 151 Officer), the Head of Law and Governance, the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to market relevant properties by an appropriate method of sale and to accept the best bids;

(3) the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Chief Executive (as Section 151 Officer), the Head of Law and Governance, the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to agree the final terms of disposal where it is considered appropriate to sell a property by private treaty, subject to the sale price being considered best value;

(4) the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Chief Executive (as Section 151 Officer), the Head of Law and Governance, the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to agree the final terms of a development agreement in respect of the former Highpoint Hotel site, subject to it representing best value for the Authority;

(5) the value of 1 Eastcliffe, Whitley Bay be underwritten up to the amount proposed in the report, conditional upon the freehold interest in the property being transferred to the Authority if a development agreement can not be concluded with the proposed developer;

(6) any reasonable and evidenced abortive costs incurred by the developer be paid up to the amount proposed in the report if a development agreement can not be concluded as detailed in the report;

(7) funding of up to the amount proposed in the report be made available to cover the cost of the demolition of 1 and 2 Eastcliffe;

(8) the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Chief Executive (as Section 151 Officer), the Head of Law and Governance, the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, be authorised to complete the sale of relevant properties in accordance with all relevant legal requirements, the Authority's Constitution and Financial Regulations; and

(9) the Strategic Property Manager be authorised to deal with all ancillary matters arising that are consistent with the preceding resolutions.

(Reason for decision – This is considered to be the best way to achieve the level of capital receipts required to support the Authority's Investment Plan and achieve best consideration for the Authority. In addition, it will assist with the economic development of the Borough and the delivery of affordable housing.)

CAB79/10/14 Date and Time of Next Meeting

6.00pm on Monday 10 November 2014.

Minutes published on Thursday 16 October 2014.

With the exception of the decisions set out in Minute CAB78/10/14, 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 23 October 2014.

The decisions contained in Minute CAB78/10/14 are not subject to call-in and may be implemented immediately.