

# Cabinet

**14 December 2015**

**Present:** N Redfearn (Elected Mayor) (in the Chair)  
Councillors CA Burdis, EN Darke, IR Grayson, JLL Harrison,  
CB Pickard, L Spillard, JJ Stirling and A Waggott-Fairley.

**In Attendance:** L Allan (Deputy Young Mayor)  
M Almond (Voluntary and Community Sector)  
D Bavaird (Business Sector Representative)  
A Caldwell (Age UK North Tyneside)  
R Layton (North Tyneside JTUC)  
S Readdie (Northumbria Police)  
  
Councillor M Madden

## **CAB94/12/15 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor R Glindon, A Armstrong (Young Mayor), M Cushlow (North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group) and S Stavers (Northumbria Police).

## **CAB95/12/15 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

## **CAB96/12/15 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 9 November 2015 and the Extraordinary Meetings held on 18 November 2015, 23 November 2015 and 7 December 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## **CAB97/12/15 Report of the Young Mayor**

In the absence of the Young Mayor, the Deputy Young Mayor reported on the following activities in which the Young Mayor and/or Young Cabinet Members had been involved:

- Dementia Friends Training
- British Youth Council Convention when the campaign 'Don't Hate, Educate' had been launched'
- Bag pack at Tesco supermarket for Age UK North Tyneside, when £561.39 had been collected.
- Children's Commissioner Takeover Challenge.
- Meeting Heads of 6<sup>th</sup> Form to discuss the differences between various schools in what was offered to students.
- The Deputy Young Mayor had helped with the judging of the Cofely Christmas Decoration Competition.
- Youth Council Meeting. A Street Pastor had given a presentation. Youth Councillors were invited to take part in another new project which would be starting soon.

International Women's day took place on 8 March every year. In 2016 an event would take place at the Council Offices and the theme for 2016 would be mental health.

The Young Mayor and several youth councillors were part of the working group that was planning the event.

Cabinet was informed that the process had begun to recruit North Tyneside's next Young Mayor and Member of UK Youth Parliament. The result would be known at the end of February 2016.

The Deputy Young Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Deputy Young Mayor was thanked for his report. The Young Mayor and Youth Councillors were commended for the work they were doing and their involvement in various initiatives.

### **CAB98/12/15 Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in North Tyneside - Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Sub Group Report (All Wards)**

Cabinet received a report detailing the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee in relation to a study undertaken by a Sub-Group of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee into the Authority's arrangements to protect young people in the Borough from child sexual exploitation. Councillor M Madden, Chair of the Sub-Committee and Sub-Group presented the report.

In response to the number of national high profile cases and reviews in relation to child sexual exploitation (CSE) in recent years, the Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee had agreed to examine the Authority's role and practice on issues relating to CSE in North Tyneside as its next in-depth study.

CSE was considered an appropriate topic as it was important to ensure the processes and initiatives undertaken by the Authority and its partner organisations to tackle the issues around CSE were appropriate and effective and to raise awareness of the issues more broadly within the Authority and the community as a whole.

The objective of the CSE Sub Group was to satisfy Members that there was a pro-active approach to tackling CSE in North Tyneside and increase awareness of Members, officers and the public in general of the issues and the warning signs in relation to CSE.

Members had held a series of evidence gathering meetings with representatives from the local authority, the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board and organisations working with young people in the Borough.

As a result of the study the CSE Sub Group had identified eleven recommendations, ten of which were for submission to Cabinet, that Cabinet:

1. requests that the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding ensures that local authority officers are enabled to attend the meetings of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board's Sub Groups to ensure a consistent membership and clear reporting lines.
2. requests that the Chief Executive requires all service areas to appoint a Safeguarding Champion who will participate in the completion of the Section 11 Audit from the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board to ensure that all services have recognised that they must have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
3. requests that the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board invites the Chair of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee or a designated member of the Sub-Committee to attend its meetings as an observer.

4. requests that the Head of Law and Governance undertakes the necessary steps to propose to Full Council an amendment to the Constitution to ensure that child sexual exploitation training is provided to all Members at the same frequency as to officers and that attendance is mandatory and includes information on:
  - a. what the situation in the Borough is
  - b. what the warning signs are
  - c. what to do if you suspect something
  - d. what to do if someone comes to you with a disclosure or a suspicion.
5. requests that the Standards Committee reviews the current Members' and Co-opted Members' Code of Conduct and considers including a provision that Members must report any suspicion of sexual exploitation or intelligence received on any safeguarding issues to the Authority's Front Door Service and that failure to do so would be considered a breach of the Code of Conduct.
6. requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to provide a quarterly update in the Members' Newsletter, including any information from the police service, on the situation in North Tyneside regarding child sexual exploitation.
7. requests that the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and the Head of Corporate Strategy develop a communication strategy for the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board's CSE Training Strategy to ensure all Members, officers and other interested groups both inside and outside the authority are aware of the training opportunities available and what is expected of them with regard to attendance and keeping up to date.
8. considers amending the process of applying for a private hire or a hackney carriage license and a personal licence issued under the Licensing Act 2003 to require the applicant to have undergone child sexual exploitation training prior to issue.
9. requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy develop a communications strategy on CSE through the Authority's own publications (Our North Tyneside and Teamwork) to dispel some of the myths surrounding CSE and to make clear to residents and employees that people who are suffering CSE or who may suspect CSE is taking place can access appropriate support and information. The strategy should include the production of posters to inform people of the warning signs and what to do if they are concerned. These posters should be available for display in all Council buildings and offered to bed and breakfasts, hotels, takeaways and taxi offices.
10. requests the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding and the Head of Commissioning and Investment to work with Changing Lives to consider whether there is a suitable venue in Whitley Bay to be made available for use by Changing Lives and their associated partners/programmes as a drop-in centre for young people who may be experiencing exploitation and/or abuse.

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

The Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had received the report on 7 December 2015 and had suggested that the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (NTSCB) Training Strategy and Implementation Plan should include School Governing Bodies and that the Group C heading should read 'children at greater risk' instead of 'children at risk'.

Officers at the meeting had undertaken to ensure that this was passed onto the NTSCB (Minute OV37/12/15 refers). Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee was of the view that the recommendations set out in the report would assist the local authority, its partners and the public to improve their awareness of CSE and enable them to identify and support victims in the most effective and comprehensive way.

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

**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 February 2016.

(Reason for decision – Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee’s recommendations within two months of receiving them.)

### **CAB99/12/15 Council Tax Support Scheme 2016/17 (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered a report which detailed the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken on the proposals for the 2016/17 Council Tax Support Scheme and requested that once approved, the proposals be submitted to Council for consideration at its meeting on 21 January 2016.

The current Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) was a means tested support which to promote simplicity generally followed the Housing Benefit rules around entitlement. It allowed a maximum amount of Council Tax Support of 93% of the claimants’ Council Tax liability for working age claimants. Pensionable age claimants received support based on 100% of their Council Tax liability as prescribed under national rules.

The report gave a breakdown of claimants as at the 30 September 2015. The majority of CTS claimants lived in a Council Tax Band A property, and based on the maximum support of 93% available to working age claimants, couples currently qualified for support of £17.73 per week and single people £13.30 per week.

This left £1.33 to pay each week for a couple and £1.00 to pay each week for a single person. Due to a reduction in the number of claimants the forecast scheme cost for 2015/16 was currently around £15,200,000.

Cabinet had considered a report on 14 September 2015 (Minute CAB43/09/15 refers), that advised of the Government’s plan to introduce further Welfare Reforms that had been announced in its July 2015 summer budget. The plan included a number of changes to state benefits and Tax Credits. The proposed change to Tax Credit entitlement would reduce the income of a number of Council Tax Support claimants, and this reduction in income would mean an increase in their entitlement to Council Tax Support. This in turn would increase the overall cost of the scheme for the Authority. Other changes to the Housing Benefit (HB) Scheme from April 2016 onwards had been announced and this would mean the current CTS scheme would no longer operate in a similar way to the HB scheme unless the changes were also replicated within the CTS scheme. Currently the CTS scheme used the same personal allowances for calculating entitlement and had similar rules which made it operationally easier to administer by having the two schemes aligned.

Due to current budgetary pressures, the changes proposed in the summer budget and the financial impact on the Council Tax Support Scheme, a review of the current CTS scheme had been considered by Cabinet.

Four options for a CTS scheme to be in operation from April 2016 onwards had been considered and it had been agreed that all four options should be consulted on.

The four options were:

**Scheme 1** - Continue to operate the current Council Tax Support scheme with the maximum level of Council Tax Support available of 93% for working age claimants.

**Scheme 2** - Continue to provide the maximum level of Council Tax Support available of 93% for working age claimants, and replicate the outlined Housing Benefit changes within the scheme.

**Scheme 3** - Continue to provide the current Council Tax Support scheme for working age claimants but reduce the maximum level of Council Tax Support available for working age claimants from 93% to 90%.

**Scheme 4** - Reduce the maximum level of Council Tax Support available for working age claimants from 93% to 90%, and replicate the outlined Housing Benefit changes within the scheme.

The Consultation exercise had started on 15 September 2015 and ended 31 October 2015. The report gave details of the consultation methods that had been undertaken.

Since the summer budget announcement the Welfare Reform and Work Bill, which included the proposed changes to Tax Credits, had been defeated in the House of Lords on 26 October 2015. In response the Chancellor had promised to review his decision on the proposed Tax Credit changes and this included consideration for some transitional arrangements to gradually introduce a reduction.

On 25 November 2015 the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced in his 2015 Spending Review and Autumn Statement that he no longer intended to put in place the reduction in the threshold after which Tax Credits would be reduced nor would he introduce the increase in the percentage at which Tax Credits reduced after reaching the threshold. Both of these changes would have had a significant impact on the income of some Tax Credit claimants; this in turn would have increased their entitlement to CTS and therefore the overall cost of the CTS scheme would have increased.

606 people had submitted a consultation response to the four options, including feedback from both those in receipt of CTS and those not in receipt of CTS. The largest number of respondents (280) were in favour of scheme 4.

Additional comments collected during the consultation were detailed in the report.

Reducing the level of Council Tax liability available for support for working age claimants as under options 2 and 4 would impact on all working age claimants. For a Band A property the financial impact of passing on an additional 3% would be £0.43 per week for a single person and £0.57 per week for a couple. Appendix 3 of the report detailed the impacts of a 3% reduction in support on other Council Tax bands.

Replicating the Housing Benefit changes in the CTS scheme outlined in Appendix 1 and proposed under options 3 and 4 would impact on only some of our working age claimants and only when their circumstances met the criteria. Appendix 3 to the report detailed the potential losses to claimants and estimated numbers who may be affected by replicating the Housing Benefit changes.

Following the announcement in the 2015 Spending Review and Autumn Statement to the effect that the main Tax Credits changes would not be implemented the cost to the Authority initially estimated as a result of the proposed changes no longer applied.

Incorporating the Housing Benefit changes into the scheme would reduce the cost of the scheme although only by a small amount. However by incorporating the changes and keeping both HB and CTS schemes aligned would make the operation of the scheme more effective, as the CTS scheme used some of the rules and the same personal allowances as the HB scheme.

Reducing the amount available for support for working age claimants from 93% to 90% would generate an amount of savings which the Authority could use to help manage its financial pressures as the Tax Credit changes were no longer being applied.

The costs associated with each scheme under consideration were set out in the report.

Cabinet considered the following decision options: either to agree to one of the four schemes set out in the report, and set out above; or alternatively to reject schemes 1-4 and request officers to consider an alternative scheme.

**Resolved** that (1) the responses to the consultation exercise, detailed in the report, be noted; and

(2) Option 4, as detailed in paragraph 1.6.1 of the report, be recommended to Council at its meeting on 21 January 2016 for adoption as the Authority's Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2016/17.

(Reason for decision – The results of the consultation demonstrate that the highest number of respondents were in favour of option 4. This shows the majority of respondents have a preference that those claiming Council Tax Support should pay a greater contribution to their Council Tax. It will provide operational effectiveness by incorporating into the scheme the Housing Benefit changes outlined in the report, so both the HB scheme and the CTS scheme remain aligned. The option provides the greatest savings to help manage budgetary pressures whilst still providing a high level of support. As the majority of claimants live in a Band A property the additional 3% represents a minimal reduction. Single people claiming CTS will see a reduction in their CTS entitlement of 43p per week, and couples will see a reduction of 57p per week.)

### **CAB100/12/15 Objections Received in Response to a Public Open Space Advert for Land at Charlton Court, Whitley Bay (Monkseaton South Ward)**

Cabinet considered a report which detailed representations made in relation to a statutory advertisement to dispose of public open space at Charlton Court, Whitley Bay.

The two hatched areas of land on the Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report had previously been declared surplus to the Authority's requirements and available for disposal to a Registered Provider for the development of affordable homes, and terms and conditions were currently being provisionally negotiated for their disposal to a Registered Provider. The proposed development would comprise 8 no. 2 bed bungalows for older persons and 12 no. 1 bed flats for people with learning disabilities.

Prior to expiry of the closing date, 82 representations objecting to the proposals had been received. The report set out the main points, together with responses to them.

Whilst acknowledging the need to meet demand for the type of housing proposed on the site, Members referred to the significant numbers of objections received, particularly relating to the proposed 60/40 split between development and open space, and recognising that the open space was well used by the local community, it was considered that the proposals should be reconsidered with a view to proposing an alternative scheme that may be more acceptable to residents.

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Cabinet considered the following decision options:

Option 1 – set aside the objections received in relation to the disposal of public open space at Charlton Court, Whitley Bay and allow the disposal to proceed;

Option 2 – uphold the objections received in relation to the proposed disposal of public open space at Charlton Court, Whitley Bay in which case the disposal cannot proceed.

**Resolved** that (1) due to the number of objections received in relation to the proposed disposal of public open space at Charlton Court, Whitley Bay, officers be requested to reconsider the proposal, taking account of the comments/objections and that possible alternative options be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting for consideration; and (2) it be ensured that Ward Councillors and residents are consulted on any alternative proposals.

(Reason for decision – it will enable consideration to be given to possible revised proposals and also consultation with residents and Ward Members on the proposals.)

### **CAB101/12/15 North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership Quarterly Update (Previous Minute CAB44/09/15) (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 14 October 2015 the Partnership had:

- received an update on the proposals made through the Killingworth and Longbenton Sustainable Surface Water Management Project, a partnership project between North Tyneside Council, Northumbrian Water and The Environment Agency;
- noted the progress of the Flood Risk Implementation Plan which provided information on several works nearing completion as well as planned improvements;
- received an update on the work being carried out around community preparedness and resilience, including the latest 'Flood Ready Flood Safe' feature from the Our North Tyneside residents magazine; and
- received an update on the work being carried out around the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidance.

A copy of the draft minutes from the meeting of the Partnership was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

In presenting the report, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport informed Cabinet that in the future the North Tyneside Surface water and Drainage Partnership would report to Cabinet on an annual basis.

Cabinet considered the following decision option: to receive the report and note the progress made.

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

(Reason for decision – It will enable the work of the Partnership to progress.)

### **CAB102/12//15 Tackling Deprivation in North Tyneside (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered a report requesting approval of a proposed approach to tackling deprivation in the Borough, to be initially piloted in the Chirton and Riverside wards.

On taking office in May 2013, the Mayor and Cabinet had created the Our North Tyneside Plan and agreed with the Council's strategic partners that the priorities and actions would guide their approach. The Plan had been in place for over two years and was being refreshed as part of the 2016/17 Budget Engagement process.

In order to secure the operational delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and to handle the financial challenges facing the Authority, Cabinet had worked with the Officer team to develop the Creating a Brighter Future Programme. The programme was intended to frame what the Authority was for, with reduced resources.

Progress on delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan was reported bi-annually to Cabinet and the Creating a Brighter Future Programmes was overseen by Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team. Appropriate outcome measures were in place and were reported on a monthly basis. However, the Mayor had asked that the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Chief Executive led work to ensure the Plan and Programme were having sufficient impact at community level. Furthermore, the Mayor had requested that the community impact was specifically tested to ensure it was reducing deprivation in those communities in North Tyneside which experienced it most.

Specifically, the Mayor was concerned that, despite a significant and extensive range of interventions, deprivation in North Tyneside had endured in specific wards. Deprivation across North Tyneside had reduced overall but particular parts of the Borough had not benefited from that improvement.

Chirton and Riverside Wards were consistently the most deprived. It had therefore been suggested that a pilot to the approach was conducted in those wards with the intention of moving on to the other areas of more concentrated deprivation in the Borough.

It was important not to generalise about either ward. The majority of people who lived in those communities had a good quality of life, each Ward had access to quality education, good health care, public transport; each Ward contained significant community assets and significant items of infrastructure. Both wards contained major parts of the North Tyneside economy and a full range of successful North Tyneside businesses. The communities of both Wards made a major contribution to life in North Tyneside and the wider region. However, analysis had shown that there were people who lived in Chirton and Riverside who did not currently benefit from the full range of those assets and whose life chances had been significantly curtailed as a result.

Over the summer the Officer team had worked with the Deputy Mayor to look at all available data. The results had indicated some very clear priorities for action.

Initial work was tested with Ward Councillors, to consider how the performance data reflected local experience. This had been followed up by discussions with representatives of the Community and Voluntary Sector working in the Wards. They had also validated the conclusions drawn from the data. Finally, a discussion with wider partners working in the Wards had also validated the conclusions and drew a clear commitment to work with the Authority.

The proposed approach, if proven successful, would be applied across the Borough, i.e.:

- Using all the available data to establish a small number of clear priorities for action
- Test those priorities with the community and a wide range of partners
- Share those priorities making sure everyone working on the issues and in the wards understands the Authority's approach and the link to the wider strategic context



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- Make a clear statement of action based on assets, risks and opportunities where partners have the opportunity to indicate their own contribution
- Take that action demonstrating commitment to the priorities
- Measure the impact paying particular attention to the original data and the outcome measures associated with the Our North Tyneside Plan and Creating a Brighter Future Programme
- Create a cycle of engagement, accountability and celebration based on the priorities and the people most directly involved in each one
- Evaluate the impact on an annual basis and reset the work as required.

The intention was to make a clear statement of intent and act on that intent, checking the action was having the desired impact.

It was not the intention to create a separate and detailed structure. For the Authority, the intention was that the priorities simply guided the day to day work of the entire team. Some management would be applied to the overall approach and to checking progress. Discussions had suggested that attempting to develop a single methodology and plan for some complex issues and very different communities would most probably fail.

The priorities for Chirton and Riverside, arising from the data, were driven by education, employment and housing with health impacts as a consequence of all three. The distinction in this set of priorities was an attempt to define the more precise issues that required action in Chirton and Riverside. Information, issues, risks, opportunities and proposed actions for both wards relating to these priorities were detailed in the report.

Building on the success of the Mayor's Community Task Force to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Whitley Bay, the proposed approach was to start the work with an Action Plan against the four identified priorities. The draft Action Plan detailed at Appendix 2 to the report set out what practical steps the Authority would take to tackle the identified priorities. Partners working in the communities had had the opportunity to add their own work to aid coherence and collaboration.

The Action Plan had been produced to avoid process and focus on making change happen. It would be used to monitor early progress and to support engagement with specific communities on specific issues. It would also be used to celebrate success.

One of the outcomes of the initial work had been the identification of gaps in the Authority's knowledge at a community level. For that reason work had been done to make the residents' survey results more meaningful at ward level.

Work was also under way to develop the right measures to demonstrate progress. For each of the priorities success criteria and progress measures were being established that could test whether the work was actually having the intended impact. The approach would be evaluated in 12 months time to check initial results. The Officer team were working with partners and the community to identify opportunities to share the changes and spell out progress.

The intention was to make sure that work happened but that it was also visible to Cabinet. A Chirton and Riverside section of the six-monthly Performance Report to Cabinet would detail progress and results.

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 report and overall approach to tackling deprivation in North Tyneside, be noted;

- (2) the proposed priorities for Chirton and Riverside as detailed in the report, be approved;
- (3) the draft Action Plan, detailed at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and
- (4) should this approach prove successful, the application of the overall approach to other parts of the Borough be approved.

(Reason for decision - It reflects the policy intentions of the Mayor and Cabinet and the priorities tested with residents and Ward Councillors, as well as against the data and a range of partners and the Action Plan contains practical action to begin to make a difference to those priorities.)

### **CAB103/12/15 Regional Trading Standards Enforcement Team ‘Scambusters’ (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered a report on the Regional Trading Standards Team ‘Scambusters’.

Across the country various Scambusters Teams had been set up by local authority Trading Standards services working together on a regional basis with national government funding. The teams had been set up to tackle cross border/regional criminal activity in the broad “fair trading” arena. This was to add to (not replace or substitute) activity already being carried out by local Trading Standards services.

In the North East, the Scambusters Team was hosted by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council on behalf of the 12 Trading Standards services in the Region, which included North Tyneside. Governance, direction and tasking was provided within the region via Heads of Service and Senior Managers. The regional team worked closely with the 12 individual Trading Standards services. The Regional Enforcement Team would enhance further the Authority’s ability to protect residents of North Tyneside.

Trading Standards Officers (or Weights and Measures Officers) within an Authority were required to have the delegated authority to act on behalf of the Authority in relation to numerous pieces of legislation and where necessary to produce proof of such authority to members of the public. If Trading Standards Officers from the Scambusters Team were placed at the disposal of North Tyneside to operate within the Borough alongside the Authority’s own Trading Standards Officers, those officers would be required to have the delegated authority to do so.

In an effort to clarify the working arrangements between the Scambusters officers and North Tyneside officers, it may be necessary on occasion for a Protocol or Agreement to be developed and entered into setting out the working arrangements to be followed by each of the officers involved in an investigation in which Scambusters officers were deployed.

Cabinet considered the following decision options to:

Option 1 – note the existence of the additional enforcement resources provided through the Regional Enforcement Team and note the delegated authority that will be given to Scambusters officers on occasion by the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure and authorise the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure to enter into any Protocol or Agreement as considered appropriate in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance.

Option 2 – note the existence of the additional enforcement resources provided through the Regional Enforcement Team but prohibit delegated authority being given to Scambusters Officers by the Head of Environment Housing and Leisure.

Option 3 – refer any of the matters arising in the report back to officers for further consideration.

**Resolved** that (1) the existence of the Regional Trading Standards Enforcement Project ('Scambusters') funded by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills through the National Trading Standards Board, that supports cross border enforcement be noted and that in the North East of England, is led by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council; (2) it be noted that the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure will give delegated authority to officers of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council to operate as Trading Standards Officers for and on behalf of the Authority for the duration of any particular cross-border investigation in which the Scambusters Team is involved; and (3) the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance, be authorised to enter into any Protocol or Agreement that may be developed setting out the working arrangements under which officers from both the Authority and the Scambusters Team will operate.

(Reason for decision – the proposal will add to the Authority's existing resources by enabling the Trading Standards function within the Authority to have access to members of a team of suitably skilled officers based within the Regional Enforcement Team to assist with the enforcement of fraudulent and malicious trading practices within the Authority's boundaries, but which have a cross-border impact on other Authorities.

The enforcement resource of the officers from the Regional Enforcement Team will enhance further the Authority's capacity and provide a resource it would not otherwise have access to.)

### **CAB104/12/15/15 North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered the Authority's Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) Annual Information Report 2015.

The report outlined the progress and key issues associated with the maintenance of the Authority's public highway network, with particular emphasis around the condition of the network and the resources required to maintain it effectively.

The report would be used as the basis for ongoing consideration around the challenges of maintaining the highway network and was aimed at supporting those considerations so that any decisions about potential changes in highway maintenance priorities and resources could be made in an informed manner.

Currently the highway maintenance activities delivered through the HAMP were funded through a number of funding streams. Capital work was funded by the annual Local Transport Plan Maintenance Block and in recent years additional funding had been invested through the Authority's Investment Plan.

Over the last 12 months the Highway Maintenance Team had continued to make steady progress in improving the Borough's roads and footpaths against the backdrop of a difficult national financial climate. Customers continued to see a well maintained highway network as a top priority. It was therefore encouraging to see that additional capital investment in highway maintenance made in recent years continued to make a positive difference. The latest condition surveys showed that a combination of additional funding and preventative maintenance policies was starting to pay dividends. This is further evidenced by positive customer feedback from residents and other stakeholders. Members had also given similar positive feedback at a series of ward briefing sessions held in September 2015.

For the first time ever, the carriageway maintenance backlog had fallen over the last 12 months which was a notable achievement.

Whilst the gradual improvement in the condition of roads was welcome, the Authority continued to face many challenges to keep North Tyneside's highway network in a serviceable condition.

For example, the condition of public footways continued to be an area of concern and the Highways Team had started to focus more on this. The backlog of carriageway repairs was still £20.7 million and it was estimated the footway repair backlog would be a similar figure.

The HAMP was due for review in 2017 and work would commence shortly on refreshing the policy. As part of the process, Cabinet Members and other key stakeholders would be engaged so that the new HAMP could be shaped appropriately in terms of policy direction and available resources.

Cabinet considered the following decision option: to note the Highways Asset Management Plan Information Report.

**Resolved** that the content of the Highways Asset Management Plan Annual Information Report 2015, be noted.

(Reason for Decision - no direct decisions are required in relation to the content of the HAMP Annual Information Report. It is for information purposes only.)

### **CAB105/12/15 Road Safety Annual Information Report (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered a report which detailed the Road Safety Annual Information Report for 2014.

The North Tyneside Road Safety Strategy 2015-2018 had been approved by Cabinet on 9 March 2015 (Minute CAB155/03/15 refers). The Strategy provided a framework for the delivery of engineering and educational measures, designed to meet the challenging targets for road casualty reduction to which the Authority was committed, and further improve its approach to supporting safety for all road users.

The report supported the Authority's Road Safety Strategy and provided an update on road safety activities and outcomes in North Tyneside for 2014. It was intended that subsequent reports would be provided on an annual basis.

The report summarised relevant data on road collisions. The recorded data showed that there had been a general decreasing trend in casualties, with some variation from year to year. Adult cyclist casualties would be further monitored as these had shown a general increasing trend, despite a decrease from 2013 to 2014. A detailed review would also be carried out of pedestrian and cyclist casualties among the 11 to 15 age group.

Details on the location and circumstances of collisions, together with related data such as vehicle speed surveys, were used to inform the development of the programme of local safety schemes and to identify specific areas and topics for education and training activities. The report noted that a number of local safety schemes had been introduced during 2014/15.

The objectives of the Road Safety Strategy included helping people to keep themselves safe and promoting road safety, through education and training. The report noted that in-class road safety education had been delivered to 16,572 children in 2014/15, and that, working with the Tyne and Wear Schools Go Smarter programme, 'Balance bike' training had been delivered to 702 nursery age children and 587 children had received practical pedestrian training.

Bikeability training, funded from a specific government grant, was delivered widely at schools, with 768 children being trained to Bikeability Level 2 standard. The Authority continued to work in partnership with Road Safety GB and the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative (NSRI).

The programme was being delivered against a background of funding constraints. From 2015/16, central government grant for the Integrated Transport element of Local Transport Plan funding had been reduced by an average of 44%, as funding was top-sliced to support the delivery of transport and related projects through the Local Growth Fund.

The Authority had been successful in obtaining funding from the Local Growth Fund for several major projects over the period 2015/16-2018/19. These included improvements to the A1058 Coast Road (Billy Mill and Norham Road junctions), which would improve traffic flows and crossing facilities in this key corridor. Government funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), which supported the Schools Go Smarter and Go Smarter to Work programmes, would no longer be available after 2015/16 and options were being explored to continue elements of these programmes.

The report provided information on road safety activities in North Tyneside and would help to target schemes and measures which had the most beneficial outcomes.

Cabinet considered the following decision option: to note the Highways Asset Management Plan Information Report.

**Resolved** that the content of the Road Safety Annual Information Report 2014 be noted.

(Reason for Decision - No direct decisions are required in relation to the content of the report. It is for information purposes only.)

### **CAB106/12/15 Cycling Strategy – Response to Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Sub-Group Report (All Wards)**

Cabinet considered a report which set out the proposed responses to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee in relation to its study into the Cycling Strategy. The report had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 October 2015 (Minute CAB56/10/15 refers)

As part of the Environment Sub-Committee's work programme for 2014/15, a report on the 2010-2014 North Tyneside Cycling Strategy (which formed the first part of a long-term '2030 Vision' for cycling) had been considered at the meeting held on 10 September 2014. It had been agreed to establish a Sub-Group to examine the Cycling Strategy to see what could be done to ensure that it could be used to improve cycling and to maximise investment in cycling in North Tyneside.

The topic had been selected as the current Strategy was due to be renewed during 2015 and Members wished to ensure that the objectives of the 2030 Vision were still appropriate and that steps were taken to ensure that the North Tyneside cycle network was designed and maintained in accordance with international best practice.

The health benefits of regular cycling were widely acknowledged and North Tyneside had a substantial and increasing level of cycling in the Borough, much of it as a way of getting to and from work, school and shops. There were also many people who made use of the Waggonways and other routes for recreational cycling.

Members had held a series of evidence gathering sessions with officers of the Authority and of adjacent authorities, and other partners and stakeholders including residents and representatives of cycling groups, and examined examples of international best practice.

## Cabinet

As a result of the study, the Sub-Group had identified four recommendations. The proposed responses to the recommendations were detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

Cabinet considered the following decision options:

Option 1 - accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report;

Option 2 - not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report;

Option 3 – accept, reject or amend any of the proposed responses at Appendix 1 on an individual basis.

Option 4 – refer the matter back to Officers for further consideration of particular issue(s).

**Resolved** that the proposed responses to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee in relation to its study into the Cycling Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(Reason for decision – It will support the effective delivery of measures to support cycling in North Tyneside.)

### **CAB107/12/15 Elected Mayor's Closing Remarks**

The Elected Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. She conveyed the thanks of herself and the Cabinet for the support given to the Authority by Partners and Officers throughout what had been a very challenging year.

### **CAB108/12/15 Dates and Times of Next Meetings**

6.00pm on Monday 11 January 2016 (Ordinary Meeting)

6.00pm on Thursday 14 January 2016 (Extraordinary Meeting)

6.00pm on Wednesday, 27 January 2016 (Extraordinary Meeting)

### **Minutes published on 17 December 2015.**

**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 24 December 2015.**