



# Cabinet

**North Tyneside Council**

1 September 2017

**Monday, 11 September 2017** Room 0.02, Ground Floor, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside **commencing at 6.00pm**

## Agenda Item

Page(s)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. **To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted**

You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.

You are also invited to disclose any dispensation in relation to any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.

Please complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.

3. **Minutes**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2017 (previously circulated).

**Continued overleaf**

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and receive information about it.

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For further information please call 0191 643 5358.

Contact Officer(s)  
Sharon Ranadé – (0191) 643 5614  
Dave Brown – (0191) 643 5358

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4. <b>Report of the Young Mayor</b>	
To receive a verbal report on the latest activities of the Young Mayor and Young Cabinet.	
5. <b>Reports from Scrutiny Committees</b>	
(a) To consider any reports submitted by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee or any of its Sub-Committees.	
6. <b>Key (and non-key) Decisions</b>	
(a) <b>2017/18 Financial Management Report to 31 July 2017 (All Wards)</b>	<b>4</b>
To consider a report detailing the Authority's financial position as at 31 July 2017, including the forecast outturn positions for 2017/18 for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account, School finances and the Investment Plan.	
(b) <b>2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Council Plan and associated Engagement Strategy (All Wards)</b>	<b>55</b>
To consider a report outlining the process to be adopted for the Authority's Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process for the current year as part of the proposed framework for the next two years.	
(c) <b>Council Tax Support Scheme 2018-19 (All Wards)</b>	<b>70</b>
To consider what changes should be made to the Council Tax Support Scheme so that a consultation exercise can be undertaken on the proposed changes to the Scheme.	
(d) <b>North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 to 2032 (All Wards)</b>	<b>84</b>
To consider a report seeking approval of the Highway Asset Management Plan.	
(e) <b>North Tyneside Parking Strategy (All Wards)</b>	<b>106</b>
To consider a report seeking approval to adopt the North Tyneside Parking Strategy.	
(f) <b>Healthwatch North Tyneside Procurement Exercise (All Wards)</b>	<b>132</b>
To consider a report seeking approval to carry out a tendering exercise, for the procurement of a suitable organisation to provide Healthwatch North Tyneside.	

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<p>(g) <b>Action Plan resulting from the Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services (All Wards)</b></p> <p>To consider a report seeking approval of the proposed Action Plan to address the recommendations of the Ofsted Inspection of North Tyneside’s services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.</p>	<p><b>139</b></p>
<p>(h) <b>Calculating Financial Support for Special Guardians (All Wards)</b></p> <p>To consider a report that outlines a revised calculation for calculating financial support for Special Guardians.</p>	<p><b>187</b></p>
<p>(i) <b>The Complaints Service Report 2016-17 (All Wards)</b></p> <p>To consider a report detailing complaint related activity during 2016-17. The report complies with the requirement to publish a Report on Complaints under the relevant statutory complaint legislation.</p>	<p><b>192</b></p>

**Date and Time of Next Meeting(s)**

Wednesday 27 September 2017 at 4.00pm (Extraordinary Meeting)  
Monday 9 October 2017 at 6.00pm (Ordinary Meeting)

**Circulated to Members of the Cabinet:**

N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)  
Councillor C Burdis  
Councillor E Darke  
Councillor R Glindon  
Councillor I Grayson  
Councillor M Hall  
Councillor J Harrison  
Councillor B Pickard (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillor J Stirling

**Young and Older People’s Representatives and Partners of North Tyneside Council:**

Oscar Daniel, Young Mayor  
Alma Caldwell, Age UK  
Mark Adams, North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group  
Roger Layton, North Tyneside Joint Trade Union Committee  
Sharon Scott, Northern Area Commander, Northumbria Police  
Carla Franchi, Voluntary and Community Sector  
Karen Goldfinch, Business Representative

# North Tyneside Authority Report to Cabinet 11 September 2017

## Item 6(a)

2017/18 Financial Management  
Report to 31 July 2017

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<b>Portfolios:</b> Elected Mayor Finance and Resources	<b>Cabinet Member:</b> Norma Redfearn Cllr Ray Glindon
<b>Report from:</b> Finance	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Janice Gillespie, Head of Finance	<b>Tel:</b> 643 5701
<b>Wards affected:</b> All	

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### PART 1

#### 1.1 Executive Summary:

This report is the second monitoring report to Cabinet on the 2017/18 financial position. The report continues to be developed such that the format brings together financial and relevant performance information with the intention of explaining the current financial position in the context of the Policy priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan.

The report covers:

- The forecast outturn of the Authority's General Fund and HRA revenue budget including details of where the Authority continues to manage financial pressures and what management mitigations are in place where issues have been identified.
- An update on the delivery of 2017/18 approved budget savings plans.
- An update on 2017/18 schools budgets
- An update on delivery of the Capital Investment Plan including details of variations and reprogramming that is recommended for approval.
- An update and overview of current performance against the policy priorities in the 2016-2019 Our North Tyneside Council Plan as context for the financial position, and
- The report includes details of additional grants received by the Authority since the budget was set.

## **1.2 Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) note the forecast budget monitoring position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Schools' Finance as at 31 July 2017 (Annex Sections 1, 2 and 3);
- (b) approves the receipt of £0.325m new revenue grants ( Table 10);
- (c) note the Authority's Investment Plan spend of £14.295m to 31 July 2017 and the financing of the Plan to the end of the year ( Annex Section 4.0); and
- (d) approve variations of £1.316m within the 2017 - 2020 Investment Plan (Annex Section 4.).

## **1.3 Forward Plan:**

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 30 May 2017.

## **1.4 Authority plan and policy framework:**

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

## **1.5 Information:**

### **1.5.1 Financial Position**

This report is the second monitoring report in the new format presented to Members on the Authority's 2017/18 financial position. It provides an update on the expected revenue and capital financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2018.

The report covers:

- The forecast outturn of the Authority's General Fund and HRA revenue budget including details of where the Authority continues to manage financial pressures and what management mitigations are in place where issues have been identified,
- An update on the delivery of 2017/18 approved budget savings plans
- An update on 2017/18 schools budgets
- An update on delivery of the Capital Investment Plan including details of variations and reprogramming that are recommended for approval
- An update and overview of current performance against the policy priorities in the 2016-2019 Our North Tyneside Council Plan as context for the financial position.

### **General Fund Revenue Account:**

The forecast overall pressure is estimated at £7.052m against an approved net budget of £152.360m. This is driven mainly by continued pressure in Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (HECS) of £7.208m (May 17 £7.625m). Included in this projection is £2.168m of pressures in Corporate Parenting and Placements

and £3.361m in Social Care package provision within Adult Social Care Services, the drivers for these pressures continue from 2016/17 and arise from:

- Continued growth in changes in demand for Adult and Children's Social Care Services;
- The timing of delivery of some aspects of the Creating a Brighter Future Programme to the extent that achievement of some savings may be at risk;
- Ongoing issues around agreeing adequate levels of contributions from the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group for clients with health needs and to support social care;
- The impact of the National Living Wage on our care providers (and the consequential impact on our Commissioning costs).

The 2017/18 budget setting process made provision for many of the pressures identified during 2016/17, however, demand pressures have continued into 2017/18. Negotiations with care providers are at an early stage for 2017/18 in terms of the National Living Wage and at this early point in the year it is not yet possible to be sure that all the savings built into the Creating a Brighter Future Programme can be delivered. Over the course of May, June and July a number of working groups were held with senior officer and Cabinet members looking in detail at the financial position and progress against the action plans developed since the start of the financial year. Some progress is being made against these plans and it is expected that the out-turn forecast will improve over the course of the year as planned remedial actions begin to have an impact on spend and income. The forecast outturn does not at this stage take into account the additional funding for Adult Social Care announced as part of the Spring Budget on 8 March 2017. For 2017/18 this amounts to £4.579m, and work is currently in progress to determine the appropriate application of this funding.

### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA):**

The HRA is forecast to have year-end balances at 31 March 2018 of £4.382m, which is £1.520m higher than budget. The higher than forecast balances are mainly as a result of higher opening balances due to the impact of the previous years' financial performance (£1.339m) but there is also an in-year estimated overall underspend of £0.181m. Total overall income is currently expected to be lower than budget (£0.046m) due to higher void levels than forecast, being offset by higher than expected income from both temporary dispersed accommodation and service charge income. Reduced spending on contingencies and bad debt provision of £0.220 brings the forecast outturn for the year to a £0.181m surplus.

### **School Funding:**

The Annex to this report includes an update in respect of work in progress with regard to school funding (Section 3.0). There is an increase in the number of schools requesting deficit approval and at the time of writing this report ten schools have made requests compared to eight in 2016/17. The 10 July Cabinet report Education for North Tyneside set out a series of actions to address schools finance and specifically further deficit clinics are planned during September to agree actions with the schools to manage and improve those deficit positions.

## Investment Plan:

The 2017-2020 Investment Plan, as adjusted for proposed variations, totals £201.475 and is detailed in Appendix 1. The Annex to this report also sets out in Section 4.0 delivery progress to date, planned delivery for 2017/18, reprogramming and other variations identified through the Investment Programme Governance process.

## New Revenue Grants:

The following revenue grants have been received during April and May 2017:

**Table 1: Revenue Grants Received during April and May 2017**

<b>Grant Provider</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>2017/18 value £m</b>
Department of Education	Step up to Social Work	A grant to support the training of social workers is used to deliver against the objective of Our North Tyneside Plan in terms of “Our People being cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable.	0.325

### 1.5.2 Performance against Council Plan

The 2016-2019 Our North Tyneside Plan (Council Plan) sets out the overall vision and policy context within which the Financial Plan and Budget are set.

The 2016-2019 Our North Tyneside Plan has three key themes – Our People, Our Places and Our Economy. For each one there is a set of policy outcomes that the Authority is seeking to deliver as set out below.

#### **Our People will:**

- Be listened to, and involved, by responsive, enabling services.
- Be ready for school – giving our children and their families the best start in life.
- Be ready for work and life – with the skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, economic independence and meet the needs of local businesses.
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, well-being and independence.
- Be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable.

#### **Our Places will:**

- Be great places to live, and attract others to visit or work here.
- Offer a good choice of quality housing appropriate to need, including affordable homes.

- Provide a clean, green, healthy, attractive and safe environment.
- Have an effective transport and physical infrastructure - including our roads, cycle ways, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport.

### **Our Economy will:**

- Grow by building on our strengths, including our existing world class companies, and small and growing enterprises.
- Have the right skills and conditions to support investment, and create and sustain new good quality jobs and apprenticeships for working age people.

### **Current Progress of Services against the Council Plan**

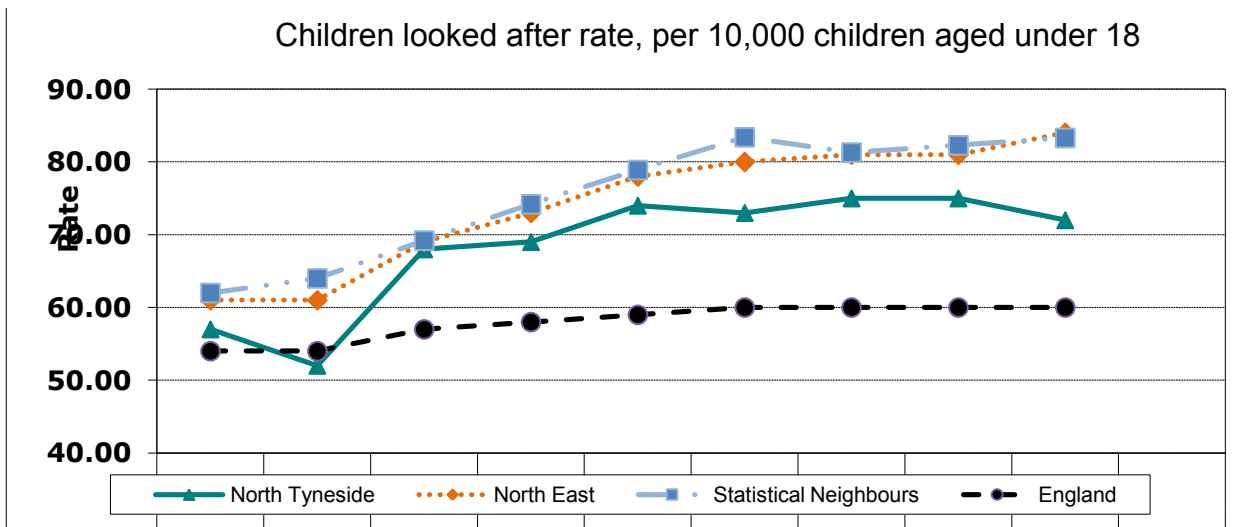
In Adult Social Care the focus remains on providing support which allows people to live independent lives by providing preventative services and keeping people living at home for as long as possible. There is an increase in short term placements to residential care and reablement in-house provision as a result of a lack of capacity in the local domiciliary care market and this is driving some of the cost pressure within Adult Social Care as highlighted in section 1.3 of the Annex to this report.

In Children's Services good progress continues to be made on engaging with children in the early years of life to ensure that they are ready for school. Safeguarding vulnerable children and maximising their educational attainment remain key priorities. The recently published Ofsted report following the review of Children's services put the service as joint 8<sup>th</sup> nationwide of the 136 authorities inspected under the new regime with a "Good" rating overall and recognition of an excellent focus on seeking the views of children to shape services. In addition 94% of our pupils attend a Good or Outstanding School.

The levels of looked after children (LAC) and children who require supervision after leaving care continue to generate a significant financial pressure. In year data continues to demonstrate that our LAC levels are reducing (as shown in Graph 2 below) but there are a wide range of levels of care provided and current demand continues to drive financial pressure in 2017/18. The Authority is forecasting a pressure of £2.168m in corporate parenting and placements (2016/17, £2.525m). The new model for children has been designed in part to address the financial pressures and more details are set out in sections 1.2 and 1.3 of the Annex to this report. Although above the England rate, the North Tyneside LAC rate compares favourably with the rate for the North East and with our statistical neighbours (as shown in Graph below).



**Table 2: Looked After Children comparators**



### HRA Impact

In Housing, the Authority is seeing some impact of Welfare Reform, as well as the on-going consequences of the current Right to Buy Scheme. The proportion of rent collected has fallen from 97.03% in 2015/16 to a position of 96.6% for 2016/17 which is expected to continue into 2017/18. We are also seeing pressure on empty homes turnaround from both a housing management and repair perspective with average re-let times in 2016/17 of 38.25 days, substantially increased from 29.39 days in 2015/16. This increase in turnaround times is driven by an increased number of transfers of older people moving from properties they have lived in for many years into the PFI sheltered housing as it has become available as part of the North Tyneside Living PFI Scheme. Often these residents have chosen not to be included in planned improvements in their areas to avoid the disruption to their lives. This has resulted in many of the properties requiring more substantial works than normal to meet the void standards before they can be re-let. The Authority continues to work with Kier to reduce the void turnaround times.

#### 1.5.3 Investment Plan

Following variations of £1.316m proposed in this report as set out in Section 4 of the Annex to this report, the revised Investment Plan stands at 99.319m for 2017/18. To the end of July 2017 £14.295m (14.39%) of spend had been incurred which is broadly in line with the budgeted spend across the year.

### 1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

#### Option 1

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

## Options 2

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

### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

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

### **1.8 Appendices:**

Annex : Financial Management Report to 31 May 2017  
Appendix 1: 2017-2020 Investment Plans

### **1.9 Contact officers:**

Janice Gillespie - Corporate Finance matters – Tel. (0191) 643 5701  
Margaret Keith –Treasury Management matters – Tel. (0191) 643 5747  
Cathy Davison - Investment Plan matters- Tel. (0191) 643 5727  
Alison Campbell – Senior Business Partner – Tel. (0191) 643 7038  
Darrell Campbell - Housing Revenue Account matters – Tel. (0191) 643 7052

### **1.10 Background information:**

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

- (a) Revenue budget 2017/18  
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Budget%20Book%20170427.pdf>
- (b) Investment Plan 2017-20  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC\\_PSCM.PSCM\\_Web.download?p\\_ID=567811](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=567811)
- (c) Reserves and Balances Policy  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC\\_PSCM.PSCM\\_Web.download?p\\_ID=567815](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=567815)

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

As this is a financial report, implications are covered in the body of the report. This report will also be presented to the Authority's Finance Sub-Committee at its meeting on 20 September 2017.

## **2.2 Legal**

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

## **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

### **2.3.1 Internal Consultation**

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

### **2.3.2 External Consultation / Engagement**

The 2017/18 budget was completed after widespread consultation and community engagement in line with the Authority's approved Budget Engagement Strategy.

## **2.4 Human rights**

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

## **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

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

## **2.6 Risk management**

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

## **2.7 Crime and disorder**

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

## **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

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

**PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Deputy Chief Executive  x
- Head of Service  x
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)  x
- Chief Finance Officer  x
- Monitoring Officer  x
- Head of Corporate Strategy  x

**Cabinet – 11 Sept 2017**  
**Agenda Item 6(a)**

# **2017/18 Financial Management Report Annex**

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<b>2.Schools Finance</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>3.Housing Revenue Account</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>4. Investment Plan</b>	<b>32</b>

## SECTION 1 GENERAL FUND

### General Fund Revenue Forecast

1.0 The Authority's approved net revenue Budget of £152.360m is forecast to overspend by £7.025m (May £8.842m). This position reflects £18.338m of budget savings as agreed at Council on 16 February 2017. Table 1 below sets out the variation summary across the General Fund.

**Table 1: 2017/18 General Fund Revenue Forecast Outturn as at 31 July 2017**

	Gross Expenditure			Income			Net Expenditure			May 17
	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding (HECS)	161.291	168.305	7.014	-88.327	-88.395	-0.068	<b>72.964</b>	<b>80.172</b>	<b>7.208</b>	<b>7.625</b>
Commissioning & Investment	196.071	198.418	2.347	-176.781	-178.143	-1.362	<b>19.290</b>	<b>20.275</b>	<b>0.985</b>	<b>0.981</b>
Environment, Housing & Leisure (EHL)	73.090	75.128	2.038	-27.945	-28.721	-0.776	<b>45.145</b>	<b>46.407</b>	<b>1.262</b>	<b>1.329</b>
Chief Executive Office	0.576	0.579	0.003	-0.440	-0.440	0.000	<b>0.136</b>	<b>0.139</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>0.003</b>
Business & Econ Development	2.378	2.465	0.087	-0.771	-0.842	-0.071	<b>1.607</b>	<b>1.623</b>	<b>0.016</b>	<b>0.016</b>
Commercial & Bus Redesign	8.012	8.412	0.400	-5.471	-5.700	-0.229	<b>2.541</b>	<b>2.712</b>	<b>0.171</b>	<b>0.184</b>
Corporate Strategy	2.351	2.482	0.131	-1.451	-1.460	-0.009	<b>0.900</b>	<b>1.022</b>	<b>0.122</b>	<b>0.123</b>
Finance	80.569	81.398	0.829	-79.332	-80.200	-0.868	<b>1.237</b>	<b>1.198</b>	<b>-0.039</b>	<b>-0.126</b>
Human Resources & Organisational Development	2.449	2.691	0.242	-2.187	-2.243	-0.056	<b>0.262</b>	<b>0.448</b>	<b>0.186</b>	<b>0.186</b>
Law & Governance	4.232	4.438	0.206	-3.995	-4.025	-0.030	<b>0.237</b>	<b>0.413</b>	<b>0.176</b>	<b>0.180</b>
Central Items & Transfers To Reserves	17.043	14.322	-2.721	-9.002	-9.346	-0.344	<b>8.041</b>	<b>4.976</b>	<b>-3.065</b>	<b>-1.659</b>
<b>Total Authority</b>	<b>548.062</b>	<b>558.638</b>	<b>10.576</b>	<b>-395.702</b>	<b>-399.515</b>	<b>-3.813</b>	<b>152.360</b>	<b>159.385</b>	<b>7.025</b>	<b>8.842</b>

## **The Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) Grant**

1.2 The Chancellor announced additional support for Adult Social Care in the Spring Budget statement on 3 March 2017. This announcement was after the Authority's budget had been set on 16 February 2017. This additional funding is being distributed and managed as part of the Better Care Fund. The amount for North Tyneside for 2017/18 is £4.579m. The Better Care Fund Agreement between the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Authority is yet to be finalised and will include the specific allocation of this funding. Authority has therefore, not included this grant within the budget position pending agreement with the CCG. The grant conditions determine that the funding should contribute to;

- Meeting Adult Social Care needs;
- Reducing pressures on the NHS, including supporting more people to be discharged from hospital when they are ready;
- Ensuring the local social care provider market is supported.

The Improved Better Care Fund Grant is in addition to the social care precept funding raised by increased Council Tax.

## **Delivery of Budgeted Savings proposals**

1.3 The combined budget savings of £18.338m in 2017/18 approved by Council in February 2017 brings the total savings the Authority has had to find in the seven years following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) to £109.9m.

**Table 2: Year on Year savings since 2010 CSR**

<b>Year</b>	<b>£'m</b>
2011/12	16.169
2012/13	16.739
2013/14	12.240
2014/15	16.552
2015/16	14.158
2016/17	15.737
2017/18	18.338
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>109.933</b>

1.4 In tracking progress (as set out in Table 3) made against each individual saving proposal, £14.847m, which is 81.0% (May £14.177m and 77.5%) of the £18.338m is currently forecast to be delivered in 2017/18. This leaves £3.491m to be secured (May £4.161m). At this stage in the year a prudent approach is taken to reporting efficiency savings, and they will only be reported in the forecast position when the impact can be seen flowing into the financial ledger system.



**Table 3: Savings Tracker 2017/18**

	<b>Budgeted Saving</b>	<b>Forecast Saving</b>	<b>Forecast Variance</b>	<b>Forecast Variance at May</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding	5.527	3.649	<b>1.878</b>	2.556
Commissioning & Investment	1.067	0.775	<b>0.292</b>	0.292
Environment, Housing & Leisure	1.578	0.847	<b>0.731</b>	0.731
Finance	0.191	0.191	<b>0.000</b>	0.000
Law & Governance	0.258	0.228	<b>0.030</b>	0.028
Human Resources & OD	0.185	0.162	<b>0.023</b>	0.014
Business & Econ Development	0.162	0.158	<b>0.004</b>	0.008
Commercial & Bus Redesign	0.235	0.235	<b>0.000</b>	0.000
Corporate Strategy	0.355	0.322	<b>0.033</b>	0.032
Non Service Budgets & Cross cutting	8.780	8.280	<b>0.500</b>	0.500
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.338</b>	<b>14.847</b>	<b>3.491</b>	<b>4.161</b>

The governance structure of the CBF programme includes a monthly review of progress at the CBF Board. In addition, in-year finance and performance progress meetings are being held between officers, the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Deputy Mayor and the relevant Cabinet members to consider progress and actions being taken to deliver savings.

1.5 The main areas of variation are:

**HECS - £5.527m Savings Target, current £1.878m forecast variance (May £2.556m)**

- £0.310m of the £0.868m savings remains to be secured of delivery within New Model for Children Budget proposals (May £0.822m). The new model is being implemented in order to respond to the increasing demand, increasing recognition and expectation but also to address cost pressures. Whilst there is a plan of changes to be made with a resulting impact on placement mix, it is too early to assume all of these will be delivered given current demographic pressures. The improved position in relation to this target has been achieved by reducing the costs of external placements through a range of alternative provision. Two children have returned home with appropriate support. One child has been moved from external residential care to an in-house fostering placement and one child has been stepped down to an interim placement pending a transfer to the new service at Mitford Gardens.
- Pay Award and Pension Increase - £0.323m of savings included in the Budget to reflect the service finding its own element of the pay award are currently not secured (May £0.634m). The Service continues to work towards identifying how they will meet this remaining pressure through a review of working hours, managing vacancies and non-essential spend.

- ASC Pathway - All but £0.031m (May £0.031m) of the £0.884m savings have been identified following the review of the ASC pathway to carry out more personalised and proportionate assessments and offer more solutions to meet need based on existing community resources and an individual's own family and community networks. The balance is expected to be achieved in year through the management of vacancies but at this stage in the year it has not been assumed.
- Specialist Housing - £0.240m of the £0.275m Specialist Housing solution remains to be secured due to the impact of the timing of solutions being in place (May £0.240m). An officer working group continues to shape the housing growth plans to include specialist housing products and services for children and adults with additional needs, Looked After Children and older people, and continues to determine where acceleration of delivery may be possible to achieve the target savings.
- Extra Care – the £0.100m saving from increased use of Extra Care is now assumed to be secured in full leaving a nil variance (May, £0.100m variance). Crossgates in Battlehill is now operational with 25 of 47 tenancies confirmed as of the beginning of August 2017. Care providers have been working closely with Authority staff in the set up stages and there is evidence of reduced package costs for these clients.
- Disability Services - £0.350m (May £0.350m). This proposal is about reviewing the internally provided residential care and respite services and the commissioned services from external suppliers provided to children with additional needs including approximately 170 children in the Borough who have a profound disability. To date these reviews have not as yet provided any savings that can be measured directly into budgets.
- £0.012m of the £0.050m savings target re DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty) assessments remains to be secured (£0.012m at May), when the new solution is fully implemented later this year.
- £0.247m of the £0.580m savings target in relation to services for 0-19s remains to be secured (£0.247m at May). The business case included a rebranding of the provision as a 'Ready for school, work and life' offer – which focused upon getting children school ready and their families able to work and participate in their community and in doing so supports the Creating a Brighter Future Together programme, the TOM principles and the Riverside/Chirton action plan. Delays in the transfer of childcare provision have impacted on achievable savings in year. This has been partially mitigated in year by additional Troubled Families Grant.
- Work is in progress to consider further actions in respect of £0.165m of the Carecall income target of £0.250m which is being forecast as not being secured at this stage (£0.120m at May). The actions include a targeted marketing campaign, discussion with our Health partners about the benefits that Carecall brings to them in terms of cost avoidance, and opportunities to promote the service to businesses. Additionally the service is reviewing the support provided to North Tyneside Living as the monitoring and response currently provided by Carecall is at no additional cost for some of the residents whilst others contribute, which is inequitable.

- A target of a £0.200m relating to a revised homecare model is now being forecasted as not being secured at this stage (May, fully achieved). This is due to delays in identifying an appropriate training partner and issues raised by providers around scheduling of visits. The service is working hard to bring this project back on track but in the interests of prudent forecasting this saving is currently forecasted as unachieved.

**Commissioning & Investment £1.067m saving, £0.257m forecast variance (£0.292m at May)**

- £0.040m is yet to be identified of a £0.133m saving relating to restructuring the Commissioning Team. The service is continuing to review its non-essential spend and team structure.
- £0.217m of savings included in the Budget to reflect the service finding its own element of the pay award and pension costs of which none is currently forecast to be achieved (£0.217m at May). The service continues to work to identify how they will meet the additional costs through a review of working hours, the management of vacancies and by reducing non-essential spend.

**Environment, Housing & Leisure £1.578m saving, £0.731m variance (£0.731m at May)**

- £0.531m of savings included in the Budget to reflect the service finding its own element of the pay award and pension costs of which none is currently forecast to be achieved (£0.531m at May). The service continues to work to identify how they will meet the additional costs through a review of working hours, the management of vacancies and by reducing non-essential spend.
- £0.064m of a £0.070m savings target relating to bereavement income remains to be secured. Volumes of cremations so far this year are slightly up on 2016/17 levels at 677 by the end of July 2017 compared to 659 at July 2016 however, at this stage in the year savings are not considered to be certain (£0.064m at May).
- £0.100m of a £0.200m target remains to be secured with regard to the implementation of the new approach to waste introduced at the Recycling Centre from July 2017 (£0.100m at May). This is expected to reduce waste from traders resulting in disposal cost savings and results will be carefully monitored.
- £0.036m of a £0.211m saving relating to Howdon Community Centre remains to be secured (£0.036m at May). Negotiations regarding the lease of Howden Community Centre are in the process of being concluded and following that the saving is expected to be achieved in full.

**Non Service Budgets and Cross Cutting savings £8.780m saving, £0.500m forecast variance (£0.500m at May)**

The £0.500m saving yet to be delivered is linked to the project in respect of procurement savings (£0.500m at May). A detailed review of the procurement of services and the Authority's spend with suppliers is underway. The expectation is that a schedule of options will follow that will deliver the target level of saving. As the exercise has not yet been completed it is considered prudent to assume at this stage that the savings

will not be achieved.

### **2016-17 Savings Targets not yet achieved**

- 1.6 Savings targets of £1.273m relating to 2016/17 schemes are still not met. The largest item within this is a target of £0.900m relating to taking on the management of Continuing Healthcare (CHC) from the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group. The HECS service is continuing to analyse and understand the data in relation to this work and is working with NHS partners to deliver CHC in a cost effective manner. There remains a significant risk this saving will not be secured and will be required to be reconsidered as part of the 2018/19 financial planning and budget process.

### **Service Commentaries**

- 1.7 As well as the usual budget monitoring process between finance staff and budget managers, meetings have been held with Officers, Cabinet Member for Finance, the Deputy Mayor and the relevant cabinet member to discuss the in-year finance and performance position with each Head of Service and their senior team, and to discuss plans in progress to mitigate any pressures.

### **Health, Education, Care & Safeguarding (HECS)**

- 1.8 HECS is forecast to overspend its £72.964m net expenditure budget by £7.208m (£7.625 at May) as shown in Table 4 below. The forecast overspend is caused mainly by over-commitments on third party payments within Older People Services, services for clients with a learning disability and Corporate Parenting and Placements within Children's Services alongside the timing of delivery of some of the CBF targets.

**Table 4: Financial Summary for HECS**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July Variance £000</b>	<b>May Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
<b>Adults</b>	49,753	<b>4,030</b>	3,631	399
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Learning</b>	23,190	<b>3,178</b>	3,994	-816
<b>Public Health</b>	21	<b>0</b>	0	0
<b>TOTAL HECS</b>	<b>72,964</b>	<b>7,208</b>	<b>7,625</b>	<b>-417</b>

### **Adult Social Care**

- 1.9 The Adult Social Care services are forecasting a pressure of £4,030m at the end of July (£3.631m at May). The pressure is largely driven by the cost of provision of care packages, the vast majority of which is delivered by external organisations and so can be seen as a pressure in third party payments as illustrated in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Analysis of Variation across Adults Social Care spend/income type**

<i>Figures exclude Continuing Health Care which is administered on behalf of the CCG</i>	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July Variance £000</b>	<b>May Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Third party payments (mainly purchased care see Table 6 )	65,628	<b>3,653</b>	2,803	850
Employees	14,395	<b>193</b>	650	(457)
Other costs – premises, supplies and transport	2,402	<b>(128)</b>	(50)	(78)
Fees and Sales (mainly client contributions)	(9,716)	<b>(957)</b>	(1,136)	179
Grants & contributions	(23,528)	<b>1,106</b>	1,392	(286)
Recharges, support services etc.	572	<b>163</b>	(28)	191
<b>Total – Adults Social Care</b>	<b>49,753</b>	<b>4,030</b>	3,631	<b>399</b>

1.10 Table 6 below sets out further analysis of the £3.653m pressure in third party payments. This illustrates that pressures are being experienced within services for older people and services for people with a learning disability. There has been an overall increase in the forecast for third party payments of £0.850m since the May report. This has partly been as a result of two complex clients with costly care packages coming out of Continuing Healthcare (CHC) with additional costs of £0.418m falling to the Authority. In addition, there have been significant backdated payments in relation to two clients which had not been previously forecasted (£0.317m). There has also been an increase in forecasted care fee inflation costs totalling £0.284m arising from negotiations on fee increases with providers. This increase in cost pressure has been partially offset by a reduced growth forecast within Learning Disabilities (£0.228m).

Note the analysis below has been developed since the May report to show Homecare and Extra Care together and to split out Independent Supported Living (ISL) services.

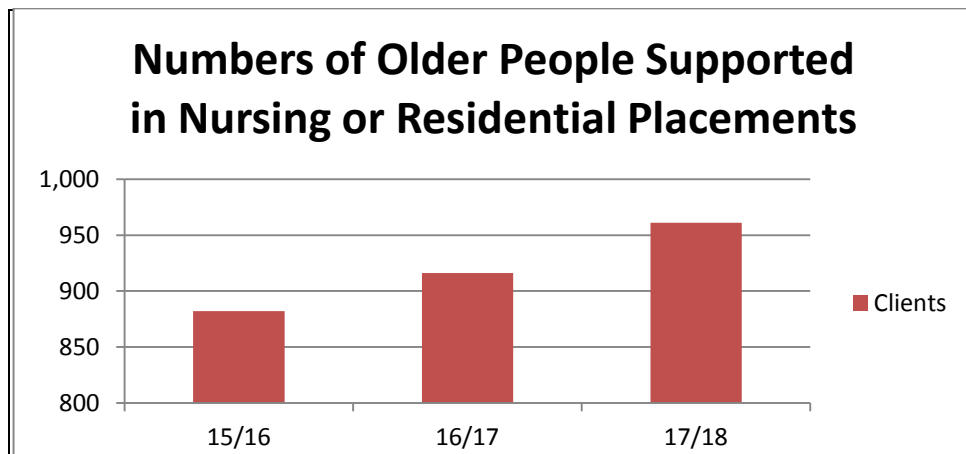
**Table 6: Analysis by type of service provision/client type - 3rd party pressure variance**

<b>Forecast Variance ASC 3<sup>rd</sup> party payments</b>					
<b>Service</b>	<b>Learning Disability (LD) £000</b>	<b>Mental Health (MH) £000</b>	<b>Older People (OP) £000</b>	<b>Physical Disability (PD) £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
Direct Payments	839	47	235	790	1,911
Home Care/Extra Care			2,185		2,185
Nursing	86	-89	-100	-154	-257
Other	1,318	-100	-779	57	496
Residential	85	-429	760	267	683
ISL	-615	173	-682	-241	-1,365
<b>Total July Forecast</b>	<b>1,713</b>	<b>-398</b>	<b>1,619</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>3,653</b>
Direct Payments	744	50	219	760	1,773
Home Care/Extra Care			2,236		2,236
Nursing	92	-105	180	-165	2
Other	827	-153	-278	-221	175
Residential	-334	-437	1,076	42	347
ISL	-969	191	-682	-270	-1,730
<b>Total May Forecast</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-454</b>	<b>2,751</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>2,803</b>
Direct Payments	95	-3	16	30	138
Home Care			-51		-51
Nursing	-6	16	-280	11	-259
Other	491	53	-501	278	321
Residential	419	8	-316	225	336
ISL	354	-18	0	29	365
<b>Total movement</b>	<b>1,353</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>-1,132</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>850</b>

### Services for Older People

- 1.11 Adult Social Care continues to suffer from demographic pressures principally within services for older people and services for people with a learning disability. The table below shows the rise in clients over 65 in nursing and residential placements since 2015/16.

**Table 7: Changes in numbers of older people in nursing and residential placements**



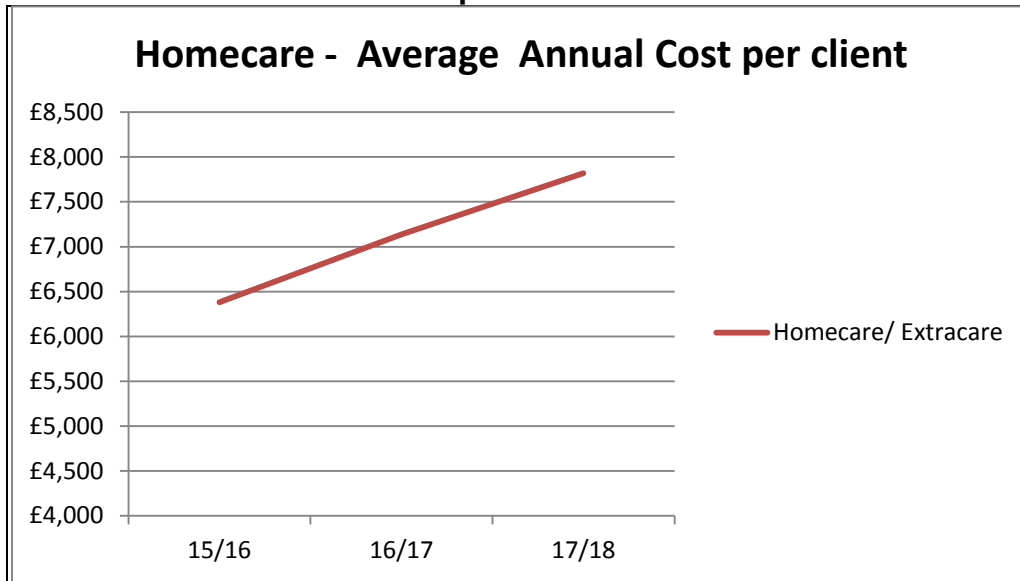
1.12 The numbers of Older People receiving homecare services has not shown the same trend although numbers in 2017/18 so far are slightly up (1.6%) on 2016/17. The static profile is likely to be due to the lack of capacity in the homecare market as providers struggle to recruit sufficient carers. This, in turn, is contributing to the additional short term and ultimately long term residential placements shown above.

**Table 8: Changes in the Number of Older People with Homecare Services**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of Older People with a homecare package	1318	1243	1263

1.13 The average cost of a homecare package is however increasing as an aging population with higher levels of need require more intense support. The graph below shows an increase of 22.5% since 2015/16 of which only 5% is due to price inflation on the hourly rate of homecare.

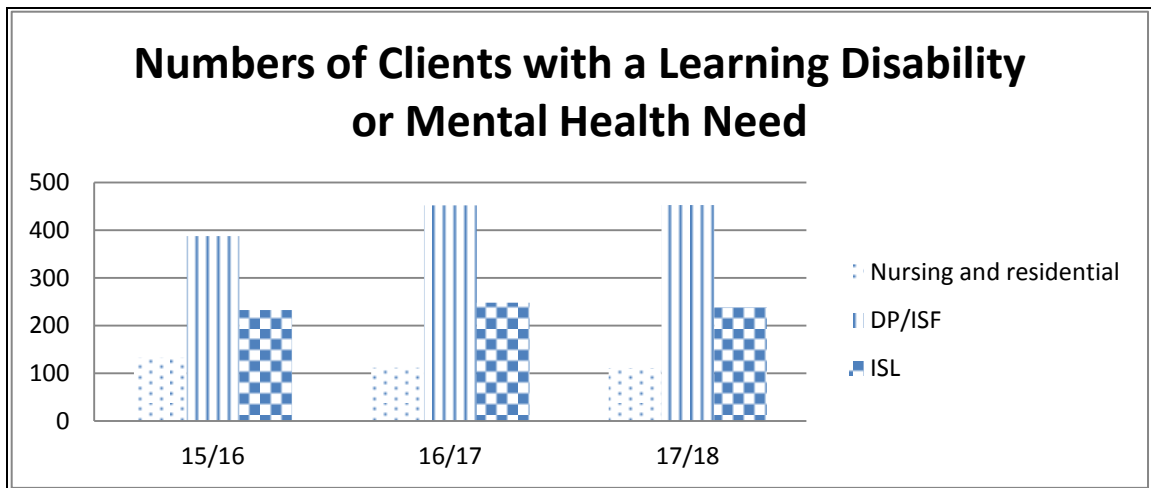
**Table 9 Trend in Annual Cost per Older Person of Homecare Services**



**Services for People with a Learning Disability**

1.14 Total numbers of clients within services have been relatively static (Table 9) with a small decrease in residential services and ISLs offset by an increase in numbers with a direct payment (DP) or Individual Service Fund (ISF – this is a fund held by a provider for an individual client to provide services on a more flexible and tailored basis for that client).

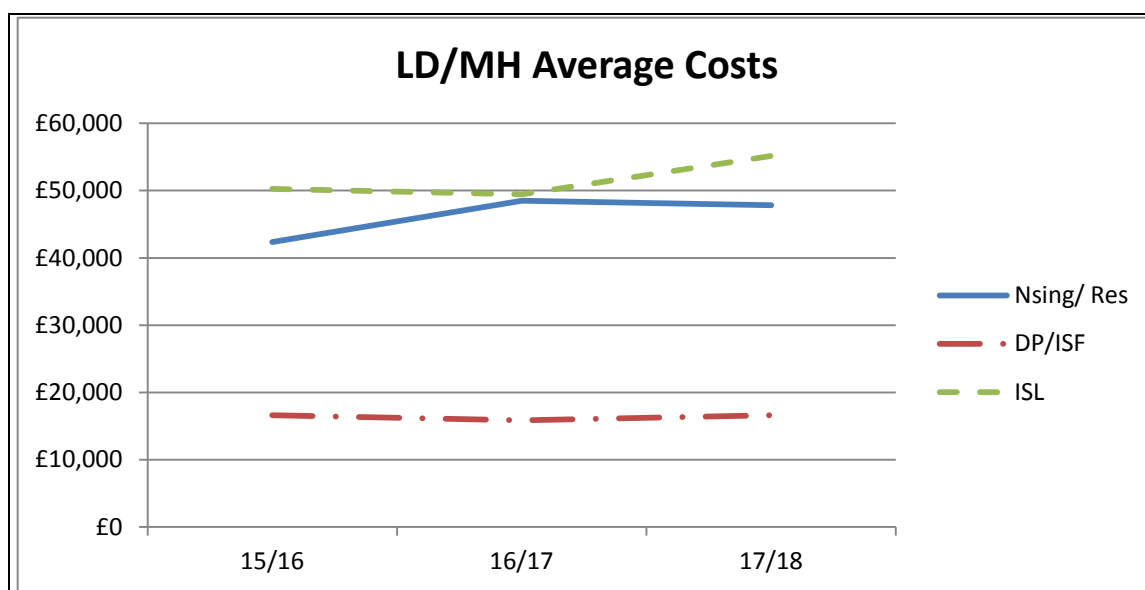
**Table 9: Changes in numbers of clients receiving services**



1.15 Average annual costs per client in for DPs and ISFs have been steady however there has been an increase in average ISL costs and a decrease in residential care average annual costs. The increase in ISL unit costs is 9.8% since 2015/16 and is explained by increases in care fees due largely to National Living Wage rises. These trends are illustrated in Table 10 below. The reduction in residential care has been due to a change in the client base with some clients moving from residential services to an ISL service.



**Table 10: Changes in average Annual costs of packages for Clients with a Learning Disability or Mental Health Need.**



- 1.16 The service is experiencing a reducing pressure within employee costs in respect of the remaining savings target relating to absorbing pay pressures described in section 1.3 above. The significant reduction in overspend within employees shown in Table 5 above is largely due to the settling out of major restructures.
- 1.17 Fees and sales income, of which the majority share is client contribution income towards care costs, is £0.957m over budget but the forecast has been reduced by £0.197m since the May report based on actual rates of income being generated. The reduction relates mainly to Homecare contributions and Carecall fees.
- 1.18 The forecast pressure in Grants and Contributions has reduced since the May report by £0.286m. The improvement in the position is due to the completion of the first set of quarterly recharges for individual clients with s117 or a jointly funded package. Actual recharges have been built into the forecast and these were higher than originally estimated.
- 1.19 The overall forecast continues to reflect a significant reduction of income from the CCG who are themselves under significant financial pressure. Although overall Continuing Healthcare and S117 recharges are forecast to be above budget, all other areas are seeing the impact of actions by the CCG to ensure that as much cost as possible stays with the Authority, particularly for clients who have Learning Disability or Mental Health issues. Dialogue with the CCG continues at the most senior officer level in order to agree the funding position.

### **Children's Services**

- 1.20 Children's Services are forecasting a pressure of £3.178m (May, £3.994m) against a net budget of £23.190m. Analysis of the variance across the

service areas is shown in Table 11 below.

**Table 11: Forecast Variation across Children's Services**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2017/18 Budget £'000</b>	<b>July Variance £'000</b>	<b>May Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Corporate Parenting and Placements	16,886	2,168	2,618	-450
Early Help and Vulnerable Families	3,008	155	493	-338
Employment and Skills	598	164	164	0
Integrated Disability and Additional Needs Service	2,170	691	719	-28
School Improvement	528	0	0	0
<b>Total Children, Young People &amp; Learning</b>	<b>23,190</b>	<b>3,178</b>	<b>3,994</b>	<b>-816</b>

### **Corporate Parenting and Placements**

- 1.21 The forecast pressure in Children's Services remains mainly within Corporate Parenting and Placements (£2.168m in July and £2.618m at May). This pressure includes £0.548m relating to budgeted efficiency savings for 2017/18 as outlined in section 1.2 above (£1.061m at May).

There is a pressure of £0.176m relating to the cost of agency staff covering vacant social work posts. The decision to pay a market supplement to social workers is forecast to add £0.148m to the pressure. The successful recruitment of 11 new social workers has seen a reduction in the dependency on agency, and has resulted in a decrease in the staff cost pressure compared to that reported in May.

In the region of £1.258m of the pressure relates to additional demand pressures particularly at the high cost end of placements, of which £0.512m has been estimated as the potential additional cost of moving to a revised model of means testing Special Guardianship Orders. Table 12 below illustrates the types and average costs of placements and shows a range of pressures across all placement types. The implementation of the new model for children as set out in section 1.2 is in place to deliver efficiencies and manage demand against these cost drivers. In addition, the service has now secured CCG income towards a Section 117 Mental Health Aftercare external residential placement, reducing the previously reported pressure by £0.170k.

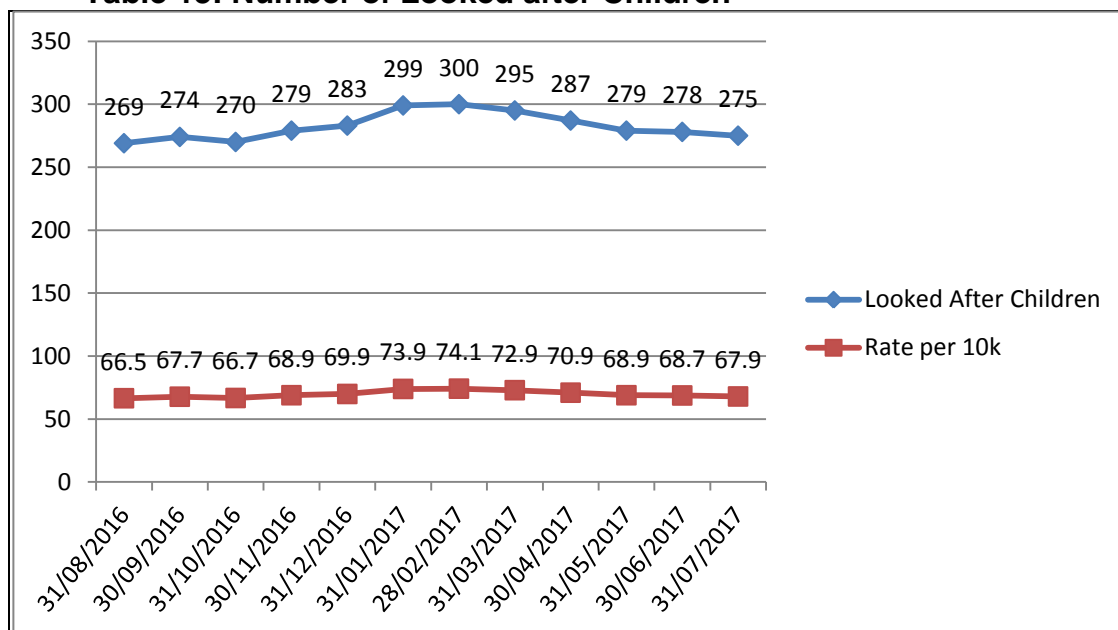
**Table 12: Analysis of variation in Corporate Parenting and Placements**

<b>Placement Type</b>	<b>No of LAC at Apr 2016</b>	<b>No of LAC at Mar 2017</b>	<b>No of LAC at May 2017</b>	<b>No of LAC at July 2017</b>	<b>Average Cost of Placement £m</b>	<b>Forecast Variance July 2017 £m</b>	<b>Forecast Variance May 2017 £m</b>
External Residential	25	18	19	15	£0.200	<b>(£0.338)</b>	£0.202
External Fostering	26	32	34	29	£0.041	<b>£0.429</b>	£0.518
Internal Fostering	194	188	173	178	£0.016	<b>£0.172</b>	£0.218
Supported Residence	13	17	15	18	£0.046	<b>£0.393</b>	£0.393
Other *	33	42	39	35	Various	<b>(£0.048)</b>	(£0.002)
<b>Total LAC</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>275</b>		<b>£0.608</b>	£1.452
Leaving Care Post 18	68	63	56	57	Various	<b>£0.173</b>	£0.160
Special Guardianship Orders	120	140	142	152	Various	<b>£0.742</b>	£0.216
CCG Income						£0.000	£0.123
<b>Net placement costs</b>						<b>£1.523</b>	£1.828
Additional staffing costs						<b>£0.470</b>	£0.715
Signs of Safety and Dartington						<b>£0.175</b>	£0.075
						<b>£2.168</b>	£2.618

\*Other includes Placed for Adoption, Placed with Parents/Parental Responsibility and NTC Children's Homes.

- 1.22 The range of actions to deliver the new model for children are progressing and Table 13 below shows the current trend in the number of Looked After Children and the direction of travel is downwards. To date 66 reviews of placements have been completed, with a planned programme of reviews through to the autumn.

**Table 13: Number of Looked after Children**



### Early Help and Vulnerable Families

1.23 £0.247m of the predicted shortfall relates to the necessary delay in implementing the proposals for childcare settings as previously highlighted in section 1.2 above. In addition there is an estimated pressure of circa £0.186m in relation to a staffing requirement in Supporting Families following changes to implementation of 2016/17 proposals. Work progressing in respect of the development of community hubs and the wider council estate is anticipated to support resolution of the pressure. The pressure has been partly mitigated by drawing down the full allocation of Troubled Families grant income for families already attached to the programme, and generating additional grant funding following achievement of outcomes for families. This has improved the position by £0.278m. In addition, further savings have been achieved in relation to delays in filling vacant posts.

The service currently has one young person placed in a Young Offenders Institution whilst on remand, which is estimated to cost approximately £16k. The Authority only receive a small grant of £1k towards this type of placement, however historically, North Tyneside have experienced low numbers of Remand placements.

### Employment & Skills

1.24 An historical income pressure remains from when services were funded by specific individual grants, mainly from the Department of Education, and it was appropriate that these grants make a contribution to overheads. The service is working through options to mitigate this pressure.

### Integrated Disability and Additional Needs Service

1.25 There is a £0.350m pressure in this service relating to savings targets as described in Section 1.2. In addition to this, the service also has a pressure

relating to a shortfall in CCG income of £0.089m. The CCG are being pursued for their contribution to costs in line with their joint responsibilities for some more complex disability placements but until they have been confirmed the Authority is not assuming this income in this financial management report. The remaining pressure is made up of additional demand cost pressures and income targets for short break care not being achieved and staff cost pressures being offset by additional income generated by the Education Psychology Service.

## Public Health

- 1.26 The service area is forecasting that it will balance the budget to spend the £12.758m Public Health Grant and deliver all the savings planned for 2017/18 to match reductions in funding from the Department of Health. This funding is also reducing in the next two years and plans are in place to manage these reductions. 84 staff successfully transferred in from the Health Service on 1 April 2017 to deliver the school nurse and health visitor role as part of a wider Authority team.

## Commissioning & Investment

- 1.27 Commissioning and Investment is forecasting a pressure of £0.985m as set out in Table 14 below. This is a slight worsening compared to the May position of £0.981m. The main areas of pressure remains within Facilities and Fair Access where, in addition to small expenditure pressures within the Cleaning and Catering services, there are demand pressures for the Home to School transport service. Property services is forecasting a pressure of £0.114m (May £0.252m), this service is managed on the Authority's behalf by Capita as part of the managed budget.

**Table 14: Commissioning and Investment forecast variation**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>2017/18 July Variance £000</b>	<b>2017/18 May Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement  £000's</b>
School Funding & Statutory staff costs	15,245	0	0	0
Commissioning Service	539	45	45	0
Child Protection Independent Assurance & Review	680	70	70	0
Facilities and Fair Access ( including Home to School Transport)	507	545	544	1
Strategic Property & Investment	388	25	25	0
High Needs Special Educational Needs	-80	0	0	0
Property	1,843	255	252	3
Management & Support	143	20	20	0
Internal Audit & Risk	2	25	25	0
Procurement	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Commissioning &amp; Investment</b>	<b>19,267</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>4</b>

## Home to School Transport

1.28 Table 15 below sets out details of the cost and number of pupils accessing home to schools transport service provision during 2016/17 and forecasted to access the service in 2017/18. Although the numbers of pupils being transported had a slight reduction between 2015/16 and 2016/17 and are not expected to increase in year, the overspend in this area for the Authority is expected to increase to £0.450m because of increased pressure on the Discretionary Schools Grant which is no longer available to contribute towards supporting this service at the previous levels. As can be seen below much of the provision is statutory with the most significant level of expenditure being in respect of special schools. The Authority is using appropriate opportunities to review the level of provision given, particularly when other elements of a child's package are reviewed.

**Table 15: Analysis of Home to School Transport**

	Description	Forecast 17/18		2016/17	
		Net Exp. £	Pupil Nos.	Net Exp £	Pupil Nos.
<b>Statutory</b>	Bus Passes*	113,437	<b>592</b>	107,231	<b>592</b>
<b>Statutory &amp; Non Stat.</b>	Post 16 Transport*	203,712	<b>190</b>	183,196	<b>187</b>
<b>Statutory</b>	Mainstream Schools	47,841	<b>9</b>	30,261	<b>13</b>
<b>Statutory</b>	SEN Resource Provision	310,170	<b>107</b>	301,771	<b>90</b>
<b>Statutory</b>	Special Schools	1,443,989	<b>415</b>	1,278,772	<b>426</b>
<b>Statutory</b>	Moorbridge PRU	50,238	<b>17</b>	45,391	<b>18</b>
Total		2,169,387	<b>1,202</b>	1,946,622	<b>1,326</b>
<b>Budget</b>		1,719,387		1,719,297	
<b>Shortfall</b>		450,000		227,325	
* Includes Voluntary Aided Bus Passes, Support for Low Income Families, Excess distance & Independent Travel arrangements & SEN					

## Property

1.29 Although there is an overspend predicted in this managed budget, following the deed of variation with Capita, signed in March 2017, the Authority now has assurance that Capita will deliver the savings and the service within the managed budget envelope overall. This means that the pressure within Property in the Commissioning & Investment service is compensated for by an under spend within the services provided by Capita for the Authority within

Environment, Housing & Leisure. The movement since the May report is due to an adjustment to bring the Capita managed budget lined into balance overall.

### Environment, Housing & Leisure

1.30 Environmental, Housing and Leisure service is reporting a pressure of £1.262m as set out in Table 16 below (May £1.329m).

**Table16: Forecast Variation in Environment Housing and Leisure**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Sport & Leisure	4,462	<b>313</b>	302	11
Arts Tourism & Heritage	1,960	<b>76</b>	73	3
Libraries and Community Centres	6,268	<b>507</b>	589	-82
Security & Community Safety	249	<b>141</b>	129	12
Fleet/Facilities Management	459	<b>-141</b>	-27	-114
Waste Strategy	11,891	<b>169</b>	233	-64
Bereavement	-741	<b>133</b>	120	13
Street Environment	8,772	<b>0</b>	-145	145
Head of Service & Resilience	287	<b>33</b>	35	-2
Street Lighting PFI	4,242	<b>277</b>	277	0
Consumer Protection & Building Control	980	<b>29</b>	29	0
Transport & Highways	5,009	<b>-327</b>	-336	9
Planning	216	<b>43</b>	39	4
General Fund Housing	1,092	<b>9</b>	11	-2
<b>TOTAL Environment Housing &amp; Leisure</b>	<b>45,146</b>	<b>1,262</b>	1,329	<b>-67</b>

### Sport & Leisure

1.31 The pressures being experienced in Sport and Leisure relate to premises costs and to employee costs for backfill and the service area's share of the savings required to meet the increase pay and pension costs. The premises costs (£0.150m) are energy and rates pressures which had historically been reported centrally.

## **Arts Tourism & Heritage**

- 1.32 There continues to be a small (£0.034m) pressure arising from the Playhouse due to reduced Authority income and operational cost inflation. As with Sports and Leisure, the service is now reflecting its own energy and rates pressures (£0.031m) which had historically been recorded centrally.

## **Libraries & Community Centres**

- 1.33 The majority of the pressures in this service area are premises related. The energy and rates pressure in this service area is £0.082m; cleaning £0.076m, PFI contract costs £0.149m. Staffing costs are currently £0.070m higher than budget in part as a result of the pay award pressure described above and in section 1.2 of this Annex. In addition, there are forecast overspends on the telephone/IT costs for the libraries (£0.039m), and pressures linked to the proposed transfers of Howdon and Shiremoor Community Centres (£0.123m). The improvement since the May report is mainly due to the in-year element of a business rates rebate for the John Willie Sams Centre (£0.031m), a reduction in expenditure associated with the transfer of Shiremoor Community Centre to Moorbridge Pupil Referral Unit (£0.032m) and additional staffing vacancies (£0.018m).

## **Security & Community Safety**

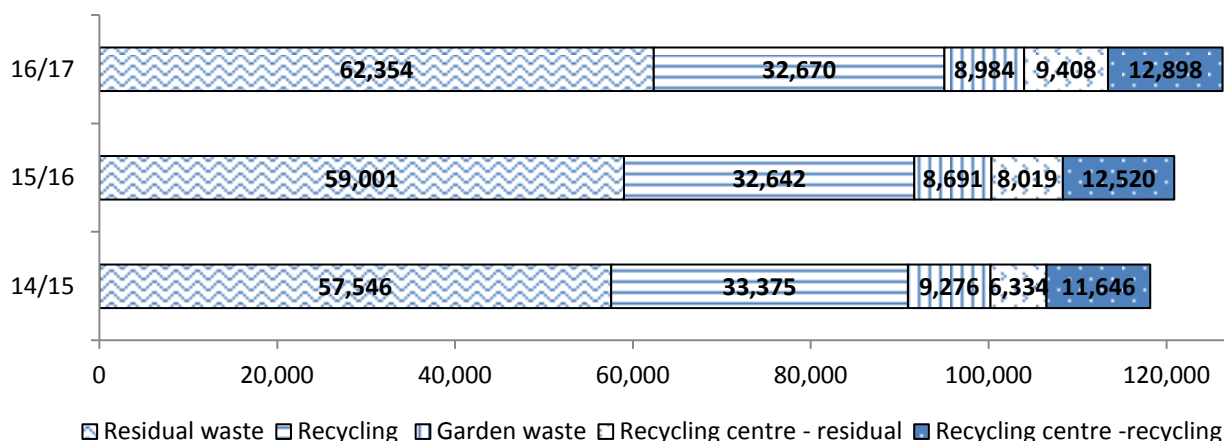
- 1.34 The £0.141m pressure relates in the main to current forecast underachievement of income (£0.121m). The service intends to move to the White Swan Centre during 2017/18 and have identified additional income generating opportunities as a result of this move which are anticipated will improve this position.

## **Waste**

- 1.35 The pressure in Waste has reduced from £0.233m in the May report to £0.169m in July largely as a result of a reduced transport costs forecast following a review.
- 1.36 The growth of both housing across the Borough has put pressure on waste growth but the main area of growth in demand for the Authority comes from increased waste being presented at the Household Recycling Centre rather than from doorstep collections. Table 17 below illustrates the changes in waste volumes over the last three years.



**Table 17: Waste Tonnage volumes '000s**



1.37 In response to this increase in volume, the Authority has made changes at its Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in North Shields, to ensure the on-going safety and sustainability of the site. The Authority has introduced a ban on very large vehicles such as ‘Luton’ vans, tippers, minibuses, and long trailers, in response to concerns about site safety and the suspected misuse of the site by commercial operators. The ban is one of several measures being phased in to ensure the facility continues to run safely, and to reduce costs. A permit scheme for specified vehicles will also be introduced in the autumn, along with charges for non-household waste.

The ban applies to any vehicles over six metres long or two metres tall, as well as trailers over three metres in length. New signage will be installed to make it clear which vehicles are prohibited and which ones need permits. These actions are expected to result in a reduction in the cost pressure.

The ban came in on 01/07/17 and we are still waiting to see what effect this will have on the waste at HWRC, before we can then make a more accurate forecast of total tonnages for 2017/18. There was a reduction in tonnages of circa 7-8% in June 2017 compared to June last year, but this may have been due to publicity regarding the changes.

### **Bereavement**

1.38 Bereavement income has not increased as much as was expected and predicted in the savings target allocated to it (See Section 1.2) and is £0.092m down against budget and the service is looking at ways to improve income levels. The service also has pay award savings pressures and pressures around security costs of £0.041m.

### **Street Environment and Fleet Service Areas**

1.39 The Service has been successful in reducing its non-pay costs across street cleansing and Parks & Horticulture in order to contribute towards the pay award savings pressures in its own service area and across the service. The apparent worsening of the position from £0.146m under spent in the May report to the current balanced position is mainly due to a reallocation of a Transport related savings target to this service area. A corresponding

improvement can be seen within the Fleet service area from £0.027m under spent in May to £0.141m under spent at July.

### Street Lighting PFI

- 1.40 Electricity pressures of £0.100m and unitary charge inflation pressures of £0.257m are partially mitigated by PFI interest and one-off income for officer time of £0.080m. A review of all PFI models is in progress as part of the CBF programme in order to consider the opportunities for savings from lifecycle costs in order to mitigate pressures and deliver against the efficiency target.

### Transport & Highways

- 1.41 The underspend is mainly due an overachievement of income relating to parking (£0.522m) offset partially by increased parking running costs of £0.216m. This service area, along with Consumer Protection and Building Control and Planning within Environment, Housing & Leisure and Property within Commissioning & Investment form the managed budget. Capita, as our Technical Partner, is responsible for delivering savings and a balanced budget in total across these areas.

### Business & Economic Development

- 1.42 There is a small pressure as set out in Table 18 below which relate to the delivery of payroll savings. The service is looking to manage this through the management of vacancies and non-essential spends.

**Table 18: Forecast Variation Business and Economic Development**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Regeneration	499	1	-1	2
Business & Enterprise	932	18	20	-2
Resources & Performance	176	-3	-3	0
<b>Total Business And Economic Development</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>

### Commercial & Business Redesign

- 1.43 The main area of variation as shown in Table 19 below relate to cost pressures arising from a number of new systems and enhancements largely in the area of automated customer contacts and internet connectivity.

**Table 19: Forecast Variation Commercial and Business Redesign**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Head of Commercial & Business Redesign	3	15	48	-33
ICT Retained Services	557	5	-2	7
ICT Client	1,985	151	138	13
<b>Total Commercial and Business Redesign</b>	<b>2,545</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>-13</b>

**Corporate Strategy**

- 1.43 Corporate Strategy is forecasting an over-commitment of £0.122m as set out in Table 20 below. This is made up of staff cost pressures these will be managed through the year in part through opportunities to increase income, and through vacancy management.

**Table 20: Forecast Variation Corporate Strategy**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movemen t £'000</b>
Corporate Strategy Management	131	9	9	0
Policy, Performance & Research	2	18	19	-1
Community and Voluntary Sector Liaison	453	7	6	1
Marketing	128	48	46	2
Elected Mayor and Executive Support	1	4	6	-2
Children's Participation & Advocacy	197	36	37	-1
<b>Total Corporate Strategy</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-1</b>

**Finance**

- 1.44 The underspends in the Finance service as set out in Table 21 relate to the increase in the pension rebate estimated as due to the Local Authority from Engie under the contract, reduced audit fee and staff savings. Within Revenue & Benefits and Customer Service an estimated increase in bad debt provision of £0.124m has been made in respect of benefit overpayment recovery, a prudent provision at the early stage in the financial year.

**Table 21: Forecast Variation Finance**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Finance Service	2	-250	-250	0
Revenue & Benefits and Customer Services	1,235	211	124	87
<b>Total Finance</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>-39</b>	<b>-126</b>	<b>87</b>

**Human Resources & Organisational Development**

- 1.45 The pressure relates to the additional HR staff supporting the transformation projects.

**Table 22: Forecast Variance Human Resources and Organisational Development**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Human Resources and Organisational Development and Total	<b>285</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>0</b>

**Law & Governance**

- 1.46 The overall pressures in Law and Governance of £0.176m are analysed in Table 23 below. The main pressure relates to Information Governance where additional staffing costs (£0.100m) are in place to deal with the Authority's response to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will apply in the UK from 25 May 2018 and the implementation of data management systems to replace the Optech systems. The Government has confirmed that the UK's decision to leave the EU will not affect the commencement of the GDPR. There is also a forecast shortfall in schools SLA income in relation to Governor Services (£0.033m) and in relation to land charges income of circa £0.027m.

**Table 23: Forecast Variation Law and Governance**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movemen t £'000</b>
Customer, Governance and Registration	-89	77	32	45
Democratic and Electoral Services	2	29	32	-3
Information Governance	27	100	136	-36
Legal Services	4	-17	-20	3
North Tyneside Coroner	293	-13	0	-13
<b>Total Law and Governance</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>-4</b>

### Central Budgets & Contingencies

- 1.47 The 2017/18 forecast outturn set out in Table 24 below reflects savings of circa £1.347m (increased from £0.450m in May) on interest charges and a revised forecast resulting in an under spend of £0.167m in relation to MRP. These savings result from 2016/17 Investment Plan reprogramming and internal borrowing. Cabinet will recall during 2016/17 significant in-year savings were achieved through the application of the Treasury Management Strategy. Additional savings were factored into budget setting for 2017/18 however the approach to Treasury Management is continually reviewed in order to minimise borrowing costs to the authority and maximise the opportunity to achieve in-year budget savings. That will be dependent on movements in interest rates which are monitored on a daily basis.
- 1.48 The assumption that £1.428m of contingencies and Service Improvement Fund not be drawn down continues (these pressures have been forecast within the Service figures reported above). A backdated rates rebate of £0.344m relating to the John Willie Sams Centre has been agreed and is shown here.
- 1.49 Included in Central items is the budgeted saving on Procurement activity £0.500m which is currently being forecast as a pressure. As highlighted previously a detailed review of the procurement of services and the Authority's spend with suppliers is underway. The expectation is that a schedule of options will follow that will deliver the target level of saving. As the exercise has not yet been completed it is considered prudent to assume at this stage the saving will not be achieved. There are also pressures totalling £0.130m relating to the bad debt provision and to payments relating to NECA and the LEP.

**Table 24: Forecast Variation Central Budgets and Contingencies**

	<b>2017/18 Budget £000</b>	<b>July 2017/18 Variance £000</b>	<b>May 2017/18 Variance £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Corporate & Democratic Core	15,608	-411	-411	0
Other Central Items – corporate accounting, contingencies and levies	-7,584	-2,654	-1,248	-1.406
<b>Total Central Items</b>	<b>8,024</b>	<b>-3,065</b>	<b>-1,659</b>	<b>-1.406</b>

- 1.50 The following table shows an additional grant received during June 2017. Cabinet is requested to approve receipt of this grant.

**Table 25: 2017/18 Revenue Grants awarded in June and July 2017**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount £m</b>
Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding	Step up to Social Work Grant from the Department for Education to support the training of social workers	0.325

- 1.51 Notification was received in July 2017 that a bid for £0.837m to the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme had been successful. This grant is to support the establishment of the new service to be operated from Elm House. At the date of writing however, the Authority is waiting to receive the formal grant offer letter with the full terms and conditions of the grant and as such expects to request formal approval for the receipt of this grant in the next monitoring report.

## **SECTION 2 SCHOOLS FINANCE**

### **2017/18 School Budgets**

- 2.0 Initial meetings with schools seeking deficit approval have now been completed. Ten schools requested approval for their 2017/18 budgets, an increase from eight schools in 2016/17. Meetings have also been held with the Schools Forum sub-group to add peer challenge to the approval process and subsequently a report was taken to the full Schools Forum on 12 July 2017. Discussions have been held internally between the Head of Finance and the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding and a further round of reviews will be held with each school in deficit early in the Autumn term to ensure all appropriate steps have been taken to improve each school's position prior to formally approving deficit arrangements.

### **Planning for 2018/19 Schools funding**

- 2.1 As noted in previous budget monitoring reports, the Department for Education (DfE) did not introduce any enforced changes to local funding formulas for 2017/18. However a further consultation (stage 2) exercise has been completed by the DfE as part of its future plans to work towards a national funding formula for mainstream school funding. Both the Local Authority and Schools Forum submitted their responses by the required deadline. The Government has since announced that Local Authorities will continue to set a local formula for distribution of funding to schools in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Initial operational guidance was issued on 4 August 2017 with further guidance expected in September.
- 2.2 The Schools Forum met on 12 July 2017 to begin the process of reviewing 2018/19 centrally retained budgets, with further meetings planned in the autumn term to discuss each element of the North Tyneside formula. The latest DfE announcement on future funding was made after the Schools Forum meeting on 12 July 2017. Updates on these announcements will be discussed at the next meeting scheduled for 13 September 2017, along with the DfE's latest consultation responses if available. Updates will be provided to Cabinet as information becomes available from the DfE.

### **Announcement on Additional Funding for Schools**

- 2.3 On 17 July 2017, the Secretary of State for Education announced £1.3 billion of funding nationally for schools over two years for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The National Funding Formula will be introduced in 2018/19 to set indicative budgets for individual schools but Local Authorities will continue to set schools' funding locally in 2018/19 and 2018/20. The DfE has committed to publishing more detailed guidance in September 2017 and until this is received it is not possible to identify the specific implications for schools in North Tyneside.

## SECTION 3 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

### Forecast Outturn

- 4.0 The forecast set out in Table 26 below based on the results to July 2017 reflects balance or underspends across all areas except HRA Management costs where there is a small pressure £0.019m and rental income where there is also a small forecast pressure of £0.055m reflecting an improving position. This pressure exists largely as a result of higher void levels than forecast (£0.147m), particularly in Sheltered Housing. In addition, the income from temporary dispersed accommodation is projected to be slightly above budget (£0.067m), whilst service charge income (including furniture packs) is now slightly better than budget (£0.025m). All of the £0.873m of savings identified in 2017/18 budget approved by Cabinet are on target to be delivered in full.

**Table 26: Forecast Variance Housing Revenue Account**

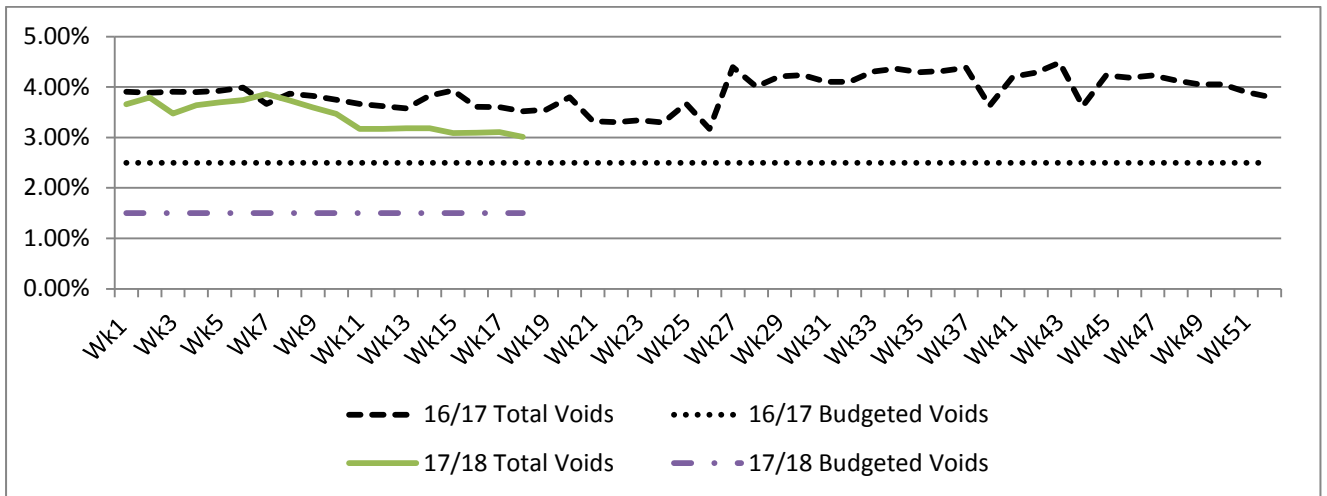
	FULL YEAR - 2017/18			Variance  May 2017/18  £000	Movement   £'000
		July Forecast Outturn			
	Full Year Budget £000	Forecast £000	Variance £000		
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>					
Rental Income	-59,689	-59,634	55	-59,515	-119
Other Rental Income, Shops etc.	-255	-254	1	-254	0
Interest on Balances	-30	-40	-10	-40	0
PFI Credits	-7,693	-7,693	-0	-7,693	0
	<b>-67,667</b>	<b>-67,621</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>-67,502</b>	<b>-119</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>					
Capital Charges - Net Effect	13,848	13,822	-25	13,822	0
HRA Management Costs	10,197	10,216	19	10,156	60
PFI Contract Costs	9,551	9,551	0	9,551	0
Repairs	11,481	11,479	-1	11,479	0
Revenue Support to Capital Programme	6,771	6,771	0	6,771	0
Contribution to Major Repairs Reserve – Depreciation	15,650	15,650	0	15,650	0
Contingencies, Bad debt Provision & Transitional Protection Payments	1,080	861	-220	901	-40
Pension Fund Deficit Funding	855	855	0	855	0
	<b>69,432</b>	<b>69,205</b>	<b>-227</b>	<b>69,185</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>1,766</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>-181</b>	<b>1,683</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>-4,627</b>	<b>-5,966</b>	<b>-1,339</b>	<b>-5,966</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>BALANCES TO CARRY FORWARD</b>	<b>-2,861</b>	<b>-4,382</b>	<b>-1,520</b>	<b>-4,283</b>	<b>-99</b>



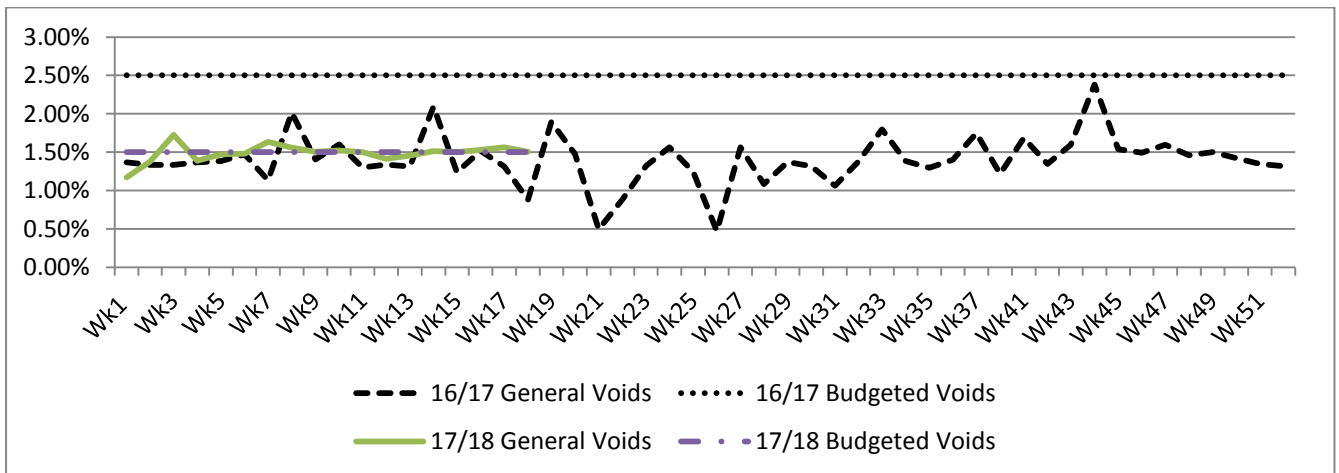
### 3.1 Empty homes

In terms of the impact of empty homes on the financial picture to date empty homes are actually below 16/17 levels overall so far this year but had been budgeted to improve more significantly following the completion of the North Tyneside Living Schemes. Stock handover was delayed but is now complete and although the level of empty homes within sheltered stock is still high the trend does indicate that this position is now starting to improve. Tables 27-29 illustrate the movement in stock void levels for 17/18 compared to 16/17.

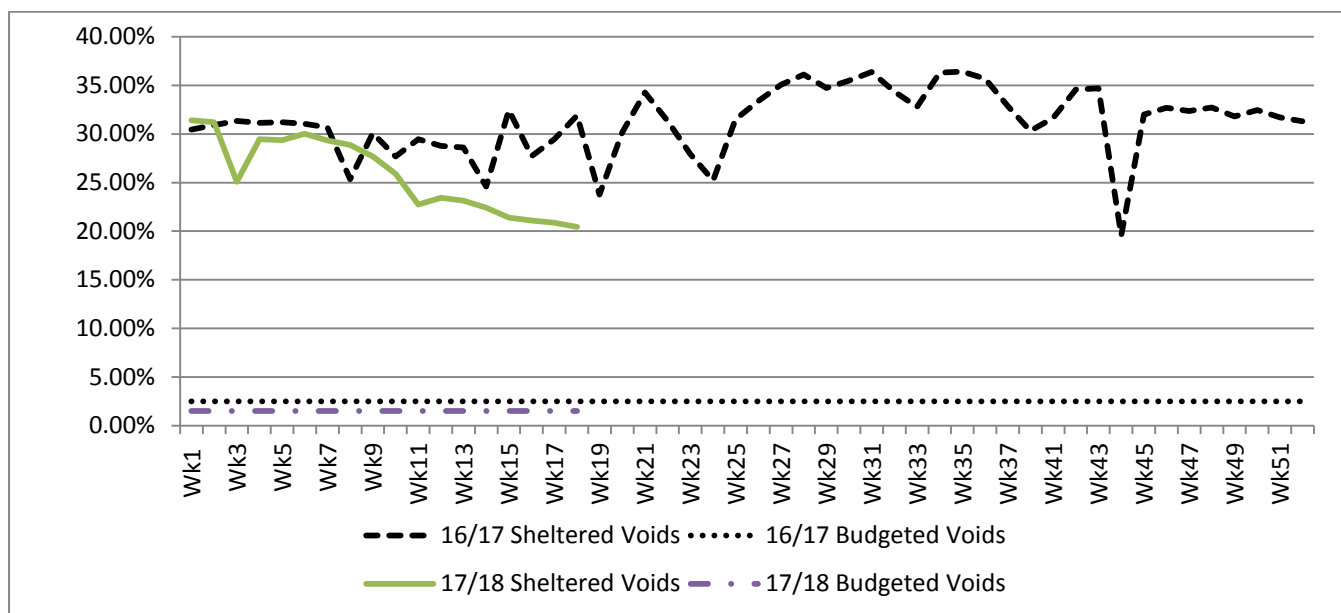
**Table 27: All stock Empty homes debit as percentage of total debit**



**Table 28: General Stock Empty homes debit as percentage of total debit**



**Table 29: Sheltered Stock Empty homes – debit as percentage of total debit**



The net forecast overspend of £0.019m in HRA Management costs includes a pressure from the impact of Authority tax payable on higher level of empty homes (£0.235m), additional water rates commission income negotiated (£0.166m) and staff vacancies (£0.164m), plus potential pressures around broadband costs for sheltered accommodation £0.059m).

The £0.220m projected underspend on Contingencies, Bad debt provision and transitional protection payments includes an expected reduction in cost for transitional protection as a result of higher than budgeted empty homes in sheltered accommodation. There is a predicted reduction in bad debt provision (£0.150m) required based on a lower level of arrears than expected which will be monitored closely as the wider roll out Universal Credit commences. The go-live on full-service universal credit in North Tyneside is 19 February 2018 so the impact for 2017/18 is expected to be minimal. Currently only around 2,000 North Tyneside residents are on universal credit, many of whom were not previously entitled to Housing Benefit. At the end of July there were 238 Authority tenants claiming universal credit, of these 204 (86%) are in arrears, with average current arrears per tenant of £795, compared to average current tenant arrears of circa £325. This is a trend that has been seen across those authorities who are live with full service and remains a risk for the HRA in future years.

### 3.2 Right to Buy (RTB) Trends

The impact of RTB is critical to long-term planning for the HRA. Prior to the introduction of self-financing back in 2012, average RTB sales had dropped to around 25 per annum, mainly due to the capped discount (£22,000) which had remained static as property values had increased, making RTB less attractive financially to tenants. Shortly after self-financing began Central Government announced a revamp to RTB significantly increasing the maximum discount, initially to £75,000 and then subsequently annual inflation was added to the

maximum. The table below shows the trend in RTB sales since that time, and the financial impact this has had on revenue to the HRA.

**Table 30 – RTB Trends and Financial Impact**

	<u>Sales assumed by self-financing</u>	<u>Actual RTB Sales</u>	<u>Additional RTB Sales above budget assumptions</u>	<u>Estimated lost rent per annum (£000)</u>	<u>Capital Receipts (£000)</u>
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>3,477</b>
<b>2013-14</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>4,957</b>
<b>2014-15</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>3,938</b>
<b>2015-16</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>5,548</b>
<b>2016-17</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>5,632</b>
<b>2017-18 (Apr-Jun)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1,503</b>
	<b>250</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>2,303</b>	<b>23,552</b>

In the same period (2012-2018) we have built just over 130 new homes through the HRA, which has helped mitigate a portion of the revenue loss from the 578 sales estimated, but in essence the HRA has lost £2.3m in rental income from the annual rent over this period.

In terms of the total Capital Receipts from the sales of these properties over the last 5 years (£23.552m), the Authority is required to pay a proportion over to Government (£8.326m) but is allowed to keep a proportion to cover administration costs (£0.753m). The Authority can also retain some proceeds to cover the additional debt burden from the extra sales (£8.507m), plus the Local Authority share of the “pooled” assumption (£3.425m). Any sum left over is called the “retained” receipt (£2.570m) and this must be used purely for new build housing, under the “one-for-one” policy. As can be seen from the figures above the Authority has sold an “additional” 328 properties in 5 years and only replaced circa 130, so the policy intention of “one-for-one” replacement is currently not being achieved in North Tyneside.

## **SECTION 4 INVESTMENT PLAN**

### **Review of Investment Plan - Position Statement**

- 4.0 The Authority's Investment Plan represents the capital investment in projects across all service areas. Some of the key highlights of the Investment Plan due to be delivered during 2017/18 are summarised below:

### **Affordable Homes New Build and Conversion Works**

- 4.1 There are currently 3 projects that will complete during 2017/18, namely:
- The construction of 20 new affordable units in Dudley, on the former Dudley & Weetslade Club site. Work is due for completion in March 2018;
  - The construction of 6 new affordable units in Seaton Burn on the old Chapelville sheltered unit site. Work is due for completion in October 2017; and,
  - The conversion of Perth Gardens into 7 new affordable units. Work is due for completion in March 2018.

In addition to the above there will be a number of other schemes progressed through the design, planning and procurement process during 2017/18 that will subsequently complete in future financial years.

### **Housing Investment Work**

- 4.2 The Housing Capital delivery programme will see the following works delivered across the Borough during 2017/18:
- Kitchens and bathrooms to 605 homes;
  - Heating upgrades to 600 homes;
  - Boundary improvements to 830 homes;
  - External decoration to 1,906 homes;
  - Roof replacements to 292 homes;
  - External Brickwork Repairs to 367 homes;
  - Insulation / Structural works to 24 Non-traditional homes ; and,
  - Infrastructure Projects to 7 locations.

### **Education Investment Works**

- 4.3 The delivery of the Investment in schools will see the following works delivered over 2017/18:
- Delivery of an initial 26 priority condition related projects across the school estate;
  - Priority Schools Building Programme (Off Balance Sheet) ;The projects at both Whitehouse Primary School and Longbenton High School are now fully completed;
  - The new build projects for both Marden and John Spence High Schools have been completed. Demolition works are also complete on both sites;

- The external works for Marden High School are scheduled for completion in August 2017;
- The external works for John Spence High School are scheduled for completion in December 2017; and,
- Cullercoats Primary School – this project is being delivered as part of Priority Schools Building Programme 2 (PSBP2). The preferred solution is to be a refurbishment programme rather than a new build. Detailed discussions are on-going with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) their appointed contractor and the school to finalise the scope of works. It is anticipated that the works will commence on site by the end of 2017.

### **Highways and Infrastructure Works**

4.4 The main Highways, Infrastructure works include:

- Delivery of the LTP including the annual resurfacing programme and integrated transport projects;
- Completion of final phase of A1058 Coast Road major scheme (Norham Road Bridge);
- Completion of Central Promenade Reconstruction Scheme. Construction work commenced on site in February 2017;
- A1056 Weetslade major highways scheme was completed in July 2017;
- Construction of the North Bank of the Tyne highway improvements from August 2017; and
- Completion of major drainage improvements at Monkseaton and Shiremoor.

### **Regeneration Works**

4.5 Regeneration Works for 2107/18 include:

- works are continuing with the restoration of Spanish City Dome;
- Hotel and restaurant adjacent to the Dome opened in July;
- The public realm work on Northern Promenade from Watts Slope to Rendezvous is also progressing on site and is due to be completed in late summer 2017;
- Swans – the next phase of works will cover feasibility works including upgrade of the Swans Quay and load out facilities plus further demolition works and Centre for innovation Phase 2 refurbishment; and,
- Facilitate development solution for Tyne Brand site at the Fish Quay

### **Variations to the 2017-20 Investment Plan**

4.6 As part of the regular investment programme monitoring £1.308m variations have been identified.

Table 31 details the changes to the approved 3-year Investment Plan, as agreed at Council on 16 February 2017.

**Table 31: 2017 - 20 Investment Plan changes identified**

	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	Total £m
<b>Approved Investment Plan – Council 16 February 2017</b>	<b>106.952</b>	<b>48.888</b>	<b>30.833</b>	<b>186.673</b>
<b>Previously Approved Reprogramming</b>				
Cabinet 12 June 2017	12.980	0	0	12.980
Cabinet 10 July 2017	(21.929)	21.926	0.517	0.514
<b>Approved Investment Plan – Cabinet 10 July 2017</b>	<b>98.003</b>	<b>70.814</b>	<b>31.350</b>	<b>200.167</b>
June/July Variations	1.316	(0.008)	0	1.308
<b>Revised Investment Plan</b>	<b>99.319</b>	<b>70.806</b>	<b>31.350</b>	<b>201.475</b>

**Details of changes to the 2017-2020 Investment Plan**

4.7 The details of the main changes are shown below:

- (a) **HS047 Trading Company Affordable Homes £1.000m** – Additional funding is required for the purchase of homes on the open market. The funding is provided from the Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 commuted sums available for affordable housing. This is to ensure the programme of delivery of affordable homes is progressed in line with the Cabinet's priorities;
- (b) **EV056 Roads and Pavements £0.346m** - the Authority has been awarded £0.619m from the National Productivity Investment Fund for 2017/18. Allocations have been made of £0.146m for upgrading of Urban Traffic Management and Control systems and £0.200m for improvements to footways. The balance of £0.273m will be used to reduce the council contribution required for this project; and,
- (c) **EV082 North Bank of Tyne Infrastructure - £0.046m credit** – This budget has been reduced following the removal of the Park Road closure from the final scheme proposal.

4.8 The impact of the changes detailed above on capital financing is shown in Table 32 below.

**Table 32: Impact of variations on Capital financing**

	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	Total £m
<b>Approved Investment Plan – Cabinet 10 July 2017</b>	<b>98.003</b>	<b>70.814</b>	<b>31.350</b>	<b>200.167</b>
Council Contribution	(0.273)	0	0	(0.273)
Grants and Contributions	1.589	(0.008)	0	1.581

<b>Total Financing Variations</b>	<b>1.316</b>	<b>(0.008)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.308</b>
<b>Revised Investment Plan</b>	<b>99.319</b>	<b>70.806</b>	<b>31.350</b>	<b>201.475</b>

### Capital Receipts – General Fund

- 4.9 There were no General Fund Capital Receipts brought forward at 1 April 2017. All receipts received in 2016/17 were applied to finance capital expenditure.

The capital receipts requirement for 2017/18 approved by Council on 16 February 2017 was £Nil (£0.760m for 2017-20). Due to reprogramming from 2016/17 £0.110m receipts are now required for 2017/18 (£0.870m 2017-20). To date £0.173m of capital receipts have been received in 2017/18, therefore the 2017/18 requirement has been met. Any receipts generated will be allocated against the future requirement as shown in table 33 below. The total revised requirement in the 2017-2020 Investment Plan is £0.697m.

**Table 33: Capital Receipt Requirement – General Fund**

	<b>2017/18 £m</b>	<b>2018/19 £m</b>	<b>2019/20 £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
Requirement reported to 16 February 2017 Council	0.000	0.380	0.380	0.760
Reprogramming from 2016/17	0.110	0	0	0.110
<b>Revised Requirement</b>	<b>0.110</b>	<b>0.380</b>	<b>0.380</b>	<b>0.870</b>
Useable Receipts Received 2017/18	(0.110)	(0.063)	0	(0.173)
<b>Balance to be generated</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.317</b>	<b>0.380</b>	<b>0.697</b>

### Capital receipts – Housing Revenue Account

- 4.10 Housing Capital Receipts brought forward at 1 April 2017 were £5.501m. The Housing receipts are committed against projects included in the 2017-20 Investment Plan. The approved Capital Receipt requirement for 2017/18 was £0.663m. This, together with the reprogramming reported to 12 June 2017 Cabinet, gives a requirement of £1.809m. To date, £2.045m receipts have been received in 2017/18 of which £0.468m has been pooled as part of the quarterly returns to Central Government. In total, subject to future pooling, this leaves a surplus balance of £5.269m to be carried forward to fund future years.

**Table 34: Capital Receipt Requirement - Housing Revenue Account**

	<b>2017/18 £m</b>	<b>2018/19 £m</b>	<b>2019/20 £m</b>	<b>2017-20 £m</b>
Requirement reported to 16 February 2017 Council	0.663	2.847	2.805	6.315
Reprogramming from 2016/17	1.146	0	0	1.146
<b>Revised Requirement</b>	<b>1.809</b>	<b>2.847</b>	<b>2.805</b>	<b>7.461</b>
Receipts Brought Forward	(5.501)	0	0	(5.501)
Receipts Received 2017/18	(2.045)	0	0	(2.045)
Receipts Pooled Central Government	0.468	0	0	0.468

<b>Surplus Balance to fund future years (subject to further pooling)</b>	<b>(5.269)</b>	<b>2.847</b>	<b>2.805</b>	<b>0.383</b>
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The final figure for useable receipts and pooled receipts in year will depend on the final number of Right to Buy properties sold during 2017/18.

### **Investment Plan Monitoring Position to 31 July 2017**

- 4.11 Actual expenditure in the General Ledger was £14.295m, or 14.39% (May £2.399m and 2.32%) of the total revised Investment Plan as at 31 July 2017. The spend is in line with the profiled budgets to the end of July 2017.

**Table 35: 2017/18 Total Investment Plan Budget & Expenditure to 31 July 2017**

	2017/18 Revised Investment Plan £m	Actual Spend to 31 July 2017 £m	Spend as % of revised Investment Plan %
General Fund	74.340	9.773	13.15
Housing	24.979	4.522	18.10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99.319</b>	<b>14.295</b>	<b>14.39</b>



Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	Total £000's	Funding Source	£000's
	<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>						
	<b><u>Great Place to live, work and visit</u></b>						
BS026	Asset Planned Maintenance programme	1,371	1,500	1,500	4,371	Council Contribution Sport England Grant	4,320 51
DV054	Coastal Regeneration	14,106	2,331	0	16,437	Council Contribution Heritage Lottery Fund	13,487 2,950
DV058	Swan Hunters Redevelopment	4,916	5,673	0	10,589	Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) Local Growth Fund (LGF) Council Contribution	6,250 1,260 3,079
DV059	Pilot Fund to Tackle Empty Properties	63	80	0	143	Council Contribution	143
DV060	Rosehill Regeneration	52	0	0	52	Council Contribution	52
DV062	St Mary's Lighthouse and Visitor Centre	35	1,852	481	2,368	Heritage Lottery Fund grant (HLF) Council Contribution	2,131 237
EV034	Local Transport Plan	4,634	1,817	0	6,451	Local Transport Plan (LTP) Grant DfT Pothole Grant DFT Incentive Grant GEO Wimpy Contribution NECA National Productivity Fund	6,105 191 126 29 0
EV054	Central Promenade Reconstruction Scheme	3,823	0	0	3,823	Council Contribution Environment Agency Grant	1,930 993

Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total	Funding Source	£000's
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
						Northumbrian Water Ltd	900
EV055	Surface Water Management Improvements	2,017	0	0	2,017	Council Contribution Environment Agency Grant	652 1,365
EV056	Roads and Pavements	2,346	2,000	2,000	6,346	Council Contribution National Productivity Investment Fund	5,727 619
EV073	A1058 Coast Road Improvements to junctions	3,391	0	0	3,391	NELEP Growth Deal Council Contribution LTP Grant	3,054 217 120
EV077	A1056/A189 Weetslade junction imp	1,352	0	0	1,352	Section 278 NELEP Growth Deal	480 872
EV078	A19 Employment Corridor access imp	2,967	0	0	2,967	NELEP Growth Deal Section 106	2,560 407
EV079	A191 Junction Improvements (Coach Lane & Tyne View Pa	153	0	0	153	NELEP Growth Deal Section 106	-47 200
EV080	Coast Road Cycle Route	943	0	0	943	Cycle City Ambition Fund	943
EV081	Cobalt Cycle Scheme	47	0	0	47	NELEP Growth Deal	47
EV082	North Bank of the Tyne Infrastructure	2,348	2,131	0	4,479	NELEP Growth Deal	4,479
GEN12	Local infrastructure projects	165	100	100	365	Council Contribution	365

Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total	Funding Source	£000's
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
HS049	Northumberland Square	1,199	3,650	1,000	5,849	Council contribution	5,849
HS046	Housing Private Landlord Refurbishment	90	68	0	158	Home and Communities Grant Revenue Contribution	46 112
HS047	Trading Company Affordable Homes Project	1,573	0	0	1,573	Section 106	1,573
EV083	Streelighting LED	1,447	507	0	1,954	Council contribution	1,954
DV063	Coastal Properties	1,771	1,000	0	2,771	Council contribution	2,771
DV064	Property Development	1,000	2,900	0	3,900	Council contribution	3,900
DV065	North Shields Fisherman's Heritage Project	75	0	0	75	External contributions Council Contribution	37 38
CO075	Skate/BMX Park - The Parks Sports Centre	179			179	SUEZ Communities Trust Section 106 Council Contribution	44 125 10
CO067	Weekly Collection Support Grant	62			62	Weekly Waste Grant	62
	<b>Total Great Place to live, work and visit</b>	<b>52,125</b>	<b>25,609</b>	<b>5,081</b>	<b>82,815</b>		<b>82,815</b>
	<b><u>Cared for, Safeguarding and Healthy</u></b>						
CO064	Social Care Information System	1,088	265	0	1,353	Department of Health grant	1,142

Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total	Funding Source	£000's
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
						Better Care Fund	211
HS003	Private Sector Homes Renovation	139	333	333	805	Council Contribution	805
HS004	Disabled Facility Grants	1,427	1,807	0	3,234	Council Contribution Better Care Fund	0 3,234
HS036	North Tyneside Warm Zone	100	42	0	142	Council Contribution	142
<b>Total Cared for, Safeguarding and Healthy</b>		<b>2,754</b>	<b>2,447</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>5,534</b>		<b>5,534</b>
<b><u>Corporate and Enabling</u></b>							
EV069	Vehicle Replacement	1,333	1,899	962	4,194	Council Contribution	4,194
EV076	Depot Delivery Project	4,432	9,252	0	13,684	Council contribution	13,684
GEN03	Contingency Provision	1,850	1,210	1,000	4,060	Council Contribution	4,060
IT020	ICT Strategy	1,387	1,000	1,000	3,387	Council Contribution	3,387
IT025	BDUK (Broadband)	21	75		96	Council Contribution	96
IT026	ICT citizen interaction and self serve	2,292	160	0	2,452	Council Contribution	2,452
<b>Total Corporate and Enabling</b>		<b>11,315</b>	<b>13,596</b>	<b>2,962</b>	<b>27,873</b>		<b>27,873</b>
<b><u>Ready for School and Work</u></b>							

Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total	Funding Source	£000's
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
ED075	Devolved Formula Capital	770	397	0	1,167	Education Funding Agency Council Contribution	691 476
ED120	Basic Need	243	0	184	427	Education Funding Agency	427
ED132	School Capital Allocation	3,396	0	0	3,396	Education Funding Agency	3,396
ED186	Backworth Park Primary - relocation and expansion	3,555	1,113	0	4,668	Section 106 Basic Need Grant Council Contribution Education Funding Agency	4,699 162 -196 3
ED100	30 Hours Capital Grant	182	0	0	182	Education Funding Agency	182
	<b>Total Ready for School and Work</b>	<b>8,146</b>	<b>1,510</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>9,840</b>		<b>9,840</b>
	<b>TOTAL: GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>74,340</b>	<b>43,162</b>	<b>8,560</b>	<b>126,062</b>		<b>126,062</b>
	<b>HOUSING</b>						
	<b>Great Place to live, work and visit</b>						
HS015	Refurbishment / Decent Homes	18,613	20,219	18,633	57,465	Revenue Contribution	16,909
HS017	Disabled Adaptations (HRA)	1,020	1,030	1,041	3,091	Capital Receipts	7,461
HS039	ICT Infrastructure Works	304	287	429	1,020	Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)	46,041
HS041	Housing PFI	708	0	0	708	House Building Fund	4,692
HS044	HRA New build	4,334	6,108	2,687	13,129	Dept of Health grant HCA Grant	160 150
	<b>Total: HOUSING</b>	<b>24,979</b>	<b>27,644</b>	<b>22,790</b>	<b>75,413</b>		<b>75,413</b>
	<b>TOTAL INVESTMENT PLAN</b>	<b>99,319</b>	<b>70,806</b>	<b>31,350</b>	<b>201,475</b>		<b>201,475</b>

Project Ref	Project Title	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total	Funding Source	
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		£000's

0            0            0            0  
0            0            0            0

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>							
Council contribution		38,777	26,621	7,563	72,961		
Capital Receipts		110	380	380	870		
Revenue Contribution		44	68	0	112		
Grants & Contributions		35,409	16,093	617	52,119		
		<u>74,340</u>	<u>43,162</u>	<u>8,560</u>	<u>126,062</u>		
<b>HOUSING</b>							
Capital Receipts		1,809	2,847	2,805	7,461		
Revenue Contribution		6,818	5,955	4,136	16,909		
Contribution from Reserves (House Building Fund)		1,192	3,500	0	4,692		
Grants & Contributions		310	0	0	310		
Major Repairs Reserve		14,850	15,342	15,849	46,041		
		<u>24,979</u>	<u>27,644</u>	<u>22,790</u>	<u>75,413</u>		
		<u>99,319</u>	<u>70,806</u>	<u>31,350</u>	<u>201,475</u>		

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 11 September 2017

## ITEM 6(b)

2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Council Plan and Associated Engagement Strategy

<b>Portfolio(s):</b> Elected Mayor Deputy Mayor Finance and Resources Community Engagement	<b>Cabinet Member(s):</b> Norma Redfearn Cllr Bruce Pickard Cllr Ray Glindon Cllr Carole Burdis
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**Report from Service Area:** Finance

**Responsible Officer:** Janice Gillespie, Head of Finance **Tel: (0191) 643 5701**

**Wards affected:** All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Executive Summary:

This is the initial report to Cabinet outlining the process to be adopted for the Authority's Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process for this year as part of the proposed framework for the next two years. Further reports will follow as part of the process of setting the Council Plan and Authority's Budget for the financial year 2018/19. The next report to Cabinet will be on 27 November 2017, which will outline the initial Cabinet Budget and Council Plan proposals.

This report sets out information in relation to:

- The proposed 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process, including information on the key decision milestones;
- The proposed Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy to be adopted as part of the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget process.
- The proposed process and timescales to be adopted to develop the updated Council Plan.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) Approve the proposed outline 2018-2020 Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget Process, which incorporates the key decision milestones and dates as set out at Appendix A to this report;

- (b) Approve the Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy as part of the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process as set out at Appendix B to this report;
- (c) Note that the Efficiency Plan will be refreshed as part of the overall Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process.

### **1.3 Forward Plan:**

- 1.3.1 Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 31 July 2017.

### **1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework**

- 1.4.1 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules are set out in Part 4.7 of the Authority's Constitution. The Budget is guided by paragraph 4.7.3 covering the process for the preparation, consideration and final approval of the Authority's budget. The constitutional requirements for preparing, considering and approving the Budget drive the timetable for the Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.4.2 The development of the Budget will follow the same timetable as in previous years. The timetable is set out at Appendix A to this report. The Financial Planning and Budget process is a fundamental part of the overall governance and assurance framework of the Authority. This in turn provides assurance that is considered as part of preparing the Annual Governance Statement to Council each year.
- 1.4.3 It is proposed that the Council Plan is updated as part of this 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Setting Process. The priorities in the updated Our North Tyneside Plan will provide the strategic policy framework within which budget resources will be allocated for 2018-2020.

### **1.5 Information**

- 1.5.1 The world financial crisis of 2008 and 2009 revealed an unstable and unbalanced model of economic growth in the UK, and since 2010 Central Government has introduced a number of reforms impacting on local government services and financing. Measures set out in the spending Review 2015 meant savings of £21.5 billion, of which £9.5 billion was reinvested in the Government's Priorities. The Budget 2016 and 2017 set out the adjustments the Government is making to those plans, with the intent to find a further £3.5 billion of savings from public spending in 2019/20. There is no specific information provided on how the adjustments of £3.5 billion of savings are to be made and no breakdown for individual departments.
- 1.5.2 Medium term financial planning remains difficult and is prepared against the continuing funding cuts for local government coupled with increased demand for social care and welfare reform. The March 2017 Budget reported a further deterioration in the public finances and the expectation that the national budget deficit will not be eradicated until the end of the next Parliament. Uncertainty remains in respect of the impact of Central Government's devolution agenda as well as the future impact of Brexit. In terms of managing the increasing demands for both Adult and Children's Social Care, there are also indications that many authorities are overspending against budgets for both Adults



and Children's Services in order to meet increasing demand and cost. These pressures are evident in our own authority and we need to explore new financial and organisational initiatives to meet this significant challenge at a time of Central Government cuts.

- 1.5.3 The policy of introducing 100% Business Rate Retention for local government could impact significantly upon local authorities' baseline funding levels and their ability to raise funding to meet future service demands. The expectation was that 100% Business Rate Retention would be introduced in 2019/20 although following the General Election this remains uncertain and adds to the risks associated with financial planning for the longer term.
- 1.5.4 At this stage for the 2018/19 Financial Planning and Budget process a two-year financial planning process is proposed covering the period 2018-2020. This planning process aligns with the remaining period of the current Local Government Finance Settlement, the Final Settlement for 2017/18 and the 2017 Spring Budget which was issued on 8 March 2017.

### **Council Plan 2018-2020**

- 1.5.5 The current referred Council Plan (the "Our North Tyneside Plan") was approved by Council on 18 February 2016. The Plan, which is developed in partnership through the North Tyneside Strategic Partnership, sets out the overall vision and policy context within which the Financial Plan and Budget proposals are set. It provides a clear strategic framework for the Authority and its partners to operate within. The Plan also provides the strategic policy context for all financial decisions and delivery of services as well the operational change programme the "Creating a Brighter Future programme". This programme is designed to reshape services in line with a Target Operating Model to ensure that the outcomes in the Council Plan can be delivered within the resources allocated through the financial planning and budget setting process.
- 1.5.6 The Council Plan has three key themes:
- Our People
  - Our Places
  - Our Economy
- 1.5.7 It is proposed that the Council Plan is updated as part of the financial planning and budget setting process to ensure that it reflects the latest position with regards to all relevant data and intelligence including:
- the priorities and needs as identified by residents and other key stakeholders;
  - the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
  - the national, regional and local policy context.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

- 1.5.8 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (Strategy) is a key part of the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework which aims to ensure that all financial resources are directed towards delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan. The Strategy describes the principles to be applied in developing and updating the annual budget and financial plan. The strategy is reviewed annually reflecting the dynamic nature of local government funding.

- 1.5.9 The Strategy is critical in order to ensure that the Authority makes decisions by focussing on strategic priorities and has a clear financial vision and direction for the medium term. This Strategy must support the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan which is the key driver of our resources allocation. The Budget setting process helps the Authority respond appropriately to responsibilities and duties placed upon local government through legislative requirements and the Central Government's drive to deliver savings.
- 1.5.10 Whilst decisions around Budget setting are approved on an annual basis the Authority must demonstrate medium-term financial and resource planning. Annual budget decisions should be taken in the context of the overall Strategy that looks at all Authority services and takes into account the Central Government's local government finance agenda.

### **Defining our Financial Strategy**

- 1.5.11 Financial Management best practice highlights the need for medium-term planning horizons and therefore, in previous years, the Authority has adopted a three year planning timeframe. However, the two year planning timeframe proposed for 2018-2020 is to align with the period of the Local Government Finance Settlement and the 2017 Spring Budget. As no further strategic financial information is available beyond this date, at this point only a two year planning timeframe is meaningful to demonstrate sustainability in the Authority's plans for the future. The Strategy supports consideration of the key drivers in developing the financial plan and is expected to secure the following:
- Delivering the priorities of the Our North Tyneside Plan;
  - Application of the principles of the Target Operating Model;
  - Continued improvement of financial planning and the strategic financial management of the Authority's revenue and capital resources;
  - Aligning financial resources to the Authority's spending priorities and priority outcomes;
  - Maximising the use of resources available to the Authority, both internal and external;
  - Ensuring that the Authority provides value for money and delivers budget savings;
  - Reviewing the Authority's reserves policy to ensure there is protection against unforeseen events;
  - Responding to external pressures;
  - Developing a sustainable budget over the medium term;
  - Highlighting financial risks and mitigating controls.
- 1.5.12 The approach to developing the draft Financial Plan for 2018-2020 will continue to concentrate on ensuring that all of the above drivers are embedded into the decision-making process for the allocation and re-direction of the Authority's finite resources, financial and otherwise.
- 1.5.13 Leading on from this, the key components and principles adopted for our 2018-2020 Strategy have been fully reviewed as part of this year's process and are summarised below:
- 1) The overall financial strategy will be to ensure that the Authority's resources are directed to achieving the Council Plan and associated outcomes. The Authority's Strategy will be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

- 2) Overall Authority spending should be contained within original estimates. If, following monthly revenue monitoring, service budgets are projected to exceed original estimates, plans should be prepared setting out the actions required to ensure spending at the end of the year does not exceed original estimates.
- 3) The Authority will maintain its general reserve a minimum level of £6.6m at the end of each year, subject to a risk assessment as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 4) The Authority will aim to balance its revenue budget over the period of the MTFS without reliance on the use of the general reserve.
- 5) The Authority will plan for any changes to specific grants/interim funding/Financial Settlement/Legislation.
- 6) The Authority will maintain earmarked reserves for specific purposes which are consistent with achieving its key priorities. The use and level of earmarked reserves will be reviewed at least annually.
- 7) The Authority will continue to improve its approach to efficiency, commissioning and procurement to ensure value for money and minimise the impact of budget savings on priority services as well as effectively managing the programme of change.
- 8) Opportunities for working in collaboration and partnership and different ways of working will be identified and developed where this will support the delivery of the Authority's outcomes and improve service efficiency and delivery. This will include the use of well-being powers, development of trading opportunities and different business models and the sourcing and securing of external funding.
- 9) The Authority will consider the use of prudential borrowing to support capital investment to deliver the Council Plan and will ensure that the full costs of borrowing are taken into account when investment decisions are taken.
- 10) The Authority will aim to promote and stimulate strong and sustainable economic growth leading to wellbeing and prosperity for residents and communities and this will be supported by a planned approach to strategic investment managed through the Authority's Investment programme.
- 11) The Authority will continue to review strategic assets to maximise the potential to release value for strategic re-investment and to ensure that the asset requirements are aligned to the delivery of services across the borough.
- 12) The Authority recognises the impact of increases in Authority tax levels and fees and charges on our residents, many of whom are struggling on relatively low income and low wealth and will therefore balance the need for increases against the delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and demand for services. This will include the consistent application of an agreed fees and charges policy.
- 13) The Authority will continue to consider business risk in all decision making process and alongside this ensure resources are aligned to reduce any material financial risk to the Authority.

- 14) The Authority will continue to review the Treasury Management Strategy and the efficient management of debt on an annual basis with an ongoing focus of delivering safe stewardship.

### **Local Government Finance Settlement and Efficiency Plan**

- 1.5.14 On 17 December 2015, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced a four year funding package to councils as part of the 2016-2020 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, with the figures for 2016/17 being confirmed on 8 February 2016. Details of the implications for North Tyneside Council of this Settlement were set out in detail in the 2016-2019 Financial Planning and Budget Reports to Cabinet and Council on 27 January 2016 and 18 February 2016 respectively.
- 1.5.15 In order to secure the funding for the final 3 years of the 2017-2020 Local Government Finance Settlement, each Local Authority was required to submit an “Efficiency Plan” to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by 14 October 2016. The Authority met this requirement.
- 1.5.16 Whilst not a central government requirement it is considered appropriate that the North Tyneside Efficiency Plan is reviewed to consider that it remains an appropriate overall approach to meeting the financial challenges moving forward. This review will be completed as part of the overall approach to the refresh of the Council Plan, Budget and Financial Plan.

### **Equality and Diversity Considerations**

- 1.5.17 The Authority has specific responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. Part of this is to ensure that the potential effects of decisions on those protected by the Equalities legislation are considered prior to any decision being made. In this Authority we will continually monitor the effect of our budget setting process and decision-making by using Equality Impact Assessments.
- 1.5.18 Full impact assessments will be included in all proposals going forward for inclusion with the initial Budget proposals in November 2017 in order to be available to Cabinet when it further considers the Financial Plan and Budget proposals on 27 November 2017.
- 1.5.19 An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the proposed Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy.

### **2018/19 Financial Planning and Budget Process Timetable of Key Decision Milestones**

- 1.5.20 Key aspects of the 2018/19 Financial Planning and Budget process timetable are set out at Appendix A to this report. This highlights key decision milestones in the process.

#### Governance and Assurance Framework (incorporating the Monitoring and Reporting Cycle)

- 1.5.21 The Elected Mayor and Cabinet are responsible for formulating the Council Plan and the Authority’s Budget. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, in close consultation with the Elected Mayor, has been nominated as the lead Cabinet Member for the overarching 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process. The Head of Finance will be the project sponsor.

## **Section 2 - The Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy**

- 1.5.22 Through its overarching corporate Engagement Strategy approved by Cabinet on 14 September 2015, the Authority is committed to being a resident-focused and listening Authority and encourages residents and other stakeholders to help to shape its decision-making. Engagement with residents takes place throughout the year and the information gathered will be used to inform the Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process. There will also be specific engagement activities as part of the budget setting process where residents and other key stakeholders will be able to be involved.
- 1.5.23 The programme of the engagement activity will ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the Council Plan and Budget proposals, given an opportunity to be listened to and comment on the proposals, and receive feedback on outcomes from the engagement. The feedback from the engagement activities will form part of reports to Cabinet and Council to support decision-making.
- 1.5.24 Details of the Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy for 2018/19 are set out at Appendix B to this report.

### **1.6 Decision options:**

- 1.6.1 The Authority's Constitution and Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set down the stages to be completed in relation to agreeing the Council Plan and Budget of the Authority. There are no other options available in relation to this. The Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy forms part of the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process.
- 1.6.2 Cabinet is referred to the legal requirements as stated in paragraph 2.2 of this report.

### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

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

### **1.8 Appendices:**

Appendix A – 2018/19 Council Plan and Financial Planning and Budget Process:  
Timetable of Key Milestones

Appendix B – 2018/19 Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy

### **1.9 Contact Officers:**

Janice Gillespie, Head of Finance  
Tel No 643 5701

Jacqueline Laughton, Head of Corporate Strategy  
Tel No 643 7070

## **1.10 Background information:**

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

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

[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC\\_PSCM.PSCM\\_Web.download?p\\_ID=566296](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=566296)

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

(b) 2016-2019 Our North Tyneside Plan

<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/368/our-north-tyneside-plan>

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

2.1.1 The financial implications arising from the outcomes of this report will be appraised as part of the decisions made about what will be included in the Authority's 2018-2020 Financial Plan, incorporating the 2018/19 Budget Setting process. Decisions on the budget in relation to the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, school's funding and the Investment Plan need to be made within the overall context of the resources available to the Authority and within the legal framework for setting budgets. The Authority will need to examine closely the links with key funding partners and their proposed financial plans, including an assessment of the impact of any grant fall-out over the proposed two-year resource planning period.

2.1.2 Cabinet and Council need to have due regard to the Chief Finance Officer's advice in relation to the levels of reserves and balances proposed as part of the two-year financial plan for 2018-2020 in accordance with the Authority's Reserves and Balances Policy most recently agreed by Council on 18 February 2016.

2.1.3 The only direct financial implications arising from this report will be any residual costs arising from support for engagement activity. These costs will be met from existing budgets.

2.1.4 The Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy for 2018/19 will in part help to inform decisions about what will be included in the Council Plan and two-year Financial Plan for 2018-2020. Decisions on the budget for the General Fund, Investment Plan, Housing Revenue Account and schools' funding will need to be made within the overall context of the resources available to the Authority and within the legal framework for setting budgets.

### **2.2 Legal**

2.2.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Authority to set a balanced budget in the context of the resources available, including central government grants, business rates and council tax income.

2.2.2 The Local Government Act 2003 imposes duties on local authorities in relation to budget setting. The Act requires that, when an authority is deciding its annual budget

and council tax level, members and officers must take into account a report from the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the authority's financial reserves. The Government has a back-up power to impose a minimum level of reserves on an authority that it considers to be making inadequate provisions.

2.2.3 The Council has agreed that the Council Plan is part of the policy framework (as a "local choice" plan) and as such it must be agreed in accordance with the rules of procedure relating to the Budget and Policy Framework (Part 4.7 of the Council's Constitution).

2.2.4 The 2018-2020 Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process has been prepared to comply with the time-scales required within the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained within the Authority's Constitution. Decision making in relation to the Housing Revenue Account is the responsibility of Cabinet, in accordance with section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended).

## **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

### **2.3.1 Internal consultation**

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

### **2.3.2 External consultation / engagement**

The Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy for 2018/19 as outlined in this report sets out the process by which residents and other stakeholders will be involved in the consultation on the Council Plan and 2018/19 Budget as part of the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process.

## **2.4 Human rights**

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

## **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

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

To achieve this we will be taking a phased approach:

- An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the proposals for Council Plan and Budget Engagement. The aim will be to remove or minimize any disadvantage for people wishing to take part in the engagement programme. We will make direct contact with groups representing persons with protected characteristics under the

Equality Act 2010 to encourage participation and provide engagement in a manner that will meet their needs. Appendix B outlines the approach we are taking.

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

## 2.6 Risk management

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

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy



## Appendix A

### 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget Process

#### Timetable of Key Milestones for 2018/19

<b>Date / Meeting</b>	<b>Detail</b>
11 September 2017 <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet approves the 2018-2020 Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget process, incorporating the associated Engagement Strategy.
11 September 2017 <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet agrees the 2018/19 Council Tax Support Scheme for consultation
11 September 2017 to 30 October 2017	Public Consultation period on the 2018/19 Local Council Tax Support Scheme.
17 November 2017	2018-2020 Business Cases published with the 27 November 2017 Cabinet Report.
27 November 2017 <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet considers its 2018-2020 initial budget proposals in relation to General Fund, Schools, Housing Revenue Account & North Tyneside Investment Plan for 2018-2020, and Council Plan.
28 November 2017	Notice of Objection Process for the 2018/19 Budget Commences.
28 November 2017	Budget and Council Plan Engagement process begins. Ends in January 2018.
December 2017 <b>Scrutiny Process</b>	Scrutiny of the 2018-2020 Council Plan, Financial Planning and Budget Process.
11 December 2017 <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet considers the outcomes of the consultation on the 2018/19 Council Tax Support Scheme and proposes a scheme for Council to consider on 18 January 2018.
Mid December 2017	Estimated timing of the 2018/19 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.
9 January 2018 <b>Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee</b>	Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee consider the results of their review of the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget and Council Plan process.
15 January 2018 <b>Cabinet</b>	Annual Housing Rent Reduction for 2018/19 approved by Cabinet.

18 January 2018 <b>Council</b>	Council considers the proposed 2018/19 Local Council Tax Support Scheme from Cabinet and agrees or amends the scheme for 2018/19.
24 January 2018 <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet considers the Council Plan, its budget proposals for 2018-2020 in relation to General Fund Revenue, Schools & North Tyneside Council Investment Plan for 2018-2020, taking into account feedback received as part of Budget Engagement.
24 January 2018 <b>Cabinet</b>	2018/19 Council Taxbase agreed by Cabinet.
1 February 2018 <b>Council</b>	Cabinet submits to the Council its estimates of amounts for the 2018-2020 Financial Plan and 2018/19 Budget & council tax levels and the Council Plan.
15 February 2018 <b>Council</b>	Reconvened Council meeting to consider Cabinet's estimates of amounts for the 2018-2020 Financial Planning and Budget process and council tax levels and the Council Plan. Consideration of any Notices of Objection.
19 February 2018 (if required) <b>Cabinet</b>	Cabinet Meeting to consider any objections to Cabinet's Budget and Council plan proposals.
27 February 2018 (if required) <b>Council</b>	Council meeting to agree the general fund revenue budget for 2018/19; the council tax level for 2018/19 & the North Tyneside Investment Plan for 2018-2020 and the Council Plan

### **2018/19 Council Plan and Budget Engagement Strategy**

North Tyneside Council is committed to being a resident-focused and listening Authority and this commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in helping to shape decision-making in relation to the Financial Planning and Budget process.

The Authority's overall approach to engagement ensures that the public have opportunities to have their say throughout the year, through a series of different methods, including engaging with the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and ward members through the Mayor's Listening Events and Community Conversations.

Between July and September 2017, there has been a programme of engagement out-and-about around the borough speaking to people to proactively gather qualitative feedback from people about their experiences as a resident and a customer of North Tyneside Council and their suggestions for future improvement (the Big Community Conversation).

The programme incorporates visits to each ward, as well as ensuring there is adequate targeting to provide opportunities for those with specific equalities characteristics to be involved. The feedback from engagement from this programme and other activity throughout the year will inform the initial Cabinet budget proposals process leading up to November 2017.

Engagement on the updated Council Plan with key stakeholders will take place through September/October including the State of the Area event on 13<sup>th</sup> October. The draft updated Council Plan will be used as the policy context in which final decisions are happening on draft budget proposals to be considered by Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

Further engagement on Cabinet's initial budget proposals and the updated Council Plan will take place from 27 November 2017 to January 2018.

As with all engagement the Authority is committed to ensuring that residents with protected characteristics, as set out in the 2010 Equality Act, are able to participate. Further information on this aspect of the engagement approach can be found in the Equality Impact Assessment on the Budget Engagement Strategy, which is available on request.

#### **Target audiences**

The budget proposals are likely to have different levels of impact on different audiences and therefore the engagement strategy will aim to facilitate opportunities to reach appropriate sectors of the population through a targeted approach.

The approach delivers both universal engagement as well as engagement with particular groups, e.g. carers, people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Specific External audiences are:

- Residents of North Tyneside
- Service users
- Children and young people (including the Young Mayor and Cabinet, Youth Council)
- Older people
- North Tyneside Strategic Partnership
- Business Community (including the Chambers of Trade, Cobalt and Silverlink Business Association, the Federation of Small Business (FSB) and the North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC) and North Tyneside Business Forum)
- Schools (including the Schools Forum, School Governors and the Head Teacher Convenors)
- Voluntary and Community Sector (including faith groups)
- Carers

Internal audiences:

- Elected Members
- Staff
- Strategic Partners (Kier, Engie and Capita)
- Trade Unions

## **Timescales**

Engagement on the budget proposals will commence on 27 November 2017 and run up until January 2018.

## **Approach**

Our approach will aim for maximum reach by offering a range of different opportunities for people to have their say. In line with the corporate principles, as agreed in the Engagement Strategy, these opportunities will be

- **Inclusive:** Making sure that everyone will be able to engage in the process
- **Clear:** Be clear on our aims of each engagement activity from the outset, and the extent to which residents can be involved.
- **Integrated:** Ensuring that engagement activities are joined up with the relevant decision-making processes.
- **Tailored:** We will aim to better understand our audience and use different methods appropriately to enable and encourage them to be involved.
- **Feedback:** We will give feedback, through agreed channels, when we have completed our activity.
- **Timely:** we will ensure that we give, where we can, sufficient notice to make opportunities available to all. We will take into account those times when it is more appropriate to engage depending on our target audience

## **1. Informing**

This will provide information to audiences about the budget proposals via:

- The Authority's website - [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)
- The resident's magazine Our North Tyneside
- Information inviting residents to engage in the process will be provided in key outlets and facilities, including libraries (including mobile libraries) and customer service centres, community centres, leisure centres - together with feedback cards for comments
- Social media

## **2. Listening**

We will listen to the wider community and specific interest groups by:

- Providing opportunities for online feedback via website, e-mail and social media.
- One event will be organised in each of the four areas of the borough to engage with residents.
- Engagement with service users or their representatives, via existing networks.
- Engagement with other key stakeholders, including: businesses, schools, young people, community and voluntary sector, trade unions, North Tyneside Strategic Partnership, older people and carers
- Specific events will be held for: Residents Panel and Staff Panel

## **3. Feeding back**

The Authority will ensure that residents and specific groups are given feedback on how their comments have been taken on board via the website, Residents magazine and in key outlets and facilities.

## **Evaluation**

Each year the Authority evaluates its budget engagement process to consider improvements that can be achieved in future years. This will include consideration of the number of people involved (including via formal engagement sessions, social media contacts,) and the feedback received.

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 11 September 2017

## ITEM 6(c)

Council Tax Support  
Scheme 2018- 2019

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Finance and Resources

Cabinet Member(s): Norma Redfearn

Councillor Ray  
Glendon

Report from Service  
Area;

Finance

Responsible Officer:

Janice Gillespie, Head of Finance

Tel: (0191) 643 5701

Wards affected:

All

## PART 1

### 1.1 Executive Summary:

In line with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), the Authority is required to consider whether to revise its Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for the forthcoming financial year. This is a means tested Scheme provided to help support people on low income to meet their Council Tax liability.

Any proposed revision of the Scheme must be consulted on and a number of options are available for consideration; these are outlined in paragraph 1.6 below.

This report asks Cabinet to consider what changes should be made to the CTS Scheme so that a consultation exercise can be undertaken on the proposed changes to the Scheme. Outcomes of the consultation will be brought back to Cabinet later in the year to enable a decision to be taken by Cabinet on what proposed changes to the Scheme should be presented to full Council for approval.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

1.2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

1. Authorise the Head of Finance to undertake consultation between September 2017 and November 2017 on all, or some, of the options for a revision of the Council Tax Support Scheme (set out at paragraphs 1.6.2 to 1.6.4 of the report) and;
2. Consider the consultation responses at a further meeting of Cabinet on 11 December 2017 and determine what revision of the Council Tax Support Scheme Cabinet would propose to Council on 18 January 2018 for approval.

### **1.3 Forward plan:**

- 1.3.1 Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the forward plan that was published on 7 August 2017.

### **1.4 Council plan and policy framework**

- 1.4.1 This report links directly to the priority 'Our people will be cared for and kept safe if they become vulnerable' in the 'Our North Tyneside Plan 2016 -2019'.

### **1.5.0 Information**

- 1.5.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 states 'For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its Scheme or replace it with another Scheme'. The Authority 'must make any revision to its Scheme, or any replacement no later than 31 January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement Scheme is to have effect'.
- 1.5.2 The legislation states that if any revision to a Scheme, or any replacement Scheme, has the effect of reducing or removing a reduction to which a claimant is entitled, then the revision or replacement must include consideration as to whether it is appropriate to introduce transitional provision relating to that reduction or removal as the Authority thinks fit.
- 1.5.3 The current Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) is a means tested support which, to promote simplicity, generally follows the Housing Benefit rules around entitlement. From April 2017 maximum support for working age claimants was reduced from 90% to 87.5% of the claimant's liability for Council Tax. Pensionable age claimants receive support based on 100% of their Council Tax liability as prescribed under national rules. In working out a claimant's entitlement to CTS, their income is compared against an 'Applicable Amount' which is based on the claimant's circumstances. Where income is below the Applicable Amount the claimant receives the maximum support; where income is above the Applicable Amount entitlement is reduced by 20% of the element of the claimant's income that is above the Applicable Amount.
- 1.5.4 Any changes proposed to the Scheme must be subject to consultation, although the level and period of consultation will depend on the proposed level of change to the Scheme. As part of that consultation the Authority should, before revising its Scheme:
- a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it,
  - b) publish a draft Scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and
  - c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the Scheme.

The final decision on the implementation of any revised CTS Scheme is a matter for Council. Any revision to the CTS Scheme that Cabinet recommends will be considered by Council on 18 January 2018.

- 1.5.5 As at 31 July 2017 there were 19,129 claimants receiving CTS. This is split between pensioner claims totalling 8,761 (46%) and working age claims 10,368 (54%). The majority of CTS claimants live in a band A property. At around the same time last year the case load was 19,981 split between 9,254 (46%) pensionable age and 10,727(54%) working age. The caseload has reduced each year since the Scheme was first introduced

in 2013/14 as more people move into employment, as claimants' incomes increase, or they no longer qualify for support.

1.5.6 Due to the reduction in the number of claimants, the forecast cost of the Scheme for 2017/18 is currently around £14.7m.

### Collection Rates

1.5.7 There has been minimal reaction to the Scheme since it was introduced in April 2013.

1.5.8 In-year collection of Council Tax for year 1 of the Scheme (2013/2014) fell by 0.4% from 96.9% to 96.5%. In 2014/15 the in-year collection rate again fell, although only slightly to 96.4% but in year 2015/16 the in-year collection rate improved to 96.6%. In 2016/17 the in-year collection rate stood at 96.5%. Throughout these years there have been reductions to support and additional charges raised for empty property discount changes. In addition the general effects of a difficult economic climate caused by the impacts of welfare reforms have also impacted on many residents on CTS.

1.5.9 As Council Tax Support is a local Scheme, all Billing Authorities are able to make a Scheme that they consider best supports their residents taking into consideration the finances available to the Authority. Table 1 shows the current Schemes that are in place in our regional Billing Authorities and the in year collection rate for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Table 1- Regional Schemes

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Current 2017 maximum support</b>	<b>In year collection rate 2016/17</b>	<b>In year collection rate 2015/16</b>
Northumberland	100%	97.9	97.8
Newcastle	85%	96.9	97.1
Durham	100%	96.7	96.3
North Tyneside	87.5%	96.5	96.6
Stockton	80%	96.3	96.5
South Tyneside	75% to 85%	96.0	95.9
Darlington	80%	95.8	95.2
Gateshead	91.5%	95.8	95.6
Sunderland	91.5%	95.8	95.7
Hartlepool	80%	95.3	95.4
Redcar & Cleveland	80%	94.1	95.9
Middlesbrough	80%	92.5	93.6

1.5.10 It is important to note that the Authority can recover any unpaid Council Tax by an attachment of £3.75 per week to certain Benefits once a liability order is in place. The Authority will then have around 37 weeks to recover the debt (including the court costs of £10.00) in year if a claimant has no other debts being recovered. Based on the current CTS level the minimum contribution of Council Tax for a couple in receipt of CTS living in a band A property could be recovered in year. However if the amount of Council Tax increased it would not be recovered in year and the debt would run into multiple years for collection.



## Options for the Scheme for 2018/19

1.5.11 The options for the CTS Scheme that are being considered for 2018/19 financial year are set out in Table 2 below. All the options reduce the maximum amount of CTS available to working age claimants and thereby pass on a greater amount of Council Tax liability to the claimant which will have the effect of reducing the cost of the Scheme and, as such, providing savings to the Authority.

1.5.12 Three options to reduce the percentage level of CTS are presented in Table 2; it shows the financial effect on both the claimant and savings to the Authority if the maximum level of Council Tax Support was reduced for working age claimants to 85%, 82.5% or 80% from its current 87.5%. Figures are based on the current level of Council Tax.

Table 2 – Reduced levels of Council Tax Support for working age claimants

% Level of Support	*Weekly Amount that claimants in a Band A property would pay		Weekly increase for the claimant		Amount of savings to the Authority
	Couple	Single			
87.5% (Current)	<b>£2.60</b> (£135.20 per year)	<b>£1.95</b> (£101.40 per year)			
85%	<b>£3.12</b> (162.24 per year)	<b>£2.34</b> (£121.68 per year)	£0.52	£0.39	£176,476
82.5%	<b>£3.64</b> (189.28 per year)	<b>£2.73</b> (£141.96 per year)	£1.04	£0.78	£352,442
80%	<b>£4.16</b> (£216.32 per year)	<b>£3.12</b> (£162.24 per year)	£1.56	£1.17	£527,812

\* Higher banded properties will pay more than is quoted above. Increases in Council Tax will increase the amount claimants will pay.

### 1.6 Proposed CTS Scheme Options for consideration:

1.6.1 This report invites Cabinet to consider the Schemes set out in paragraphs 1.6.2 to 1.6.4 of the report and to determine which of the options, if any, should be consulted on.

1.6.2 **Scheme 1** - Reduce the maximum level of Council Tax Support available from 87.5% to 85% for working age claimants.

1.6.3 **Scheme 2** – Reduce the maximum level of Council Tax Support available from 87.5% to 82.5% for working age claimants.

1.6.4 **Scheme 3** – Reduce the maximum level of Council Tax Support available from 87.5% to 80% for working age claimants

1.6.5 Estimated costs of Schemes 1 to 3 above are provided below in Table 3 (Estimated cost of Schemes).

**Table 3 – Estimated cost of Schemes**

	<b>Current Scheme</b> current level of CTS of 87.5% for working age claimants	<b>Scheme 1</b> Reduce maximum CTS from 87.5% to 85% for working age claimants	<b>Scheme 2</b> Reduce maximum CTS from 87.5% to 82.5% for working age claimants	<b>Scheme 3</b> Reduce maximum CTS from 87.5% to 80% for working age claimants
Current forecast cost of Scheme as at June 2017 (forecast for 2017/18)	£14,706,050	£14,706,050	£14,706,050	£14,706,050
Estimated potential savings for 2018-19 due to implementing different options		(£233,096)	(£465,518)	(£697,154)
Adjustment to reflect assumption of 85% collection rate (based on previous years collect rates)		£34,964	£69,827	£104,573
<b>Total forecast cost of Scheme for 2017/18</b>	<b>£14,706,050</b>	<b>£14,507,918</b>	<b>£14,310,359</b>	<b>£14,113,469</b>
Deduct cost applicable to Fire and Police Authorities (10.93%)	(£1,607,371)	(£1,585,715)	(£1,564,122)	(£1,542,602)
Cost of Scheme to North Tyneside Council	<b>£13,098,679</b>	<b>£12,922,203</b>	<b>£12,746,237</b>	<b>£12,570,867</b>
Change for North Tyneside	<b>0</b>	<b>(£176,476)</b>	<b>(£352,442)</b>	<b>(£527,812)</b>

## **Decision**

### **Option 1**

To agree the recommendations at 1.2.1 of the report and to consult on the Scheme, or Schemes, set out in 1.6 as considered appropriate by Cabinet.

### **Option 2**

Refer the matter back to officers for the consideration of an alternative CTS Scheme.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

## **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

1.7.1 Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

1.7.2 It provides an opportunity to gain feedback from our residents and partner organisations on the Scheme or Schemes being considered. This will allow Cabinet to determine what revision to the Scheme Cabinet wish to propose to Council on 18 January 2018.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 – Timetable of consultation
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Janice Gillespie – Head of Finance Tel. (0191) 6435701

Andrew Scott – Senior Client Manager Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services,  
Tel. (0191) 643 7150

Tracy Hunter – Client Manager Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services,  
Tel. (0191) 643 7228

## **1.10 Background information:**

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

- [Local Government Finance Act 1992](#)
- [Council Report 19 January 2017 - Council Tax Support 2017-18](#)

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1. Finance and Other Resources**

2.1.1 The detailed financial implications of the different options of change to the CTS are covered in Table 3 in section 6.

2.1.2 In summary, the Scheme is implemented through a discount on the Council Tax liability for eligible claimants, thereby reducing the amount of Council Tax collectable by the Authority. Based on current claimants and cost projections for the options for changes to the Scheme under consideration, Table 3 estimates that for 2018/19 there could be a saving for the Authority of circa £0.176m under Scheme 1, £0.352m under Scheme 2 and £0.527m under Scheme 3 assuming no change to the rate of Council Tax.

2.1.2 The overall cost of the Scheme will reduce if the number of claimants continues to fall or entitlements reduce. It is not possible to provide a more accurate forecast as entitlement depends upon the detail of individual claims.

### **2.2 Legal**

2.2.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the 1992 Act) was amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 in that each Local Authority had to have in place by 31

January 2013, and each subsequent year, a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (referred to as a Council Tax Support Scheme by this Authority) to replace the previous support arrangements.

2.2.2 Schedule 1A of the 1992 Act sets out the steps that must be taken before revising or replacing a Council Tax Reduction Scheme, namely, consultation on, and publication of the draft revised or replacement Scheme.

2.2.3 As referred to in the body of the report, the Authority is also required by virtue of Schedule 1A of the 1992 Act to each year to determine if the Scheme should be revised or replaced. Consultation will be undertaken on any proposed changes suggested by Cabinet similar to the consultation undertaken for the 2017-18 CTS Scheme.

2.2.4 Section 67 of the 1992 Act specifies the functions that can be discharged only by the Authority as a whole. Included in those functions is the ability to make or revise a Council Tax Support Scheme.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

2.3.1 This report is seeking direction from Cabinet as to what change to the current Council Tax Support Scheme it wishes to recommend to Council on 18 January 2018. Consultation will be carried out on any proposal made by Cabinet and this will take place from September 2017 to November 2017. A timetable of engagement is included at Appendix 1 which includes using partner organisations and an on line form to collect consultation feedback to provide a wider opportunity for residents to get involved.

### **2.4 Human rights**

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

### **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

2.5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the options considered. The EIA is included as Appendix 2 to this report.

2.5.2 There is an acknowledgement in the EIA that any option to change the Scheme that is proposed will have a negative impact on working age claimants, but it is acknowledged that there are actions that can be taken that may reduce or remove this.

2.5.3 Other potential negative impacts around communications for some claimants with protected characteristics were noted in the EIA. However should any of the options be proposed by Cabinet and accepted by Full Council, a communication plan would be developed to help mitigate against this.

### **2.6 Risk management**

- The Scheme options are based on the current scheme and as such there will be no system administration support risks from a system perspective.
- A consultation exercise will be carried out on proposals made by Cabinet and this should mitigate the risk of a legal challenge.

### **2.7 Crime and disorder**

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

### PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive  X
- Head(s) of Service  X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)  X
- Chief Finance Officer  X
- Monitoring Officer  X
- Head of Corporate Strategy  X

## Appendix 1

### Timetable of engagement for Council Tax Support Scheme 2018/19

<b>Type of engagement</b>	<b>Date</b>
Staff communication	From 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Members newsletter	October 2017 newsletter
All Members briefings	3 and 4 October 2017
Public consultation – working with customer services as well as partners such as CAB and using an online web form.	Up to 7 weeks starting 12th September 2017
Meeting with Voluntary Sector Group for Welfare Reform	October 2017
Private landlords (Private landlords forum members) - Email invitation to take part in consultation.	From 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 until end of consultation
Registered Social landlords -Email invitation to take part in consultation.	From 18 <sup>h</sup> September 2017 until end of consultation

## **Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment for Council Tax Support Scheme 2018/19** **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The separate EIA guidance notes outline what should be included for each section. Please read them before you begin. If you have any queries, contact your Corporate Equality Group rep, or the Engagement Team on 643 2828.

**1. Author, service area, date**

*Tracy Hunter, Finance*

**2. Who else has been involved in writing this EIA?**

*Andrew Scott, Client Manager Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service*

**3. What proposal is this EIA assessing?**

*The review of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19*

**4. What is the purpose of your proposal and what is it expected to achieve?**

*To carry out the annual review the Council Tax Support Scheme and to consider the options of change to the maximum level of support for working age claimant's. This will help inform Cabinet as to what change to the Scheme should be proposed to Council on 18 January 2018. The following options are being considered:*

**Scheme 1** – Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 85% of their Council Tax liability

**Scheme 2** - Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 82.5% of their Council Tax liability

**Scheme 3** - Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 80% of their Council Tax liability

**5. Is there any relevance to the aims of the public sector equality duty? Write your answers in the table**

Aim	Yes, No, or N/A	Details if 'yes'
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment	N/A	
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Yes	By considering the different characteristics and needs of people in the scheme, in order to ensure that the scheme is fair to all claimants.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	N/A	

**6. Analysis by characteristic Write your answers in the table**

Protected characteristic	Potential positive or negative impact?	Explanation and evidence
All protected characteristics	Yes	<p><b><u>Scheme 1, 2 and 3</u></b></p> <p>The changes proposed under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme 1 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 85%)</li> <li>• Scheme 2 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 82.5%), and</li> <li>• Scheme 3 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age</li> </ul>



		claimants to 80%), will all impact negatively on working age claimants only as working age claimants will be able to claim less entitlement. Working age claimants will be expected to contribute more to their Council Tax liability than pensionable age CTS claimants.
Age	Yes	Schemes 1, 2 and 3 are more favourable and therefore more positive towards pensionable age claimants as is the current scheme as each scheme allows up to 100% CTS for pensionable age CTS claimants.
Disability	Yes	Potential negative impacts around consulting and communicating the change to claimants.
Gender	No	
Gender reassignment	No	
Marriage and civil partnership status	No	
Pregnancy and maternity	No	
Race	Yes	Potential negative impact around consulting and communicating the change to claimants.
Religion or belief	No	
Sexual orientation	No	

**7. Have you carried out any engagement in relation to this proposal? If so, what?**

- *Engagement around consulting residents on the scheme options will start once Cabinet considers and agrees to this on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017.*
- *SLT, LMB and Cabinet member and Mayor.*

**8. Is there any information you don't have that you need to find?**

*Consultation feedback will need to be considered when outcomes are known.*

**9. What actions are already in place, or will be taken, to remove or reduce potential negative impacts? (add more lines to the table if you need to) Write your answers in the table**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
The current Discretionary Support Scheme can be used to support people in exceptional circumstances	Andrew Scott/ Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	In place
Engagement Strategy to consult on changes being considered by Cabinet	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	Mid September through to November
Communication Strategy will be developed on the change to the level of support that is proposed by Cabinet and if accepted by Council. Any change agreed by Council will be affected from April 2018.	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	From 19 January 2018

**10. Are there any potential negative impacts that cannot be removed or reduced? If so, why is this?**

Government funding reductions to North Tyneside continue to be significant and this will impact *on the amount of funding available for the CTS Scheme.*

*Prescribed regulations ensure that pensioners must have entitlement based on 100% and this has an impact on the amount of funding remaining for working age claimants.*

**11. Based on your conclusions from this assessment, what are your next steps?**

*Cabinet will hear a report on 11 September 2017 which will recommend all options above to be consulted on. The consultation exercise will be carried out and outcomes from the consultation will then be reported to Cabinet in December 2017. Cabinet will consider the outcomes and the funding available to it and propose a revision it feels appropriate to Council in January 2018 who will consider the proposal and either accept the proposed revision or not.*

**12. How will the impact of this proposal be monitored after it is introduced?**

*The number of claimants claiming is monitored and compared against the previous year's trends. The caseload is reducing but should any significant change be identified this and claimant's characteristics will be investigated.*

**13. When will this EIA be reviewed?**

*The EIA is carried out at the annual review unless no changes are proposed as part of the next review. This will take place September 2018.*

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 11 September 2017

**ITEM 6(d)**  
North Tyneside Highway  
Asset Management Plan  
2017 to 2032

**Portfolio(s):** Housing and Transport

**Cabinet Member(s):** Councillor J  
Harrison

**Report from Service Area:** Environment, Housing and Leisure

**Responsible Officer:** Phil Scott, Head of Environment,  
Housing and Leisure

**Tel:** (0191) 643 7295

**Wards affected:** All

## **PART 1**

### **1.1 Executive Summary:**

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 8 May 2017, sets out the Authority's vision for transport in the borough. It seeks to ensure that "North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently." It sets out five principles which are key to achieving this.

The Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) sets out the Authority's approach to maintaining North Tyneside's highways in good condition and responds to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's policy direction to provide greater emphasis on footways. Cabinet is requested to adopt the HAMP and authorise officers to approve any ancillary framework and guidance documents.

### **1.2 Recommendation(s):**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1) approve the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) attached as Appendix 1 which sets out the policy and strategy for maintaining the borough's pavements, roads and infrastructure assets; and
- 2) delegate authority to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, to approve ancillary framework and guidance documents.

### **1.3 Forward Plan:**

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 14 August 2017.

## 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report is relevant to the following priorities set out in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2016 to 2019:

- Our People will be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Our Places will have an effective transport and physical infrastructure – including our roads, cycleways, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport

## 1.5 Information:

### 1.5.1 Background

The Council's Transport Strategy 2017 to 2032 sets out the overall vision for transport in North Tyneside and contains a commitment to have a HAMP in order to ensure a well-managed highway network.

North Tyneside Council is responsible for an extensive highway network and feedback from our residents has consistently told us that the maintenance of roads and footpaths is a high priority. It is therefore important that the Authority manages its highway assets in the most effective way.

Asset management has been widely accepted by central and local government as a means to manage highway assets effectively through long term planning and looking at the whole-life maintenance cycle.

North Tyneside's original 5-year HAMP was implemented on 1 April 2012. Good progress has been made over the life of the plan and it is now in need of being refreshed. The proposed new HAMP is intended to build on the progress made to date.

The proposed HAMP has been prepared following the adoption of the Transport Strategy and Local Plan. The HAMP consists of:

- Part 1 – Policy. This describes our commitment to highway asset management and sets out the principles and objectives of the HAMP. This is shown at Appendix 1.
- Part 2 – Investment and Delivery Strategy. This details how the Authority will manage its highway infrastructure assets and how the objectives in Part 1 will be achieved. This is also shown at Appendix 1.
- Part 3 – The Annual Information Report. This is a commitment to provide an annual report to Cabinet setting out our progress over the last 12 months and our plans for the coming 12 months. It will assist in informing any decisions around future highway maintenance spending and priorities. This will be reported to Cabinet separately on an annual basis.
- Part 4 – The HAMP will be supported by a Highway Asset Management Framework. This will set out the operational detail for the management and planning of maintenance work on highway infrastructure assets. It is proposed that authority to approve the Framework document will be delegated to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport.

Since the Authority implemented the first HAMP, new funding opportunities have emerged, including the Department for Transport's (DfT) incentive funding. In order to receive the maximum available allocation from DfT, local authorities are required to demonstrate that good asset management practices have been implemented to manage their highway infrastructure assets. In order to receive the maximum allocation, authorities are required to have a HAMP in place.

The HAMP is designed to be sufficiently flexible in order to accommodate changes in resources or priorities. In addition to the Transport Strategy, the HAMP supports and complements a range of other local and regional transport strategies and plans.

Following clear policy direction from the Elected Mayor and Cabinet, one of the key objectives of the HAMP is to increase the commitment to the improvement of footways across the borough.

## **1.6 Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet

### Option 1

Cabinet accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

### Option 2

Cabinet do not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

## **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended in order to have a HAMP in place to enable the effective management of the Authority's highway and infrastructure assets. Additionally, it will support the Authority's ability to demonstrate best practice in order to seek to secure maximum funding from DfT's incentive fund.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

Appendix 1 North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 to 2032 Part 1 (Policy) and Part 2 (Strategy) (final draft for approval)

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Karen Cassar, Highway Asset Manager (Capita), tel. 0775 3222730  
Mark Newlands, Highways and Infrastructure Manager, tel. (0191) 643 6129  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, tel. (0191) 643 7038

## **1.10 Background information:**

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

(1) North Tyneside Transport Strategy  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p\\_ID=568803&p\\_subjectCategory=41](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=568803&p_subjectCategory=41)

- (2) HAMP 2012-2017  
<http://test-ubuntuweb.northtyneside.gov.uk:3004/category/784/highway-asset-management>
- (3) Highway Infrastructure and Asset Management Guidance, UK Roads Liaison Group 2013  
<http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=5C49F48E-1CE0-477F-933ACBFA169AF8CB>
- (4) Well-managed highway infrastructure, Code of Practice, UK Roads Liaison Group 2016  
<http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/guidance/codes-of-practice.cfm>
- (5) Highways Act 1980  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66/contents>

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

The funding to support the delivery of the HAMP is allocated from a range of sources, including North Tyneside's Local Transport Plan (LTP) allocation from DfT; the Council's Investment Plan; and general revenue budgets.

The HAMP is a key component of demonstrating best practice in order to seek to secure maximum funding from DfT's incentive fund.

Funding allocations and priorities will be reviewed on an annual basis and details reported to Cabinet as part of the Annual Information Report.

### **2.2 Legal**

The Authority has a duty to maintain its highway network under the Highways Act 1980. There is an expectation from government that local authorities will produce a HAMP and this is deemed best practice.

If Cabinet agree to the recommendations contained in this report, a further delegated officer decision(s) will need to be taken by the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport. Twenty eight days notice on the Forward Plan of the delegated officer decision must be given and a record of the decision taken together with the report to the officer making the decision will need to be produced and published on the Authority's website (unless the matter for decision involves exempt or confidential information in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972).

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

The development of the HAMP has been supported by an officer and Cabinet Member working group, which has met periodically to shape the document.

Feedback received during the lifetime of the first HAMP has also been used in the development of the proposed new HAMP.

## 2.4 Human rights

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

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equalities and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

## 2.6 Risk management

The HAMP will contain a comprehensive risk management system to manage ongoing highway maintenance activities. There would be a risk to future funding if the HAMP were not implemented, as a HAMP is a key component of demonstrating best practice in order to seek to secure maximum funding from DfT's incentive fund.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are potential positive environment and sustainability outcomes such as carbon reduction through use of low heat asphalt. Wherever possible, the HAMP will seek to make use of more sustainable maintenance techniques such as use of recycled surfacing materials.

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy



**Appendix 1**

**Highway  
Asset  
Management  
Plan  
2017 – 2032**

**North Tyneside Council**

## **1. An Introduction to our Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP)**

The Council's first HAMP was formally adopted in December 2011 and was implemented on 1 August 2012. The production of a HAMP is industry best practice and is aimed at ensuring local authorities get the most out of their highway infrastructure assets.

Since the introduction of our first HAMP there have been a number of changes in the highway asset management industry including new best practice guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT). New DfT funding rules have also emerged including an incentive scheme to reward those local authorities who can demonstrate good asset management.

The Council's Transport Strategy 2017 to 2032 sets out the overall vision for transport in North Tyneside and contains a commitment to have a HAMP in order to ensure a well-managed highway network. The HAMP will be used to plan our highway maintenance activities during this same period as the Transport Strategy in order to get the best outcomes within the resources available. We will do this by building on the principles set out in the first HAMP and further improving the way we manage our highway assets in future years.

The HAMP consists of:

- Part 1 – Policy. This describes our commitment to highway asset management and sets out the principles and objectives of the HAMP.
- Part 2 – Investment and Delivery Strategy. This provides the specific detail about how we will manage our highway infrastructure assets and will set out how the objectives in Part 1 will be achieved.
- Part 3 – The HAMP Annual Information Report. This is a commitment to provide an annual report to Cabinet setting out our progress over the last 12 months and our plans for the coming 12 months. It will assist in informing any decisions around future highway maintenance spending and priorities.
- Part 4 - The HAMP will be supported by a Highway Asset Management Framework. This will set out the way we will manage and plan the operational maintenance our highway infrastructure assets. The Framework will contain a Highway Management Plan which will set out our various specific programmes and technical procedures for day to day delivery of the highway maintenance service.

The HAMP is designed to be flexible so it can accommodate changes in resources or priorities. In addition to the Transport Strategy, the HAMP supports and complements a range of other council and regional transport strategies and plans.

The application of good asset management principles to the management of our highway infrastructure will make the best use of our existing resources, will provide a clear evidence base to justify the need for investment in highway maintenance and, by applying the principles of asset management, we will achieve a well-structured long term approach to maintaining our highway network.

## 2. Strategic Vision

1. The strategic vision for North Tyneside is contained in the Our North Tyneside Plan. This Plan comprises three inter-related themes: Our People, Our Places and Our Economy. It includes a clear statement within the Our Places themes in relation to highway asset management as follows

***“Our places will have an effective transport and physical infrastructure – including our roads, cycleways, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport”<sup>1</sup>***

2. We asked residents, businesses, visitors and partners what “effective transport” meant to them and established a more detailed picture for transport in North Tyneside

***“North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently.”***

3. We then thought about how to translate that picture into some principles which will guide our action and against which we will measure performance. These are
  - i. **Improve safety, health and well-being outcomes and sustainability;** in relation to people, communities and the environment
  - ii. **Support economic growth;** through effective movement for people, businesses and goods and to support the regional aim of “more and better jobs”<sup>2</sup>
  - iii. **Improve connectivity;** with all parts of the borough, the region, the rest of the country and the world
  - iv. **Enable smart choices for all;** help people, businesses and visitors find out how to get to where they need to
  - v. **Manage demand;** on transport networks and assets and address current and future highway asset management challenges

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<sup>1</sup> Our North Tyneside Plan

<sup>2</sup> NELEP Strategic Economic Plan



North Tyneside Council

Working in partnership with  
**CAPITA**

## Part 1 : Our Policy



## Part 1 – Policy

### 1.1 Background

North Tyneside Council is responsible for an extensive highway network and feedback from our residents has consistently told us that the maintenance of roads and footpaths is a high priority. It is therefore important that the Council manages its highway assets in the most effective way.

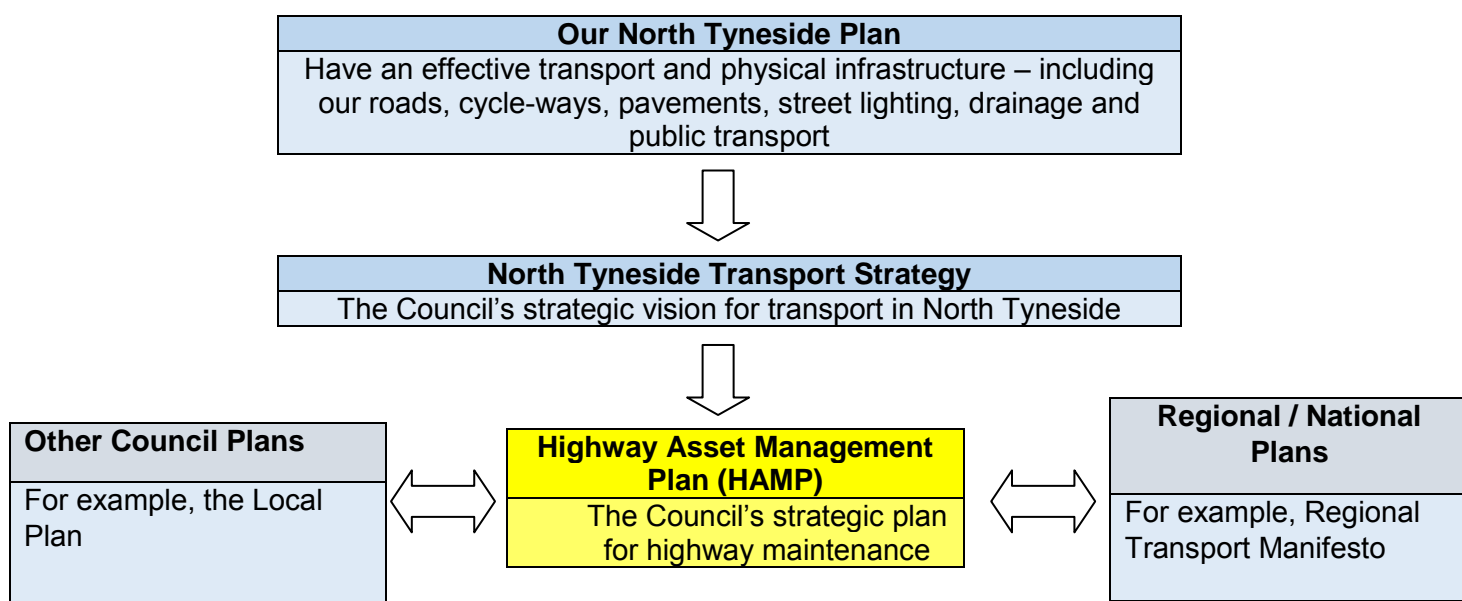
Asset management has been widely accepted by central and local government as a means to deliver a more efficient and effective approach to management of highway infrastructure assets through long term planning and looking at the whole life maintenance cycle. There is a need to manage the assets within finite resources which may fluctuate throughout the lifetime of the HAMP.

We have developed this policy in line with the Council's priorities documented in the Transport Strategy, in consultation with our cabinet member working group, resident's responses to our annual surveys and customer feedback received via our website.

Our HAMP policy has been developed by a joint officer and Cabinet Member working group against the backdrop of the Transport Strategy, working to a clear policy direction from the Elected Mayor. The content has also been influenced by input received from resident surveys, communications received via our website and other customer feedback.

### 1.2 Strategic Context

The HAMP will align the management of our highway infrastructure with the Council's other transport plans and regional / national plans as shown below. The illustration in Annex 1 documents the HAMP's relationship with the Council's other transport plans.



### 1.3 Policy Statement

Our transport strategy sets out that the HAMP will “deliver effective maintenance of the highway network in the most efficient way”.

This HAMP defines highway asset management as:

*A systematic approach to meeting the strategic need for the management and maintenance of highway infrastructure assets through long term planning and optimal allocation of resources in order to manage risk and meet the performance requirements of the authority in the most efficient and sustainable manner.*

The key objectives of our HAMP will be:

1. To ensure the Council adheres to its duty of care under the Highways Act 1980
2. To ensure there is a commitment to highway asset management across all tiers of the Council’s organisation
3. To ensure that highway asset management work supports the strategic policy direction for North Tyneside, set by the Elected Mayor and Cabinet
4. To actively engage with our elected members, residents, businesses and visitors so that services can be aligned with their priorities and expectations wherever possible
5. To increase our commitment to the improvement of footways across the borough
6. To gather and manage robust and accurate inventory and condition data so we fully understand our assets and invest in ICT to make sure our plans and decisions are right
7. To apply the principles of effective asset management to our highway network to develop forward works programmes over a number of years and to direct investment on the basis of prevention is better than cure
8. To ensure that all processes and procedures are in place to maximise funding opportunities and to manage risk appropriately and effectively
9. To manage and monitor performance so that we can continually improve
10. To ensure that all aspects of highway management are reported in accordance with the Council’s established governance and performance systems

### 1.4 Scope of our Policy

This Policy covers highway infrastructure assets in the ownership of North Tyneside Council. The infrastructure assets are:

- carriageways
- footways
- bridges and related structures.

The street lighting stock is managed through a long term PFI contract and the traffic signals are managed by Newcastle City Council so these assets are not included in the HAMP.

## Part 2 – Our Investment and Delivery Strategy

## 2.1 Introduction

The 'Our North Tyneside Plan' makes it clear that the Mayor and Cabinet's aim is to ensure North Tyneside is a great place to live, work and visit. Critical to delivering that ambition is ensuring we have a fit for purpose Highway Network.

The highway network is amongst the largest and most visible of our community assets. The Authority maintains more than 800km of roads, 1700km of footpaths and over 300 highway or similar structures. The highway network is also the most valuable asset in the Council's ownership, with its total highway assets being valued at £1,314,000,000.

During the lifetime of the first HAMP the backlog of highway repairs has been brought under control. This is largely due to the additional Council investment in the highway network in the same period.

The reduction in the maintenance backlog indicates the Council is performing well in relation to its maintenance of the highway assets with the overall condition of the network being good. This would indicate that the increased use of preventative maintenance treatments and a relatively healthy financial investment is producing the expected benefits. This HAMP is intended to build on the good progress made to date and sets out the strategy for our approach to future highway maintenance.

The strategy sets out the overall vision for highway asset management in North Tyneside. It includes how we will deliver against our policy objectives which will underpin strategic and operational decisions in relation to all aspects of highway asset management. It also notes some key challenges, key considerations and issues. The strategy will be used to explain the overall vision for residents and businesses and other stakeholders, as well as shaping future decisions and supporting future funding bids for highway management -related projects or initiatives.

However, the strategy does not exist in a vacuum; there are national, sub-regional and local relationships that must be considered. Most importantly, residents, businesses and visitors expect local authorities to work together to achieve the right outcomes for the wider place. This strategy has therefore been prepared with a clear eye on the regional and national context.

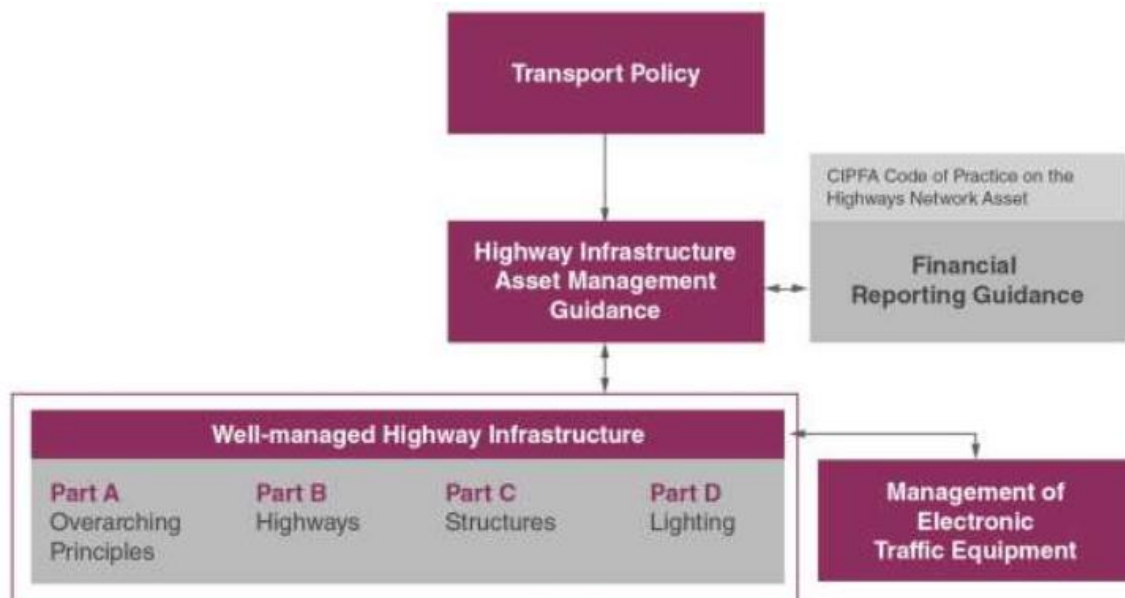
The strategy has been prepared following the adoption of the Transport Strategy and Local Plan.



## 2.2 Governance and Policy Framework

This strategy fits within a complex broader governance and policy structure as set out below

- **National**



The Government sets national transport policy and local authorities have a responsibility to develop and set local transport policies which best meet the area's needs. The HAMP will be guided by the policies and legislation set by the Government and in particular the guidance issued by the DfT such as the Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme and the revised Codes of Practice, Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure.

- **Regional**

The North East Combined Authority (NECA), which comprises North Tyneside along with the six other regional local authorities of Newcastle, Durham, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland, has the role of Local Transport Authority for the region. The NECA is developing a Strategic Transport Plan for the North East (to be subject to consultation in due course), which will replace the existing Local Transport Plans for Tyne and Wear, Durham and Northumberland.

The NECA has adopted a Metro and Local Rail Strategy for the region. Pending the development of a NECA Bus Strategy, the existing strategies for Tyne and Wear, Durham and Northumberland apply.

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership has adopted a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for the region which is based on the aim of "more and better jobs".

- **Local**

Within North Tyneside this strategy links with a range of key strategies and policies (see Annex 1), which are regularly reviewed and relate to specific aspects of transport and highways matters. In particular these are;

- i. Our North Tyneside Plan
- ii. North Tyneside Transport Strategy
- iii. North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- iv. North Tyneside Local Plan

### **2.3 How we will deliver the key objectives of our HAMP:**

The key objectives and deliverables have been discussed and reviewed at our officer and Cabinet Member joint working group. The recommended policy objectives for the HAMP are shown below.

#### **Key Objective 1: Ensuring the Council adheres to its duty of care under the Highway Act 1980**

The Council has a statutory duty to keep the highway network in a safe and serviceable condition. We will do this by

- a. maintaining an appropriate highway inspection procedure. This will take into account national codes of practice such as Well-managed Highway Infrastructure
- b. undertaking regular bridge inspections in line with industry standards
- c. ensuring that highway defects, whether identified by inspectors or reported by the public, are investigated and repaired in accordance with the criteria set out in our repairs policy
- d. regularly review our working practices to ensure we are carrying out our duties effectively and in a professional manner

The detailed policies and procedures which will be used to ensure compliance with our statutory highway maintenance duty are set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

#### **Key Objective 2: Ensuring there is a commitment to highway asset management across all tiers of the Council's organisation**

To attain maximum funding from the Department for Transport's Incentive Fund, the Council is required to demonstrate its commitment to highway asset management. We will do this by

- a. providing informative asset management updates to our elected members and staff via appropriate briefings and newsletters
- b. continuing to provide briefing notes to Cabinet, the Lead Members Board and the Senior Leadership Team to advise on progress and receive valuable feedback

- c. continuing to deliver presentations to keep our elected members and staff informed of relevant changes to working practices and to ensure a consistent approach to highway asset management
- d. continuing to provide briefings to keep the Lead Member informed of progress
- e. continuing to produce the HAMP Annual Information Report to keep our elected members and staff informed of progress, future plans and report on changes being introduced by the Department for Transport

The detailed procedures which will be used to demonstrate the Council's commitment to highway asset management are set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 3: Ensuring that highway asset management work supports the strategic policy direction for North Tyneside, set by the Elected Mayor and Cabinet**

The HAMP recognises the importance of engaging with the Elected Mayor and Cabinet to ensure that highway maintenance activities are aligned with wider corporate objectives. We will do this by

- a. holding regular briefing sessions with the lead Cabinet Member to receive feedback on strategic priorities
- b. acting on feedback received from the Authority's Investment Programme Board to ensure appropriate oversight of capital investment
- c. production of a HAMP Annual Information Report which will provide investment options for consideration by the Elected Mayor and Cabinet

A programme for engagement with the Elected Mayor and Cabinet will be included in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document.

**Key Objective 4: Ensuring the Council actively engages with our elected members, residents, businesses and visitors so that services can be aligned with their priorities and expectations wherever possible**

Engagement is key to the success of the HAMP and to establishing priorities and informing future work programmes. We will continue to do this by

- a. continuing to consult with the Mayor and our elected members via briefings, attendance at meetings and delivering bespoke presentations
- b. deliver the priorities of the Mayor and our elected members for future programmes
- c. developing a programme of footway improvements across the Borough
- d. continuing to conduct the annual Ipsos/Mori residents survey using the feedback to inform the strategic priorities of the HAMP
- e. continuing to carry out bespoke surveys with residents and businesses of North Tyneside to better understand their views on highway maintenance priorities and determine the levels of service
- f. procuring when appropriate the National Highways Transport Public Satisfaction Survey. This survey will enable us to gather feedback on highway specific services and inform our future direction
- g. continuing to keep our residents and road users informed by providing updates / information on our website and via our social media pages, namely Facebook and Twitter

The detailed procedures which will be used to ensure the Council actively engages with its residents are set out in the Communications Strategy. The Communications Strategy is set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and engagement activities undertaken will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 5: Increasing our commitment to improving footways across the borough**

Listening to residents, the Elected Mayor and Cabinet and have given a clear policy steer to improve footways across the borough. We will do this by

- a) increasing our investment in footway improvements whilst being mindful of the impact on the wider highway network
- b) increase the use of preventative treatments to allow more footway works to be undertaken from the resources available
- c) develop a system of prioritisation for footway expenditure to ensure best value is being achieved and the risk is being managed effectively

**Key Objective 6: Ensuring we gather and manage robust and accurate inventory and condition data so we fully understand our assets and invest in ICT to make sure our plans and decisions are right.**

To provide a safe and serviceable highway network the Council requires up to date inventory and condition data to inform our decision-making process. We will do this by

- a. continuing to procure condition surveys of our infrastructure assets, namely our carriageway, footways and bridge inspections
- b. maintaining our investment in our asset management system ExpertAssets
- c. continuing to invest in ICT to enable the capture and analysis of data in the most efficient and effective way to maintain an update asset inventory
- d. carrying out data cleansing to ensure our information is fit for purpose and informative
- e. continuing to develop our inventory of assets by investing in mobile technology to capture an assets location, condition and document works undertaken

The detailed procedures used to ensure the Council provides data to inform its decision-making process are set out in the Information and Data Management Strategy. The strategy is set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and engagement activities undertaken will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 7: Ensuring the principles of effective asset management to our highway network to develop forward works programmes over a number of years and to direct investment on the basis of prevention is better than cure**

To inform future works programmes the Council is required to adopt effective asset management to its highway infrastructure by adopting efficient and effective maintenance activities. We will do this by

- a. developing life cycle plans for the whole life of our infrastructure assets to enable us to carry out preventative maintenance at the right time to avoid costly repairs to our highways
- b. developing works programmes based on condition data to ensure we deliver value for money for our residents and road users

The detailed procedures which will be used to ensure effective asset management are set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 8: Ensuring that all processes and procedures are in place to maximise funding opportunities and to manage risk appropriately and effectively**

It is essential the Council maximise all funding opportunities. We will do this by

- a. carrying out horizon scanning to identify all funding opportunities made available by central government, NEXUS and local planning contributions
- b. completing the annual highway self-assessment questionnaire to secure maximum funding from the Department for Transport's Incentive Fund
- c. consulting with elected members and senior leaders prior to a funding submission to ensure the risk is considered and managed appropriately

The detailed policies and procedures which will be used to maximise funding are set out in the supporting HAMP Framework document and will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 9: Ensuring we manage and monitor performance so that we can continually improve**

To ensure the Council has effective performance monitoring procedures in place to maintain its highway infrastructure efficiently and effectively. We will do this by

- a. carrying out periodic reviews of our works undertaken on the highway to ensure our performance is monitored and maintained
- b. continuing to measure delivery of the highway service to meet the key performance indicators
- c. conducting periodic reviews of our highway service provision and sharing the findings with our staff
- d. adopting a culture of continuous improvement to enable our staff to learn by their experiences and implement better ways of working
- e. completing lessons learnt to inform future changes to policies and procedures

The detailed procedures which will be used to ensure the Council monitors and improves its performance are set out in the Performance Management Strategy. The strategy is set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and our performance will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

**Key Objective 10: Ensuring all aspects of highway maintenance are reported in accordance with the Council's established governance and performance systems**

The Council is required to publish its performance on its website and demonstrate its activities are in accordance with its governance procedures. We will do this by

- a. keeping our staff informed of the Council's established governance and performance systems
- b. adhering to these established systems
- c. reporting progress against the established systems

The detailed policies and procedures which will be used to ensure governance and performance reporting are set out in Part 4 of the HAMP, the supporting framework document, and will be reported each year in the Annual HAMP Information Report.

## **2.4 Context, Considerations and Challenges**

In recent years Government funding allocated to local authorities to manage their highway network has been reducing year on year. In North Tyneside this has meant a reduction in our Local Transport Plan funding from £3.91m in 2010/11 to £3.16m in 2017/18. Despite this the Elected Mayor and Cabinet have managed to maintain a local commitment to improving the network which has made a significant difference.

The Council's funding for maintaining the highway infrastructure assets is from several sources. The day to day and routine maintenance is supported by revenue funding, which comprises funds provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government, from council tax and additional funds raised locally.

Funding to improve highway infrastructure assets comes from the Department for Transport. To encourage local authorities to adopt good asset management practices to better manage their highway infrastructure assets, the Department for Transport introduced changes to the highway maintenance formula funding mechanism. The Incentive Fund was introduced and as a consequence each highway authority, including North Tyneside, are required to complete an annual self-assessment questionnaire.

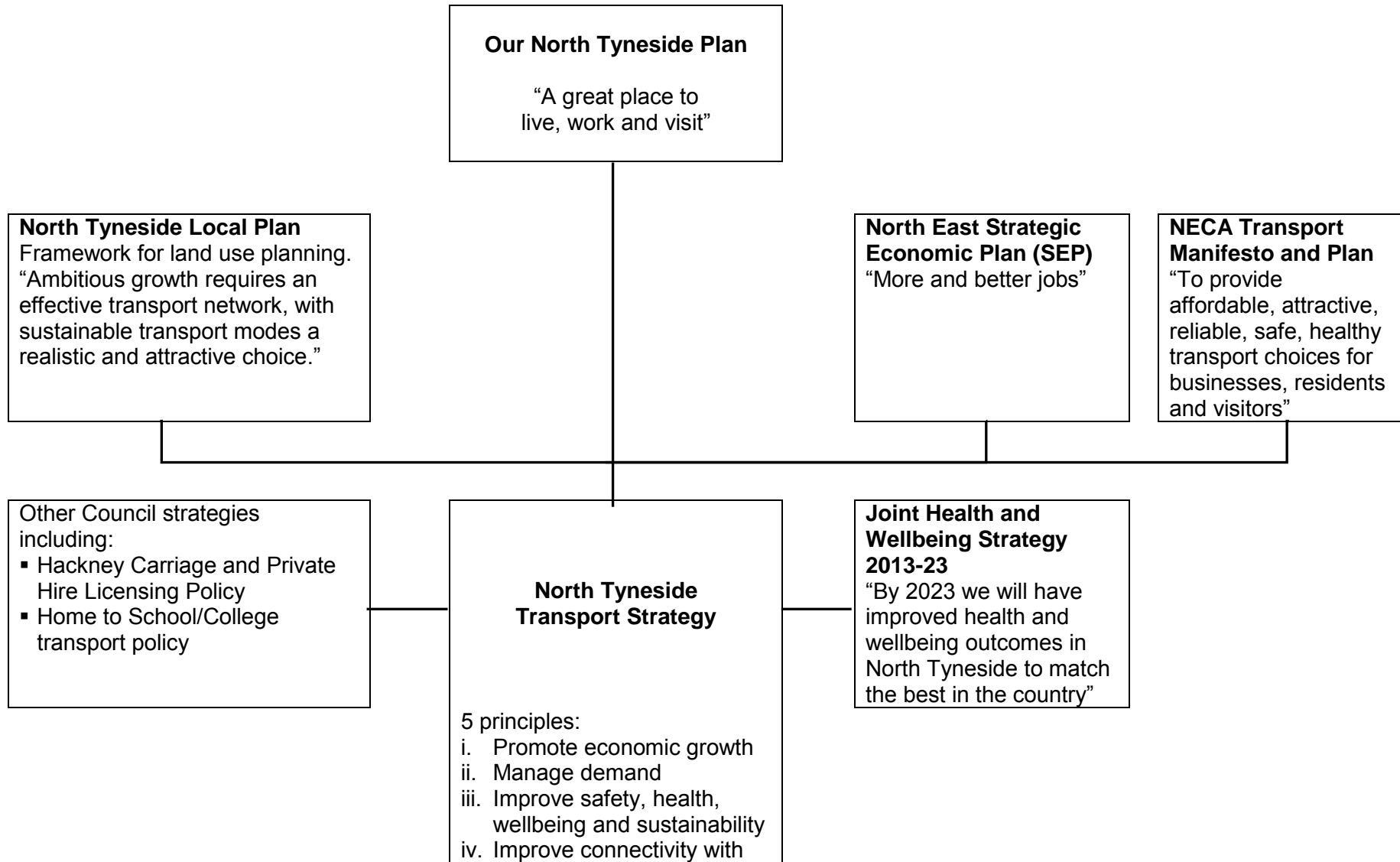
The completion of the annual self-assessment questionnaire requires the Council to score themselves against a set of criteria aimed at assessing performance in relation to asset management, resilience, customer engagement, benchmarking and efficiency and operational delivery. In 2017/18 we scored ourselves as a level 2 authority with an action plan in place to achieve level 3 in forthcoming years.

It is therefore more important than ever that we shape this strategy to secure maximum funding for North Tyneside and develop the strategy in line with the Department for Transport's best practice guidance and adopt the principles of asset management to manage our highway assets.

The challenge for the Council is to adopt and implement asset management practices to manage our highway infrastructure assets and achieve level 3 to ensure maximum funding for the Borough is attained. Our progress to adopt asset management and attain level 3 funding will be documented in the Annual HAMP report.

Should the Council be unable to demonstrate the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the highway self-assessment questionnaire, monies received from the Incentive Fund will reduce on a sliding scale year on year. This would result in a significant reduction in the available monies to carry out improvement works to the highway infrastructure assets within the scope of this document.

**Annex 1  
Highway Asset Management Strategy Context**



other areas  
v. Enable smart choices for all

**LDD12 – Transport and Highways** Supplementary Planning Document that provides direction and guidance for prospective developers on the transport implications of new developments

**Parking Strategy**  
Effective management of parking in the borough including supporting the vitality of our town centres

**Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP)**  
Deliver effective management of the highway infrastructure assets in the most efficient way through the adoption of asset management principles to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

**Cycling Strategy**  
2030 Vision – for North Tyneside to be the North East’s leading cycling borough by 2030  
Encourage everyday cycling and improve the cycling network

**Travel Safety Strategy**  
Improving safety on our transport networks including road safety promotion and casualty reduction

**Network Management Plan**  
Facilitate the efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists on our highway network; improve reliability of journey times; and co-ordinate activities on the highway





# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet 11 September 2017

## ITEM 6(e)

North Tyneside Parking  
Strategy

Portfolio(s): Housing and Transport

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr J Harrison

Report from Service Area: Environment, Housing and Leisure

Responsible Officer: Phil Scott, Head of Environment,  
Housing and Leisure

Tel: (0191) 643 7295

Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Executive Summary:

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 8 May 2017, sets out the Authority's vision for transport in the borough. It seeks to ensure that "North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently." It sets out five principles which are key to achieving this.

The North Tyneside Parking Strategy, attached as Appendix 1, sets out clearly the Authority's approach to managing parking in the borough. Cabinet is invited to adopt the strategy and make appropriate officer delegations related to the management of parking.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. adopt the North Tyneside Parking Strategy, attached as Appendix 1;
- ii. endorse the parking solutions tool and parking investment priorities tool set out in the strategy;
- iii. agree changes to the parking permit scheme as set out in the North Tyneside Parking Strategy;
- iv. agree that the application of the new procedures and associated outcomes be delegated to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport; and
- v. agree that the setting of parking fees and charges be delegated to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Head of Finance, in accordance with the Authority's fees and charges policy framework.

### 1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 17 July 2017.

### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework:

This report is relevant to the following priorities set out in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2016 to 2019:

- Our People will be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Our Places will have an effective transport and physical infrastructure – including our roads, cycleways, pavements, street lighting, drainage and public transport

### 1.5 Information:

#### 1.5.1 Background

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 8 May 2017, sets out the Authority's vision for transport in the borough. It seeks to ensure that ***“North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently.”*** It sets out five principles which are key to achieving this:

- Improve safety, health and well-being outcomes and sustainability;** in relation to people, communities and the environment
- Support economic growth;** through effective movement for people, businesses and goods and to support the regional aim of “more and better jobs”
- Improve connectivity;** with all parts of the borough, the region, the rest of the country and the world
- Enable smart choices for all;** help people, businesses and visitors find out how to get to where they need to
- Manage demand;** on transport networks and assets and address current and future transport challenges.

The design and provision of new car parking relating to new developments brought forward through the planning process has been agreed by Cabinet, as part of Supplementary Planning Document LDD12 – Transport and Highways (approved on 8 May 2017).

In relation to existing car parking, the economy of North Tyneside is growing and the borough continues to be an attractive place to live, work and visit. The borough is served by cycling and walking routes of improving quality and a comprehensive public transport network. The number of vehicles on our road network continues to grow and the use of the private car remains a frequent choice. Many historic areas of North Tyneside were constructed before the era of widespread car ownership, resulting in an every-increasing demand for car parking provision. It is difficult to balance the parking needs of residents, local businesses and visitors against this backdrop. Therefore it is important that the

approach to meeting those needs should be consistent, coherent and based on a set of agreed priorities for parking investment.

### 1.5.2 The current North Tyneside Parking Strategy

The Authority was first designated a Permitted Parking Area and a Special Parking Area on 24 June 2007 which meant that from that date the enforcement of parking restrictions in the borough was dealt with by way of civil enforcement using Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's) rather than through the criminal justice system. In March 2008 the borough became a Civil Enforcement Area under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The current North Tyneside Parking Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in 2012. It sought to "provide a consistent framework which reflects the needs of all stakeholders, residents, businesses and visitors whilst seeking to provide a safe and uncongested network for all modes of transport", however it is now in need of being refreshed.

## 1.6 **The proposed Parking Strategy:**

1.6.1 The North Tyneside Parking Strategy has been developed with reference to a wide evidence base. The following are examples of what information has been taken into account:

- The priorities set out in the Our North Tyneside council plan developed following extensive public consultation including the Big Community Conversations
- Data on usage of car parking facilities
- Specific feedback received from the community through enquiries from Ward Members and the public
- Specific consultation undertaken by the Parking Permit Study Group of Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, work which was requested by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport.

### 1.6.2 Review by Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

In October 2015 the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee set up a sub group to carry out a study into permit parking in North Tyneside. This was in response to a request from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, that Committee review the current permit system and explore opportunities to improve and simplify the permit system across the borough. Members held a series of evidence gathering sessions with officers of the Authority, its technical services delivery partner, Capita, and local residents and business representatives.

Cabinet's response to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee's recommendations was agreed on 12 September 2016. In its response, Cabinet accepted the recommendation of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee that a virtual permit system for the administration of parking permits should be introduced, subject to an appropriate business case. It was noted that capital funding had to be identified to implement this. The Authority's Technical Partner, Capita, has provided this funding to replace the existing Notice Processing system.

The changes in the revised Parking Strategy, outlined below, have been developed with due regard to Cabinet's response to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee's recommendations.

## **1.7 Proposed Parking Strategy Highlights (Appendix 1):**

### **1.7.1 Parking management in North Tyneside**

Parking provision for residents, businesses and visitors in our three main town centres consists of a mixture of Authority-managed and privately managed parking facilities. Suitable provision is made for short, medium and long stay parking depending on the location; town centre off-street car parks operated by the Authority remain free of charge. This approach helps to encourage turnover of parking in the most central areas and support retail vitality.

The Authority is investing heavily in North Tyneside's seafront to make it a vibrant and popular area and continue to encourage a steady turnover of people to come into the area to support tourism, local businesses and keep the local economy buoyant. The Authority operates off-road car parking facilities at locations along the Foreshore. The option of payment by mobile phone is available at all Authority operated car parking facilities with usage continuing to increase, particularly along the coast, and ticket machines which accept card payments only are being more widely introduced.

In order to make it easier to find a parking space on the coast, residents and visitors can use the AppyParking app for a smartphone or tablet, which provides directions and details of the parking tariffs which apply.

A flexible parking initiative has been in operation for some time, which allows drivers to pay for parking at one parking facility along the Foreshore and use this at another parking location along the Foreshore.

The proposed strategy endorses the continuation of this measure.

A flexible permit for parking at the Foreshore is now available for six months or a year, to reflect seasonal demand.

The proposed strategy endorses the continuation of this measure.

Also a flexible day ticket will be introduced for foreshore car parks.

### **1.7.2 Parking permits and proposed changes**

There are currently 40 residents' parking permit zones in the borough, of which 35 are in the three main town centres or in the coastal area. The Authority receives numerous requests for additional residents' parking permit schemes. There are currently 238 individual requests which have been submitted to the Authority and are undergoing consideration.

Within the North Tyneside Parking Strategy at Appendix 1, Annex 2 a new permit parking scheme is set out to manage this demand. A comparison between the details of the existing scheme and proposed new scheme is provided at Appendix 2.

The proposed changes seek to simplify the application process, make the permit scheme clearer, making better use of technology.

It is proposed a charge is to be applied for all future parking permit schemes to cover the management and administrative costs of the scheme.

### **1.7.3 Parking solutions tool**

As previously mentioned, many historic areas of North Tyneside were constructed before the era of widespread car ownership and hence it is often difficult to balance the parking needs of residents, local businesses and visitors. It is therefore important that the approach to meeting those needs should be consistent, coherent and based on a set of agreed priorities for parking investment which is affordable and sustainable. As such, a parking solutions tool is proposed: this is included within the North Tyneside Parking Strategy at Appendix 1, Annex 3.

The parking solutions tool sets out a process to identify the nature and cause of the local parking problem and seeks to address this through engagement with other organisations and partners, with the focus on resolving the situation through this means before any commitment by the Authority to introduce new parking measures is considered.

#### 1.7.4 Parking investment priorities tool

A parking investment priorities tool is also proposed, within the North Tyneside Parking Strategy at Appendix 1, Annex 4. It sets out a transparent and consistent process by which new parking measures will be assessed to either proceed to become an investment priority or not.

### 1.8 **Next steps:**

Subject to adoption of the North Tyneside Parking Strategy, the proposed changes to permit parking will be advertised in accordance with statutory process.

All existing requests for parking measures will then be reviewed in accordance with the associated new processes, using the proposed new parking solutions tool, and, as appropriate, the parking investment priorities tool.

Fees and charges are to be reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, in consultation with the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme of works is approved on an annual basis. All new highways investment priorities, including car parking, will be considered as part of the Authority's Investment Plan through the normal governance processes.

### 1.9 **Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

#### Option 1

Cabinet accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

#### Option 2

Cabinet do not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

### 1.10 **Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended in order to support the effective management of parking in North Tyneside.

### **1.11 Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 North Tyneside Parking Strategy (final draft for approval)
- Appendix 2 Comparison between the details of the existing parking permit scheme and proposed new scheme

### **1.12 Contact officers:**

Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical and Regulatory Services, 0191 643 6620  
Andrew Flynn, Integrated Transport Manager, 0191 643 6083  
Nicholas Bryan, Highway Network Manager, Capita, 0191 643 4808  
Garry Hoyle, Parking Manager, Capita, 0191 643 6599  
John Cram, Integrated Transport Officer, 0191 643 6122  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, 0191 643 7038

### **1.13 Background information:**

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

- (1) North Tyneside Transport Strategy (approved by Cabinet on 8 May 2017)  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p\\_ID=568803&p\\_subjectCategory=41](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=568803&p_subjectCategory=41)
- (2) Tyne and Wear third Local Transport Plan (LTP3)  
<http://www.tyneandwearltp.gov.uk/documents/ltp3/>
- (3) North East Combined Authority (NECA) Transport Manifesto  
<http://www.northeastca.gov.uk/local-transport-plan>
- (4) Cabinet response to Permit Parking – report of Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee (12 September 2016)  
[http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p\\_ID=566444&p\\_subjectCategory=41](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=566444&p_subjectCategory=41)
- (5) Equality Impact Assessment  
[http://october.northtyneside.gov.uk:7778/pls/portal/NTC\\_PSCM.PSCM\\_Web.download?p\\_ID=569743](http://october.northtyneside.gov.uk:7778/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=569743)

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

The existing parking permit scheme can be confusing for the public and is expensive to administer with an increasing number of requests for new permit parking schemes across the borough. It is intended to make greater use of 'virtual' parking permits to make the scheme more effective and to minimise costs.

The replacement of the existing Notice Processing system with a virtual hybrid system is being funded by the Authority's Technical Partner, Capita. The system is compliant with the Authority's existing ICT architecture and resource plan.

It is proposed that the setting of parking fees and charges be delegated to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Head of Finance.

Publication of the policy will be managed within existing resources. It is anticipated that all costs of introducing the new parking strategy, the parking solutions tool and the permit scheme can be contained within current budgets but should any unforeseen financial implications arise these will be brought back to Cabinet as appropriate.

## **2.2 Legal**

The Authority was designated a Permitted Parking Area and Special Parking Area by The Road Traffic (Permitted Parking Area and Special Parking Area) (Metropolitan Borough of North Tyneside) Order 2007 made under the Road Traffic Act 1991, and has been undertaking civil enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions since June 2007.

With the commencement of the relevant Parts of the Traffic Management Act 2004 in March 2008 the borough became a Civil Enforcement Area

The introduction of the parking related sections of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on 31st March 2008 amended the legal framework and widened the scope of local authority parking enforcement.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Authority to manage highways in order to secure the expeditious movement of traffic (including cycling and walking) on its network and on adjacent networks. The management of on and off street parking provision is a key component of ensuring the highway is managed effectively.

The adoption of the Authority's Parking Strategy and the setting of parking fees and charges is a Cabinet function as there is nothing in legislation to suggest that such functions cannot be the responsibility of Cabinet.

If Cabinet agree to the recommendations contained in this report, a further delegated officer decision(s) will need to be taken by the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport and the Head of Finance. Twenty eight days notice on the Forward Plan of the delegated officer decision must be given and a record of the decision taken together with the report to the officer making the decision will need to be produced and published on the Authority's website (unless the matter for decision involves exempt or confidential information in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972).

## **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

The proposed updated Parking Strategy reinforces the Authority's ongoing commitment to managing parking in the interests of residents, businesses and visitors. The strategy has been developed using a wide evidence base, as outlined in paragraph 1.6.1 of the report.

In October 2015 the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee set up a sub group to carry out a study into permit parking in North Tyneside. Members held a series



of evidence gathering sessions with local residents and business representatives as well as officers of the Authority and its technical services delivery partner, Capita. The proposed changes to the Authority's approach to permit parking have been developed with due regard to Cabinet's response to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee's recommendations.

The proposed amendments to the parking permit scheme will require amendment to the relevant Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in accordance with statutory process.

## **2.4 Human rights**

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

## **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

The proposed development of a formal permit parking scheme will have regard to the Authority's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. This noted that the Parking Strategy aims to ensure that it has a positive impact for people with a disability, in that it sets out clear criteria which will contribute to a positive outcome, e.g. for dealing with requests for the provision of disabled parking bays.

## **2.6 Risk management**

There are no risk management issues directly arising from this report.

## **2.7 Crime and disorder**

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

## **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

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

## **PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy

**North Tyneside Council  
Parking Strategy**

**[final draft for approval]**

# **North Tyneside Council**

## **Parking Strategy**

### **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. How we manage car parking – overview**
- 4. Challenges**
- 5. Our aims**
- 6. Monitoring and Review**

**Annex 1 – Policy background**

**Annex 2 – Permit parking scheme**

**Annex 3 – Parking solutions tool**

**Annex 4 – Parking investment tool**

**Annex 5 – Criteria for requests for disabled bays**

**Annex 6 – Criteria for requests for waiting restrictions**

## 1. Introduction

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy sets out the Council's aspirations for transport in the borough. It seeks to ensure that ***“North Tyneside will have a safe, easy to use, healthy, affordable, accessible and integrated travel and transport infrastructure that works for residents, businesses and visitors effectively and efficiently.”*** It sets out five principles which are key to achieving this:

- i. **Improve safety, health and well-being outcomes and sustainability;** in relation to people, communities and the environment
- ii. **Support economic growth;** through effective movement for people, businesses and goods and to support the regional aim of “more and better jobs”
- iii. **Improve connectivity;** with all parts of the borough, the region, the rest of the country and the world
- iv. **Enable smart choices for all;** help people, businesses and visitors find out how to get to where they need to
- v. **Manage demand;** on transport networks and assets and address current and future transport challenges, including enabling parking at the right time, right place and right price.

To support the delivery of the North Tyneside Transport Strategy, the North Tyneside Parking Strategy sets out our approach to managing parking in the borough.

This document is consistent with the North Tyneside Local Plan and the Supplementary Planning Document LDD12 – Transport and Highways, and is written with regard to current and emerging national and strategic guidance and local and regional plans and policies (see Annex 1).

In relation to the design and provision of new car parking relating to developments brought forward through the planning process, our approach is set out in Supplementary Planning Document LDD12 – Transport and Highways.

In relation to existing car parking, it is important to note that over the past 60 years the advances in motor vehicles have transformed our lives, providing social mobility, expanding the distances between where we work and live and increasing the business opportunities for employers and employees alike.

Parking is an intrinsic part of this change. On average, 96% of the lifetime of a car is spent parked (RAC report – Spaced: Perspectives on Parking Policy) and parking management is an ongoing challenge.

Parking forms an integral part of the Council's transport strategy for the borough. It is essential that parking controls are transparent and consistently applied. This will become even more important as the regeneration of the borough brings new challenges and opportunities.

## 2. Background

The borough of North Tyneside is diverse in its nature. It includes historic town and district centres, growing employment destinations, education and retail destinations and visitor attractions.

The economy of North Tyneside is growing and the borough continues to be an attractive place to live, work and visit. The borough is served by cycling and walking routes of improving quality and a comprehensive public transport network including the Metro, for which demand continues to grow. The number of vehicles on our road network continues to grow and the use of the private car remains a frequent choice.

Many historic areas of North Tyneside were constructed before the era of widespread car ownership and therefore it is often difficult to balance the needs of residents, local businesses and visitors.

Parking management and pricing is an important tool for managing demand and can encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport, such as public transport.

The Council is responsible for the enforcement of parking and bus lane restrictions, while enforcement of other matters on the highway, such as obstruction or dangerous parking, is the responsibility of the Police.

This strategy sets out how parking is linked into the Council's long term aims, as identified in the North Tyneside Transport Strategy, and how we will make parking work for our residents, businesses and visitors, to deliver a safe, consistent and transparent parking service. This will support four of the key principles of the Council's

Transport Strategy:

- Improve safety, health and well-being outcomes and sustainability
- Support economic growth
- Enable smart choices for all
- Manage demand

## 3. How we manage car parking – overview

### Town Centres

North Tyneside has four main town centres. Three of these, North Shields, Wallsend and Whitley Bay, are the historic town centres with a wide range of uses such as retail, services and other businesses as well as many residential properties. Killingworth town centre was constructed more recently than the other town centres and is focussed mainly on retail uses and served by large privately owned car parks with no significant on-street parking.

In the three historic town centres, off-street parking is available in both Council-managed and commercial car parks, and a substantial proportion of parking is in on-street bays, often on partially or wholly residential streets.

Surveys suggest that there is sufficient parking provision for residents, shoppers and visitors in three main town centres through the mixture of parking facilities provided.

The Council offers free parking in the off-road parking facilities that it manages, and demand at these sites regularly exceeds availability. Use of the privately managed car parks is generally below full capacity and there is a heavy reliance on the availability of on-street provision, which, in some locations, contributes to traffic congestion in the town centre.

The pricing structure for on-street parking in the commercial core of each town centre is set so as to encourage higher turnover (predominately 'short stay') in these locations to support the vitality of these areas. A different parking tariff applies on streets on the outskirts of the commercial core ('medium stay'), which helps to accommodate drivers who wish to park for longer.

### **Other district centres**

Other district centres within the borough such as Tynemouth, Longbenton, Forest Hall and Monkseaton are served by both on- and off-street parking. Each has its own unique characteristics and these need to be taken into consideration in the process of managing parking.

### **Residential areas**

Many residential properties in the borough have their own off-street parking. On-street parking is available in many residential streets. In some areas which experience specific pressures on parking demand, residential parking permit zones are in place. Streets which are largely residential may also include shops and businesses, whose needs are also considered in the design of parking schemes.

### **Foreshore**

The Council is investing heavily in North Tyneside's seafront to make it a vibrant and popular area, and we want to continue to encourage a steady turnover of people to come into the area to support tourism, our local businesses and keep the economy buoyant. The Foreshore is well served by public transport and cycling and walking routes, however at some locations on certain days the demand for parking exceeds the availability, hence an efficient parking management strategy has to be employed to optimise the available parking space to meet the competing demand.

In order to offer improved flexibility, the Council offers the option of payment by mobile phone at all of its car parking facilities. Pay and display machines which accept card payments only are to be introduced at six car parks during 2017, with a view to extending this technology into other locations in the future if the system proves popular. To more easily find a parking space on the coast, residents and visitors can use the AppyParking app for a smartphone or tablet, which provides directions and details of the parking tariffs which apply.

A flexible parking approach is in place along the Foreshore which means that drivers who pay for parking at one facility can also use the other parking facilities along the Foreshore. A flexible permit for parking at the Foreshore is also available: these permits are not specific to a particular vehicle (hence can be used by any member of a household, club or society) and, to reflect seasonal demand, are available for six months or a year.

## 4. Challenges

In this context, the parking challenges in North Tyneside are as follows:

- **Managing demand**

Challenges include:

- i. making the most efficient use of the existing infrastructure;
- ii. maintaining the infrastructure in good condition;
- iii. balancing the parking needs of residents, businesses and visitors and managing the competing demands for car parking;
- iv. using technology effectively to support journey planning and assist people in managing their parking needs;
- v. promoting more sustainable transport; and
- vi. making our transport networks function more effectively.

- **Businesses**

Challenges include:

- i. making the most effective use of existing parking provision to meet the needs of customers;
- ii. supporting retail vitality;
- iii. the impact of growth and regeneration on demand for parking;
- iv. balancing the needs of users to ensure a quality urban environment;
- v. changes in the operational needs of businesses (including deliveries);
- vi. heavy reliance on on-street parking, which contributes to congestion;
- vii. accessibility for people with limited mobility.

- **Visitors**

Challenges include:

- i. providing visitors with appropriate information to enable them to make an informed choice on parking locations;
- ii. understanding the parking patterns of existing users;
- iii. understanding the parking needs of visitors to the area;
- iv. continuing to provide effective flexible parking payment options;
- v. accessibility for people with limited mobility.

- **Residents**

Challenges include:

- i. making the most effective use of existing parking provision to meet the needs of residents;
- ii. safety around schools;
- iii. obstruction associated with pavement parking;
- iv. issues associated with increased car ownership per household;
- v. accessibility for people with limited mobility.

Our parking management arrangements have been successful in balancing the competing demands of different users and we intend to build on this success. However, new challenges require us to update our procedures: these are set out below.

## 5. Our aims

Our work programme and future activity will be judged against the following principles and the success of our aims, which are outlined below. Our delivery and action plan is consistent with the activity outlined in the North Tyneside Transport Strategy.

- **Improve safety, health, wellbeing and environmental sustainability;**

We will seek to:

1. Encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport
2. Address safety issues around schools
3. Consider the safety of travellers across our network
4. Improve environmental sustainability and local air quality and support greater use of low emission vehicles
5. Working with partners, seek to reduce pavement parking.

To achieve this we will:

- i. Give priority to more sustainable transport in scheme design, e.g. bus lanes and cycling provision
- ii. Continue to develop parking initiatives with respect to safety around schools
- iii. Develop a Travel Safety Strategy
- iv. Provide chargepoints for electric vehicles in our car parks
- v. Ensure that suitable enforcement action is carried out to address inappropriate car parking

- **Support economic growth;**

We will seek to:

1. Make it easy to use cashless parking options
2. Improve consistency between the three main town centres, e.g. operational hours of parking tariffs
3. Support the travel needs of tourists and visitors to the borough
4. Support the movement of freight and deliveries

To achieve this we will:

- i. Continue to develop and introduce cashless parking options where appropriate
- ii. Develop parking initiatives which improve consistency between the three main town centres
- iii. Consider seasonal variations to parking arrangements to support the vitality of town centres in accordance with the Mayor's priorities.
- iv. Provide facilities for loading and deliveries as part of schemes



- v. Continue the flexible parking approach on the Foreshore
- vi. Introduce a day ticket for car parks on the coastline
- vii. Review charges on an annual basis

- **Enable smart choices for all;**

We will seek to:

1. Enable residents and visitors to make a more informed choice regarding their parking destination
2. Continue to support the use of smart technology for information and payments.

To achieve this we will:

- i. Provide improved information that supports an informed choice
- ii. Update our parking apps and technological systems when required to provide an effective service

- **Manage transport demand;**

We will seek to:

1. Have an effective parking permit scheme in place
2. Encourage and address increased demand to cycle and walk
3. Improve bus priority and support an integrated public transport network
4. Support a change in culture which prompts people to adapt their travel behaviour to use more sustainable forms of transport other than car travel
5. Manage future demand through integration between transport and land use planning strategies
6. Manage our transport network effectively, considering all forms of travel including public transport, cycling, walking, horse riding, motorcycling, hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

To achieve this we will:

- i. Implement the new parking permit scheme
- ii. Take a fair and consistent approach to all requests for changes to our parking schemes.
- iii. Improve the street network, prioritising cycling and walking
- iv. Work with partners on matters such as bus lane enforcement
- v. Facilitate dedicated provision for 'car clubs', electric vehicles etc.
- vi. Review charges on an annual basis.

## 6. **Considering requests for waiting restrictions, parking permit schemes and disabled bays**

The Council receives numerous requests for parking measures, which generally can be categorised as one of the following types of measure:

- i. permit parking schemes (new schemes or alterations to an existing scheme);

- ii. new waiting restrictions, or amendments to existing waiting restrictions; or
- iii. disabled bays (advisory or mandatory).

It is important that the approach to assessing these requests should be consistent, coherent and based on a set of agreed priorities for parking investment which is affordable and sustainable.

For requests relating to waiting restrictions or parking permits, a parking solutions tool and parking investment priorities tool are used.

The parking solutions tool (see Annex 3) sets out a process to identify the nature and cause of the parking problem and seek to address this through engagement with other organisations and partners, with the focus on resolving the situation through this means before any commitment by the Authority to new parking measures is considered.

The parking investment priorities tool (see Annex 4) provides a consistent means by which new parking measures can then be assessed and either proceeded with or rejected.

When new parking measures are processed, specific assessment criteria will be used to evaluate requests for each of the categories above:

#### Permit parking schemes

When processing a request for a permit parking scheme, we will assess this against specific criteria, set out in Annex 2, to determine whether it is implemented. The various different types of parking permit available are also described in Annex 2.

A charge will be applied for parking permits to cover the management and administrative costs of the scheme.

#### New waiting restrictions or amendments to existing waiting restrictions

When requests for new waiting restrictions are proceeded with, they are assessed against the criteria set out in Annex 6.

#### Disabled bays

The criteria which will be used in assessing requests for disabled bays are set out in Annex 5.

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

### **Review of the strategy**

The Parking Strategy will be reviewed periodically and details reported to Cabinet for consideration as appropriate.

## **Annual Report**

The Road Traffic Act 1991 introduced the concept of local authorities undertaking enforcement of parking management schemes. This system was called Decriminalised Parking Enforcement. North Tyneside Council was designated a Decriminalised Parking Authority by Order made under the Road Traffic Act 1991, and has been undertaking civil enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions since June 2007.

The subsequent introduction of the parking related sections of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on 31st March 2008 changed the legal framework. It widened the scope of local authority parking enforcement and harmonised many of the regulations applicable to authorities inside London with those pertaining to authorities outside the Capital. Decriminalised Parking Enforcement became Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) and under this new legislation, reporting was identified as an important part of accountability. The transparency given by regular and consistent reporting is considered important in helping the public understand and accept CPE.

We will therefore produce an annual report on the operation of our parking and bus lane enforcement activities each financial year, which will be published on the Council website.

## **Annex 1 – Policy background**

### **Plans and Policies which support the delivery of the North Tyneside Transport Strategy and North Tyneside Parking Strategy**

#### **Regional transport strategies**

Tyne and Wear third Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

NECA Transport Manifesto (a concise statement of NECA's transport policy)

NECA Transport Plan for the North East (in preparation and to be subject to public consultation, this is in due course to replace the Local Transport Plans for Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear)

#### **North Tyneside strategies and sub-documents**

LDD12 – Transport and Highways

- This document provides direction and guidance for prospective developers on the transport implications of new developments.

- Engineering adoptable specification for developments
  - Sets out the standards which streets and roads constructed by developers should meet in order for the Authority to consider their adoption.

Cycling Strategy

- This sets out how the Authority will encourage everyday cycling and improve the cycling network, in line with our 2030 Vision, for North Tyneside to be the North East's leading cycling borough by 2030.

- Cycling Design Guidance
  - Sets out the design standards which street and road infrastructure schemes are expected to meet in order to support and facilitate cycling.
- Local Cycling Implementation Plan
  - Sets out details and timescales for a range of measures to cater for, support and encourage cycling in the borough.

Travel Safety Strategy

- This sets out how the Authority will support safety on our transport networks, including road safety promotion and casualty reduction

- Speed Management Policy and review of traffic management safety policies
  - Sets out the Authority's approach to speed management and safety-related traffic management.

Network Management Plan

- This sets out how the Authority will facilitate the efficient movement of traffic (including cycling and walking) on our highway network, improve reliability of journey times, and co-ordinate activities on the highway.

- Review of Signage Policy
  - Sets out the Authority's procedures in relation to signage.
- Objects on the Highway scheme
  - Sets out the Authority's procedures in relation to objects placed on the highway.
- Rights of Way Definitive Map programme of missing routes (statutory requirement, ongoing until 2026 legal deadline)
  - Sets out the Authority's approach to meeting statutory requirements to ensure that public rights of way are recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement.

## Annex 2 – Permit parking scheme

### Scheme assessment criteria

Criterion	Level
1. Amount of on-street parking available	At least 85% of parking space occupied for at least 3 hours per day
2. Amount of on-street parking used by non-residents	At least 30% of parked vehicles estimated to be non-residents
3. Amount of alternative off-street parking available to householders	More than 50% of houses on the street to be without off-street parking
4. Only shared used restrictions to be implemented in areas that have commercial demand	
5. Hours of restriction to be appropriate to the parking problem identified.	
6. Level of resident support for scheme	At least 51% of households in the street to respond in favour

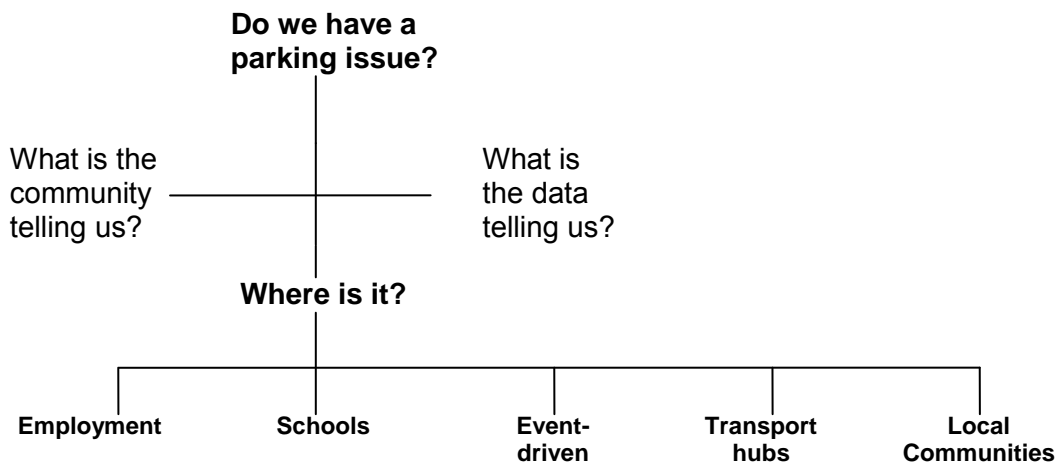
### Permit classification and eligibility

Permit Classification	Eligibility	Restriction on number	Permit Type
Resident Permit	<p>The application must satisfy the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The applicant resides at a household which has a postal address within the defined boundary of the permit parking zone at the time that the zone is created;</li> <li>2. <b>Either</b> the applicant is the registered keeper of the vehicle and the vehicle is registered at the address named on the application form (these permits will be specific to the vehicle listed on the application form and the permit parking zone) <b>Or</b> the applicant can provide written confirmation from their employer that they regularly use vehicles belonging to the company with which they are employed (these permits will be transferrable between vehicles but will be specific to the permit parking zone where the applicant resides);</li> <li>3. The primary or dominant purpose of the property is residential and not commercial or business use; and</li> <li>4. The number of permits may be restricted to one per household if the property/development has dedicated private parking, other than a driveway.</li> </ol>	3 per household	Virtual

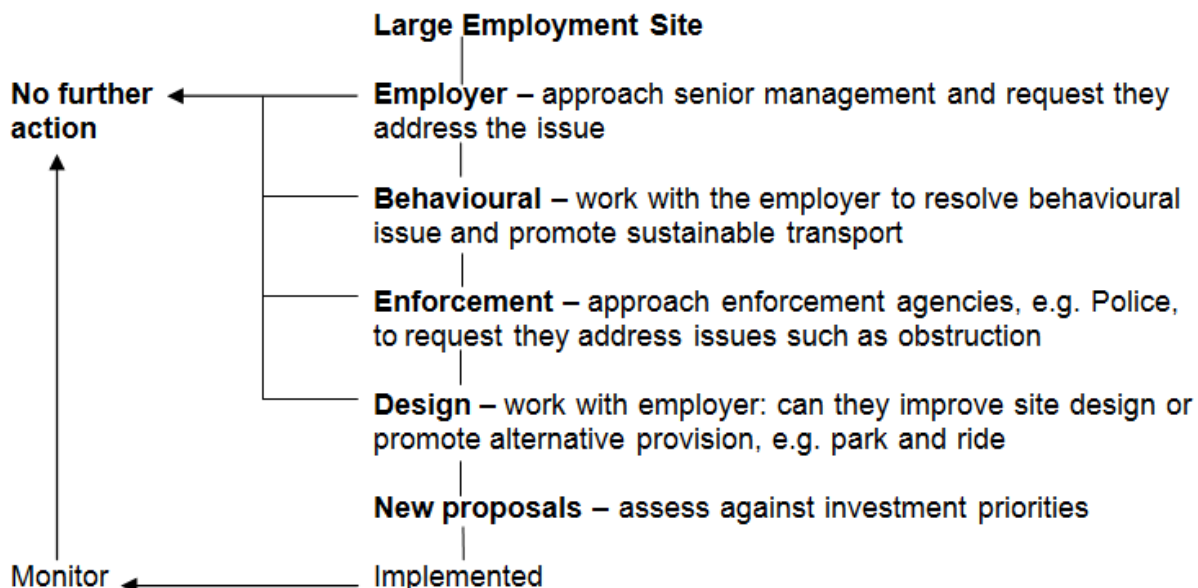
Visitor Voucher	The household must have a postal address within the defined boundary of a permit parking zone at the time that the zone is created. The vouchers are specific to the zone in which the property is located.	50 per household per year (each voucher provides a maximum 3 hour period)	Virtual
Visitor Permit	The household must have a postal address within the defined boundary of a permit parking zone at the time that the zone is created. The permit is specific to the zone in which the property is located.	1 per household	Paper (transferrable)
Business Permit	The business must be operating within a permit parking zone and have an operational need for the vehicle. The permit is specific to the area where the property is located.	2 per business; for essential operational vehicles only	Paper (transferrable)
Care Home Resident	The Care Home must have a postal address within the defined boundary of a permit parking zone at the time that the zone is created. The vouchers are specific to the zone in which the property is located.	1 per flat	Paper (transferrable)
Community Worker's Permit	Organisations that provide emergency or urgent health or social care cover to patients in the community and who are required to undertake 'on-call' duties may apply for a permit to use whilst they are visiting patients.	1 per applicant	Paper (with clock; non-transferrable)
Tradesmen Voucher	Individuals undertaking works to a property within the boundaries of a permit parking scheme. The vouchers are specific to the zone in which the property is located.	Up to 10 vouchers valid for 3 hours each. Further vouchers at the Council's discretion.	Virtual
Landlord Voucher	Individuals who own but do not reside at a property within the permit parking zone. The vouchers are specific to the zone in which the property is located.	Up to 10 vouchers valid for 3 hours each. Further vouchers at the Council's discretion.	Virtual
Bed & Breakfast / Hotel Voucher	The applicant must be the Manager/Owner of a property that is registered to operate as a bed & breakfast / hotel establishment and be located within a permit parking zone. The vouchers are specific to the zone in which the property is located.	Justification will be sought from the applicant if high numbers of vouchers are requested.	Virtual

## Annex 3 – Parking solutions tool

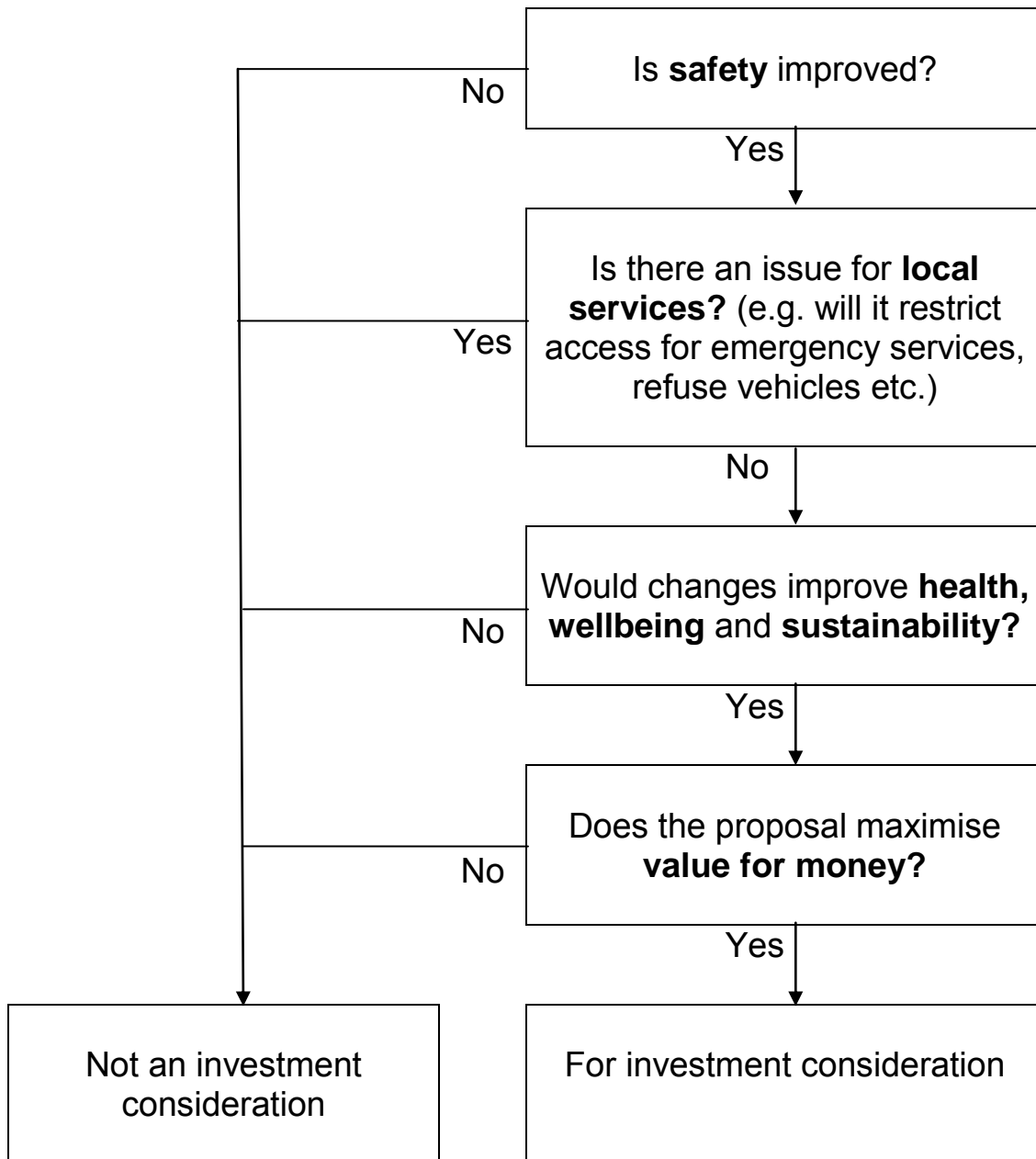
### Initial assessment



### Example of process – large employment site



## Annex 4 – Parking investment tool





## **Annex 5 – Criteria for requests for disabled bays**

The guidelines that North Tyneside Council work to are that:

- The applicant must have a vehicle.
- The applicant must be in possession of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Government's Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance: mobility must be dependent on having a vehicle directly outside their property.
- The applicant has no off-street parking available or the possibility of providing it.
- Surveys confirm that demand for parking adjacent to the property is high for the majority of the day.

If these conditions are met, North Tyneside Council will normally be able to provide a marked bay provided there are no unresolved concerns from consultees or road safety issues.

It will not be possible to provide a marked bay where:

- Surveys demonstrate that there is not a significant demand for parking adjacent to the property throughout the day;
- Affected residents formally object;
- There are other legal restrictions on parking such as yellow lines;
- The marking may adversely affect road safety in the area;
- The land on which the marked bay is required is not the responsibility of North Tyneside Council.

## **Annex 6 – Criteria for requests for waiting restrictions**

New requests are assessed against set criteria and the nature of the issue is diagnosed. The criteria for assessment are detailed below:

- i. Road safety (number of recorded collisions)
- ii. Impact on local services (emergency services, refuse vehicles etc.) or public transport
- iii. Proximity to major employment site (e.g. business parks, industrial estates, shopping centres etc) or public transport station
- iv. Proximity to school
- v. Road classification (A, B or unclassified)
- vi. Number of requests relating to same location / level of support
- vii. Number of residents impacted
- viii. Duration of parking problem
- ix. Frequency of occurrence

**Comparison between the details of the existing parking permit scheme and proposed new scheme**

<b>Permit Classification</b>	<b>Restriction on number</b>	<b>Permit Type</b>	<b>Change made (2017/18)</b>
Resident Permit	None	Paper	Virtual Permit Max. of 3 per household
Visitor Voucher	None	Paper (transferrable)	Virtual Permit Max. of 50 per household per year (each voucher provides a max 3 hour period)
Visitor Permit	1 per household	Paper (transferrable)	No change
Business Permit	None	Paper (transferrable)	Paper Permit Max. of 2 per business
Church and Community Centre Permit	1 per property	Paper (transferrable)	Permit type discontinued
Care Home Resident Permit	1 per unit	Paper (transferrable)	No change
Community Worker's Permit	1 per applicant	Paper (with clock; non-transferrable)	No change
Tradesmen Voucher	None	Paper (transferrable)	Virtual Permit Up to 10 vouchers valid for 3 hours each (further vouchers at the Council's discretion).
Landlord Voucher	None	Paper (transferrable)	Virtual Permit Up to 10 vouchers valid for 3 hours each (further vouchers at the Council's discretion).
Bed & Breakfast / Hotel Voucher	None	Paper (transferrable)	Virtual Permit Justification will be sought from the applicant if high numbers of vouchers are requested.

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet

**Date: 11 September 2017**

## ITEM 6(f)

Title: Healthwatch North  
Tyneside Procurement  
Exercise

**Portfolio(s):** Adult Social Care, Public  
Health and Wellbeing

**Cabinet Member(s):** Councillor Margaret  
Hall

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**Report from Service**

**Area:** Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

**Responsible Officer:** Jacqui Old (Tel: (0191) 643 7317)  
Head of Health, Education, Care and  
Safeguarding.

**Wards affected:** All

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## PART 1

### 1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of the report is to provide information for Cabinet on the proposed procurement exercise to commission an organisation to deliver the functions of Healthwatch in North Tyneside.

This report seeks Cabinet approval to carry out a procurement exercise in accordance with the Authority's Standing Orders, for the procurement of a suitable organisation to deliver Healthwatch North Tyneside. In accordance with Contract Standing Order 8 (4), this report requests approval to proceed with a procurement exercise as the estimated potential contract value may exceed £500,000.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) Note the information contained within this report regarding the Authority's responsibility to commission an organisation to deliver the functions of Healthwatch North Tyneside; and
- (2) Authorise the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Wellbeing, the Head of Law and Governance and the Head of Finance to:
  - (i) undertake a competitive procurement exercise and appoint a provider to deliver a local Healthwatch in North Tyneside; and
  - (ii) award a contract to the successful tenderer on contractual terms approved by the Head of Law and Governance.

### **1.3 Forward Plan:**

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 14 August 2017.

### **1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework**

This report relates to the following priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan:

Our people will:

- Be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, wellbeing and independence
- Be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable

### **1.5 Information:**

#### **1.5.1 Background**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced a statutory requirement for local authorities to establish a local Healthwatch in its area. As a 'consumer champion', the core business of local Healthwatch is to be an independent consumer voice ensuring that the views of children, young people and adults influence improvements in health and social care.

The vision for a local Healthwatch was that it could only deliver on its statutory requirements if the organisation was seen as credible and professional, able to build highly effective and constructive relationships with commissioners, providers, service users, patients and wider partners including Healthwatch England.

Local Healthwatch organisations are not themselves statutory bodies. There is a requirement however that the organisation which delivers the local Healthwatch functions must be a 'body corporate' (it has a legal personality distinct from that of its members) and is a social enterprise. In addition, the Health and Social Care Act 2012, requires that a local Healthwatch be an independent body in its own right.

The tender for the current delivery of Healthwatch North Tyneside was published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012. Carers Federation was identified as the preferred provider to establish an independent organisation that would become the local Healthwatch for the Borough of North Tyneside, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

Healthwatch North Tyneside (HWNT) was established and registered as an independent charity in 2014. The charity is led by a board of trustees, supported by a staff team and a group of volunteers (charity no 1160753). As provided for in the tender in October 2012 and to satisfy the independence requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the contract for the delivery of the Borough's local Healthwatch was novated from Carers Federation to independent HWNT, in April 2015.

HWNT has been operating successfully since the contract was novated to it and has built up strong relationships with the health and social care, community and voluntary sector in North Tyneside. The contract will expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### 1.5.2 Functions of Healthwatch

Whilst funded by the Authority, HWNT is required to be an independent organisation. As such, the Authority cannot prescribe the work to be undertaken by HWNT or how it will deliver that work, outside of compliance with legal requirements.

There is however a number of statutory activities that HWNT is expected to deliver under its contractual arrangement with the Authority. These are:

1. Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services.
2. Enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved.
3. Obtaining the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly, to make these views known.
4. Making reports and recommendations to commissioners and providers of care services, about how local care services could or ought to be improved and sharing this information with Healthwatch England.
5. Providing advice and information about access to local care and support services so choices can be made.
6. Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to conduct special reviews or investigations (or, where the circumstances justify doing so, making such recommendations direct to CQC); and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
7. Providing Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively.

### 1.5.3 Additional responsibilities of a Local Healthwatch Service

The local Healthwatch service:

- (a) is required to have a seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Board, to ensure that the views and experiences of patients, carers and other service users are taken into account. This will ensure that local Healthwatch has a role in promoting public health, health improvements and in tackling health inequalities;
- (b) may involve persons or organisations (other than the Authority) to help carry out some (but not all) of its activities. It may choose to subcontract the delivery of particular activities, for example the advice and information activity;
- (c) may ask providers for information which they must make available. For public bodies, Healthwatch must rely on good relationships or use the Freedom of Information Act to get information; and

- (d) has additional reporting power to enable it to refer matters relating to social care services to the overview and scrutiny committee of the Authority. The committee must then have regard to any relevant information that is sent to them.

Local authorities are given a number of duties in relation to monitoring and reporting on the work of its local Healthwatch. The Secretary of State has powers to regulate the contractual relationships between local authorities, local Healthwatch organisations and local Healthwatch contractors.

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Secretary of State can make regulations to require commissioners and providers of health or social care services to respond to requests for information or reports or recommendations of a local Healthwatch organisation and to allow members of local Healthwatch entry to premises. The Secretary of State can also regulate for local authority overview and scrutiny committees to acknowledge referrals to them from local Healthwatch. Service-providers, such as local authorities and NHS bodies are under a duty to respond to local Healthwatch recommendations. Commissioners and providers are also required to have regard to the reports and recommendations and will have to be able to justify their decision if they do not intend to follow through on them.

Local Healthwatch organisations are required to produce an annual report on their activities and finance and have regard to any guidance from the Secretary of State in preparing these reports.

The intellectual property for the Healthwatch branding is owned by Healthwatch England. North Tyneside Council use the branding under licence, and, in turn, permit the current provider to use it under licence. Any new provider will be able to use the branding of Healthwatch and Healthwatch North Tyneside in the same manner.

#### 1.5.4 Procurement Exercise

Subject to Cabinet approval, it is anticipated that a procurement exercise will commence in October 2017 and the new contract for the delivery of Healthwatch North Tyneside will be awarded in early January 2018. This will allow for a 3 month transition period to the new provider for the delivery of the functions of Healthwatch North Tyneside from 1 April 2018.

The proposed contract will be for a period of two years with the option to extend for up to three further years (3 x 1 year extensions). The reasons for the requirement for this length of contract include:

- It is an ongoing statutory requirement that the Authority commissions a local Healthwatch; legislation is unlikely to change within the next two years;
- Should the contract be awarded to an organisation new to North Tyneside, it could take up to a year to establish itself; and
- Yearly contract extensions provide the opportunity for the successful organisation to offer some security and stability to the staff team, and a stable presence within the borough; however the Authority will retain control to end the contract should legislation change significantly.

As the Authority continues its work to find more efficient, cost effective and flexible ways of delivering services, one of the main aims of the procurement process will be to seek bids detailing more innovative ways to deliver the local Healthwatch which, whilst

meeting the statutory outcomes and driving up standards of delivery, will see savings on costs such as overheads.

The contract will be awarded on a price/quality of 70/30.

## **1.6 Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

### Option 1

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

### Option 2

Cabinet may decide not to approve the recommendations at paragraph 1.2 of this report and ask officers to explore other options for the delivery of the Borough's local Healthwatch.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

## **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reason:

A local Healthwatch is a statutory requirement. The current contract for the delivery of Healthwatch North Tyneside will terminate on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. If approved, the Authority will be in a position to commence a procurement exercise to appoint a replacement provider when the current contract comes to an end, and allow for a transition period.

If the preferred option is not approved, the Authority will be unable to undertake the proposed procurement exercise and will be unable to meet its statutory obligations to ensure the provision of a local Healthwatch service in North Tyneside.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

None.

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Scott Woodhouse, Strategic Commissioning Manager, Adults, tel. (0191) 643 7082  
Susan Meins, Commissioning Manager, tel; (0191) 643 7940  
Lynne Allen, Category Manager, Engie, tel: (0191) 643 5661  
Emma Simson, Legal Services, tel: (0191) 643 5375  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, Corporate Finance, tel; (0191) 643 7038



## **1.10 Background information:**

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

- (1) [Regulation 40, The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities \(Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch\) Regulations 2012.](#)
- (2) [A guide to the legislation affecting local healthwatch - Healthwatch England 2014.](#)

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

Local authorities have a duty under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) to ensure that an effective local Healthwatch is operating in their area, delivering the activities set out in the legislation. The Local Reform and Community Voices grant provides one element of the non-ring fenced funding provided for local Healthwatch, with the larger proportion having been rolled into the local government settlement in 2011/12.

As discussed in 1.5.4 above, the Authority will want to see a reduction in the current budget for the local Healthwatch during the forthcoming procurement exercise. It is acknowledged that the same statutory outcomes are expected of the organisation, and as such, more innovative and cost effective ways of delivery will be sought during the procurement process to enable the Authority to make these savings.

### **2.2 Legal**

The procurement of a provider to deliver HWNT under a contract with the Authority will be a contract for services and as such will be governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR). The Authority will therefore carry out an open procurement exercise through the North East Procurement Organisation portal to determine the most suitable provider for this service. In doing so, the Authority will comply with the PCR 2015.

The nature of this service fits within the definition of health, education and social services as defined by the PCR 2015, which means the Authority will be able to apply the 'Light Touch Regime' to this procurement. This regime gives the Authority a greater degree of flexibility in the procurement process (including over the time periods for the procurement) provided that the Authority complies with the European Commissions overarching principles of fairness and transparency.

If Cabinet agree to the recommendations contained in this report, a further delegated officer decision will need to be taken by the Head of Health Education Care and Safeguarding in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance and the Head of Finance. Twenty eight days notice on the Forward Plan of the delegated officer decision must be given and a record of the decision taken together with the report to the officer making the decision will need to be produced and published on the Authority's website (unless the matter for decision involves exempt or confidential information in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972).

## 2.3 Consultation/community engagement

### 2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Consultation has been conducted with the Adult Social Care Senior Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Wellbeing to agree the procurement proposal. The Assistant Director Strategy and Transformation is part of the working party to develop the specification for the service.

### 2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

The views of senior staff within North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust are being gathered and will inform the specification for the service.

## 2.4 Human rights

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

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

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

## 2.6 Risk management

Any risks identified can be managed within the organisation's risk management processes.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 11 September 2017

## ITEM 6(g)

Action Plan resulting from  
the Ofsted Inspection of  
Children's Services

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area: Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

Responsible Officer: Jacqui Old, Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Tel 0191 643 7317

Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Executive Summary:

Between 27 February 2017 and 23 March 2017 North Tyneside Council's services for children were inspected by Ofsted as part of their national inspection programme. Ofsted published their findings by way of Report on 13 June 2017. Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of children's services in North Tyneside to be 'Good', placing the Authority within the top ten performing Children's Services within the country.

Ofsted made seven formal recommendations to the Authority about areas for development. All areas were known to the Cabinet Members and Officers and improvement work was on-going at the point of inspection. The Authority is required to provide an 'Action Plan' relating to the recommendations for approval by the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, no later than 20 September 2017.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

Note and approve the proposed Action Plan to address the recommendations of the Ofsted Inspection of North Tyneside's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

#### 1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this Report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 14 August 2017.

#### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The Our North Tyneside Plan states that 'Our people will':

- Be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Be ready for school – giving our children and their families the best start in life
- Be ready for work and life – with the skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, economic independence and meet the needs of local businesses
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, wellbeing and independence
- Be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable

The Ofsted Inspection of the Authority's services for children confirmed the quality and performance of Children's Services contribution to these priorities. The Inspection highlighted seven areas for development to improve services further. This Report and appended Action Plan details how the Authority will deliver these improvements.

## 1.5 Information:

### Background to the Inspection

Between 27 February 2017 and 23 March 2017 North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers were inspected by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) as part of their national inspection programme.

The inspection took place over a four week period. The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Ofsted and three additional inspectors. The inspection team were onsite for fifteen working days and read case files, observed staff working with children and families and other professionals and discussed with staff and safeguarding partners the help and care given to children and young people. They also talked directly to children, young people and their families.

The Inspection focused on the overall effectiveness of services based upon judgments about:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection;
- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence;
- adoption performance;
- the experiences and progress of care leavers; and
- leadership, management and governance.

### Outcome of Inspection

Ofsted published their findings by way of Report on 13 June 2017. Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of children's services in North Tyneside to be 'Good'. Ofsted define this grading as being achieved when inspectors find work of good quality, with some outstanding elements and which is delivering measurably improved outcomes. This overall judgment was based on the following findings:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection were judged to be 'Good';
- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence were judged to be 'Good';
- adoption performance was judged to be 'Good'; and
- leadership, management and governance was judged to be 'Good'.

Ofsted judged the experiences and progress of care leavers in North Tyneside to be 'Outstanding'. Ofsted define this grading as being achieved when inspectors find work of the highest quality which is delivering improved outcomes that exceed expectations.

Alongside these very positive findings, Ofsted formally identified seven recommended areas for development. All areas were known to Officers and improvement work was on-going at the point of inspection. The recommendations were:

1. Ensure that assessments are regularly updated to reflect the changing needs of children and that they fully consider children's identities, contingencies and research.
2. Ensure that support to children who are privately fostered is timely, managed well and effectively meets the needs of children.
3. Improve the timeliness with which designated officers complete investigations.
4. Improve the oversight of IRO's (Independent Review Officers) of the progress of plans between child protection conferences and between children looked after reviews, and evidence this on the child's records.
5. Ensure that life story work and later life letters are of consistently good quality and completed in a timely way to ensure that children and their adopters have a clear understanding of a child's history in preparation for placement and for later life understanding.
6. Ensure that supervision for all staff is consistently of good quality because it is reflective, directive, regular and well recorded.
7. Ensure that actions identified as a result of audits are specific and measurable and have timescales.

The Authority is required to submit copies of the Authority's Action Plan to address these recommendations to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector no later than 20 September 2017.

#### **1.6 Decision options:**

The following options are available for consideration by Cabinet

##### Option 1

Cabinet accepts the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

##### Option 2

Cabinet does not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above and requests that Officers revise and amend the proposed Action Plan.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

#### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The Action Plan will enable the delivery of the seven formal recommendations by Ofsted following their inspection of the Authority's services for children. The Action Plan is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-limited and will improve services for vulnerable children and young people within the Borough.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

- i. Ofsted Report on the Inspection of North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board published 13 June 2017
- ii. North Tyneside Council Post-Inspection Action Plan

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Jacqui Old, Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (0191) 643 7317  
Nik Flavell, Senior Manager for Quality Assurance, Children, Young People and Learning (0191) 643 7219  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, Finance (0191) 643 7038

## **1.10 Background Information**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author. This report is appended and is also available electronically at:

- [Ofsted Report - Inspection of Children's Services](#).

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

There are no financial implications as a result of implementing the proposed Action Plan. The Action Plan will be delivered from within the existing resources allocated to Children, Young People and Learners.

### **2.2 Legal**

The inspection of North Tyneside Council by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The Authority is required to submit copies of the post inspection action plan to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector no later than 20 September 2017 (The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007).

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

The Action Plan has been produced following consultation with key stakeholders.

## 2.4 Human rights

There are no direct human rights issues arising from this Report and appended Action Plan.

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct issues of equality and diversity arising from this Report and appended Action Plan.

## 2.6 Risk management

The Ofsted Inspection of North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers focused on the management of risk to children and young people. The Report identified seven areas for development. It is a requirement that the Authority produce an Action Plan for agreement by Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. The Plan will need to be delivered to improve services for vulnerable children and young people within the Borough.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy

# North Tyneside

## Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

## Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board<sup>1</sup>

Inspection date: 27 February to 23 March 2017

Report published: 13 June 2017

<b>Children's services in North Tyneside are good</b>	
<b>1. Children who need help and protection</b>	Good
<b>2. Children looked after and achieving permanence</b>	Good
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Outstanding
<b>3. Leadership, management and governance</b>	Good

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<sup>1</sup> Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.



## Executive summary

Services for children in North Tyneside are good. In the vast majority of cases seen by inspectors, children have benefited from high-quality social work and well-coordinated partnership working, and this has demonstrably improved their lives. There is an excellent focus on seeking the views of children to shape services and to ensure that individual targeted services meet their needs.

Strong political and senior manager leadership ensures that improving outcomes for children and young people is at the heart of North Tyneside Council. This shapes its strategic priorities and effectively influences partners in sharing their ambition and commitment to improve children's lives. Engagement and participation are a particular strength and children are not only heard, but their views are shaping and driving service improvement. Good workforce development, commissioning of services and performance monitoring contribute to delivering effective services and solid social work practice. However, actions identified from thematic and casework audits are not always specific and measurable or have timescales. At the last Ofsted inspection in 2012, safeguarding and services for children looked after were judged to be good. The quality of those services has continued to be developed and improved, and inspectors saw evidence of robust social work practice that is improving the lives of children in North Tyneside.

There is a broad and developing early help offer, which is of good quality and supports families, preventing children from needing to be referred to children's services. Significant harm is identified and responded to well. Assessments are timely and comprehensive, although in a small number of cases not always updated to reflect the changing needs of children. Planning for children is effective and driven by social workers who know children well and supported by effective operational partnership working, providing a wide range of services to support and protect children. Responses to children at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing are well developed and effective. A good range of accommodation informed by a prompt assessment is provided for 16- and 17-year olds who present as homeless. Awareness raising of private fostering is good, but the social work response following notification is not always prompt. The designated officer coordinates agencies well when issues are raised about professionals who may be behaving inappropriately towards children. However, the completion of investigations is not always timely.

North Tyneside Council is a highly ambitious and nurturing corporate parent for all of its children and ensures that there is an excellent range of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

Edge of care services work well to support children to stay at home. Children only become looked after when it is in their best interests, and, in these instances, the response is timely and appropriate. A good range of permanence options combined with a wide range of local accommodation, including foster carers' and children's homes, means that most children maintain their local support networks. This

promotes stability and security for children. Effective services from health, education and specialist support promote good outcomes. The caseloads of independent reviewing officers (IROs) who chair child protection conferences and children looked after reviews are high, and this impacts on their ability to monitor progress between meetings. Children and carers who met inspectors reported that they have too many changes of social worker.

Achieving permanence for children is a key priority in North Tyneside. There is strong oversight of children to ensure that children find their 'forever homes'. Although it has taken a long time to secure permanence through adoption for some children, this is due to the additional time required to find adoptive families for older children and sibling groups. Overall, adoption timeliness is improving. There is a wide range of effective post-adoption support available, including therapeutic assessments of attachment to enhance adopters' understanding of children's needs. Life story work and later life letters, however, take too long to complete and are of variable quality. Adopters who met inspectors reported that they feel extremely well supported and prepared throughout the process.

The services for care leavers are outstanding. This is because council leaders and senior managers have high aspirations for all care leavers and consistently listen to the views of young people and value their contribution. The care leavers' team has an excellent focus on working proactively with the young people. As a result, all care leavers are in touch with their workers, live in suitable and safe accommodation, take increasing responsibility for their health and have excellent support to continue their training and to find jobs. They benefit from highly effective individual support, including through their pathway plans, and many of them have benefited from apprenticeships with the council. The result is that the vast majority have the skills and knowledge that they need to become successful adults.

Despite much good work across children's services, the recording of social workers' involvement with children is inconsistent. There are variable approaches to social work recording and completion of key documentation. The quality of supervision notes is also variable and, for a small number of cases, this means that it is not always possible to evidence reflective and directive management oversight. These issues are due to an electronic client database, which is barely fit for purpose. The local authority is well aware of the issues and is procuring another system, which will become live in 2018. In the interim, it has put in additional support to address current deficits and to ensure that the problems with recording do not impact on the high quality of support that social workers provide to children and their families.

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## The local authority

### Information about this local authority area<sup>2</sup>

#### Previous Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates five children's homes. Three were judged to be good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's safeguarding arrangements / arrangements for the protection of children was published in May 2012. The local authority was judged to be good.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's services for children looked after was published in May 2012. The local authority was judged to be good.

#### Local leadership

- The director of children's services (DCS) has been in post since July 2015.
- The DCS is also responsible for adult services.
- The chief executive has been in post since November 2013.
- The chair of the LSCB has been in post since March 2014.

#### Children living in this area

- Approximately 40,460 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in North Tyneside. This is 20% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 18% of the local authority's children aged under 16 years old are living in low-income families.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
  - in primary schools is 16% (the national average is 17%)
  - in secondary schools is 12% (the national average is 15%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 5% of all children living in the area, compared with 21% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian/Asian British and Mixed.
- The proportion of children and young people who speak English as an additional language:
  - in primary schools is 5% (the national average is 20%)
  - in secondary schools is 4% (the national average is 16%).

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<sup>2</sup> The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data where this was available.

### Child protection in this area

- At 27 February 2017, 1,319 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is a reduction from 1,462 at 31 March 2016.
- At 27 February 2017, 169 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan (a rate of 42 per 10,000 children). This is a reduction from 179 children (44 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2016.
- At 27 February 2017, four children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is an increase from three at 31 March 2016.
- In the two years prior to inspection, six serious incident notifications have been submitted to Ofsted, and no serious case reviews have been completed.
- There is one serious case review ongoing at the time of the inspection.

### Children looked after in this area

- At 27 February 2017, 298 children are being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 74 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 290 (72 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2016. Of this number:
  - 88 (or 30%) live outside the local authority area
    - 26 live in residential children's homes, of whom 16 (62%) live out of the authority area
    - none is in residential special schools
    - 223 live with foster families, of whom 69 (31%) live out of the authority area
    - 17 live with parents, of whom five (29%) live out of the authority area
    - two children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
  - there have been 19 adoptions, and 14 children are currently placed for adoption
  - 21 children became subject of special guardianship orders (SGOs)
  - 137 children ceased to be looked after, of whom three (2%) subsequently returned to be looked after
  - four young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
  - no young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses of multiple occupation.

## Recommendations

1. Ensure that assessments are regularly updated to reflect the changing needs of children and that they fully consider children's identities, contingencies and research.
2. Ensure that support to children who are privately fostered is timely, managed well and effectively meets the needs of children.
3. Improve the timeliness with which designated officers complete investigations.
4. Improve the oversight of IROs of the progress of plans between child protection conferences and between children looked after reviews, and evidence this on the child's records.
5. Ensure that life story work and later life letters are of consistently good quality and completed in a timely way to ensure that children and their adopters have a clear understanding of a child's history in preparation for placement and for later life understanding.
6. Ensure that supervision for all staff is consistently of good quality because it is reflective, directive, regular and well recorded.
7. Ensure that actions identified as a result of audits are specific and measurable and have timescales.

Pre-publication

## Summary for children and young people

- Services for children and young people in North Tyneside are good. This is because the council listens carefully to your views, you have helped to improve services and everyone is working together to make things better for children and young people.
- Sometimes when you need extra help, particularly if you do not feel safe, everyone works closely together to make sure that you and your family receive the right sort of help quickly. This means that social workers, police and teachers work well together to make sure that you are safe and well protected. It also means that families get help before problems are too big.
- Social workers provide good and helpful support to you. They write good assessments about what needs changing when they first start working with you and your families. However, they are not always good at making sure that these are updated and include all the things that have changed. Everybody needs to know when things should be done, who should do them and what should happen next if there is a problem.
- When you have to leave your family, social workers are good at making sure that you live in stable, caring foster families and in good children's homes. Managers are very good at making sure that you can live locally, near to your school and friends. When it is safe for you to return home, you and your families are helped to do so with lots of support to make it work.
- If you are being looked after by the local authority, you have plenty of help to make sure that you stay healthy, go to the doctor and dentist regularly and do well at school. If problems arise, then plans are made, which are reviewed regularly so you can continue to make good progress. You are helped to say what you think in reviews, and people listen to what you have to say.
- You have helped to improve the care leaving service, and this is now outstanding. Social workers and personal advisers develop excellent relationships with young people. They work extremely hard to make sure that care leavers feel safe and happy with their accommodation and have a pathway plan that is right for them. Everyone in the council is involved, for example by offering an apprenticeship or work experience. A high number of care leavers are attending further and higher education. Personal advisers and social workers are in touch with everyone.
- You told inspectors about a very small number of things you would like to see improve. For example, a very small number of you had changed social worker too many times. This sometimes makes you lose trust in the people trying to help you, although this has not happened very often. Finally, you told us that some of you wanted to complete your life story work, but in too many cases this has not happened. We listened to you and asked the council for these things to improve.

<b>The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Children are at the centre of the social work practice in North Tyneside. Children’s voices and opinions are the foundation of assessments and planning. Direct work with children is of good quality and undertaken by social workers who know the children they work with very well.</p> <p>No children were found to be in situations of unassessed or unmanaged risk of significant harm. In the vast majority of cases, inspectors saw good-quality social work, with appropriate support and intervention resulting in reducing risk and improving outcomes for children.</p> <p>An extensive range of early help services is available to support the differing needs of children and families. This is resulting in improving outcomes for many children.</p> <p>Children in need receive good, timely support, ensuring that needs are met early, and risks are reduced safely, so they do not enter the child protection system unnecessarily.</p> <p>Thresholds are well understood and appropriately applied. The multi-agency screening and coordination team (MASCT) deals with all contacts appropriately and promptly. When children are potentially at risk of significant harm, enquiries are swift and robust, including an effective, well-coordinated response to children who are missing or at risk of child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Assessments are timely and thorough and provide a good platform for planning and intervention to meet children’s needs and reduce risk. However, not all assessments are updated to reflect children’s changing circumstances, and written plans are not of a consistently good quality.</p> <p>Multi-agency response to risk is well managed through timely information sharing in strategy meetings, conferences and core groups, and as a result actions taken are appropriate to the levels of identified risk, and statutory intervention is taken only when it is necessary.</p> <p>Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are well established and demonstrate a coordinated multi-agency response and shared understanding that reduces risk to children.</p> <p>However, although there has been much done to improve the recognition of private fostering in North Tyneside, too many children experience delays in these arrangements being formalised. The designated officer provides a good service, ensuring that children are safeguarded. However, the investigations are not always completed in a timely manner.</p>	



## Inspection findings

8. Children who need help and protection in North Tyneside benefit from high-quality social work, robust multi-agency working and a strong focus on ensuring that their views are at the centre of all decision-making. This enables outcomes for these children to improve.
9. A well-considered early help and prevention strategy that also includes the Troubled Families work has been developed, and is informed by a thorough analysis of local need. It is clear and used by all agencies across North Tyneside. As a result, children benefit from the provision of a good range of universal, targeted and specialist services. This reduces risk and helps to reduce the need for statutory social care intervention. Feedback provided by children who met the inspectors was positive. They described enthusiastically how the support has improved school attendance, self-esteem and relationships within families. One child reported, 'I am able to contact the family partner and discuss how I'm feeling. She has supported my mum with doing volunteering and she has now got a job. She has helped my brother to improve his school attendance, and there is a good atmosphere at home.'
10. Families can access a good range of early help services, based in their own communities. These provide parenting support and targeted assistance related to substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse. Intensive support is also provided, including during evenings and at weekends, to better meet the needs of children and families. The support is being effective at tackling issues and concerns earlier and preventing crises that result in referrals to children's services.
11. The MASCT is an effective single point for all contacts with children's services. In all cases seen by inspectors, thresholds were appropriately applied. Qualified social workers make all decisions about whether referrals meet the threshold for a social work assessment. Decision-making is informed by thorough information gathering and good consideration of previous involvement with agencies. There is effective information sharing within the MASCT to ensure an appropriate response to risk. Advice and decisions are clearly recorded and reviewed by the senior social worker and are of sound quality. A large majority of contacts (97%) have a decision made about whether to progress to referral in one working day. Referrers are routinely informed of the outcomes of their referrals. Consent is sought appropriately. The out-of-hours service responds swiftly and proportionately to presenting risks. There is a robust handover and information sharing with the MASCT, and this minimises delay in follow-up and keeps children safe.
12. The presence of a detective constable and domestic abuse worker within the MASCT enables timely joint working and decision-making between the agencies and, as a consequence, families gain access to prompt support so that needs are met early and risks reduced. The domestic abuse worker provides timely advice and support to victims of domestic abuse and

undertakes short pieces of work with families, making swift referrals for ongoing therapeutic support and interventions when appropriate. The housing officer responds quickly to any housing issues and expedites searches for suitable accommodation. In the main, arrangements for step up and step down from early help to the MASCT are effectively managed to ensure timely and appropriate information sharing. However, in a very small number of cases seen by inspectors, there had been a delay when signposted to early help services. The local authority advised inspectors that it is introducing a new series of checks to improve the management oversight from the MASCT, to ensure that families receive the support that they need at the time that they need it.

13. The quality of assessments is good. They are timely and comprehensive, consider historical information, effectively identify risks and strengths and make appropriate recommendations for future action to reduce risk and meet children's needs. Views of children and family members are integrated well in the assessment process. However, in a small number of cases, assessments are not updated to reflect the changing circumstances of children.  
(Recommendation)
14. Children in need and their families receive a good range of well-coordinated services and interventions to ensure that children's needs are met effectively within their families, and positive changes are sustained. In addition to well-coordinated and regular children in need reviews, inspectors saw a range of assistance from practical support to bespoke 1:1 sessions with parents as well as social workers working closely with other professionals, such as from education, housing, health and the youth offending service to ensure that support is coordinated and leading to positive outcomes.
15. Significant harm is recognised well. Strategy meetings are thorough, timely and very well attended by an appropriate range of agencies. Coordinated multi-agency responses result in good understanding of risks and inform decision-making. Appropriate actions are taken promptly to ensure that children are safe. Decisions to progress from a child protection enquiry to an initial child protection conference (ICPT) are timely. Subsequent child protection conferences are held promptly. Effective multi-agency information sharing ensures that immediate risk is identified, assessed and managed promptly and results in children receiving proportionate interventions. Decisions to make children subject of a child protection plan are appropriate. Children are well supported to participate and contribute to their conferences either via completion of child protection consultation forms or in person, with the support of an advocate. Since April 2016 to date, 30 children aged over eight have been supported at ICPCs.
16. Child protection, core groups and child in need (CIN) reviews are regular and well attended, resulting in well-coordinated planning that protects and safeguards children. IROs chair both child protection conferences and children looked after reviews. Despite caseloads for IROs being high, 90% of initial and

99% of review child protection conferences are held on time. IROs' ability to have an overview of the progress of plans between reviews, however, is compromised by the poor recording system in North Tyneside.  
(Recommendation)

17. When children are on child protection plans, work is focused on managing and reducing risk. Evidence was seen of effective use of family group conferencing, resulting in additional support being provided by the extended family members and enabling children to remain safely with their parents. Parents are referred to appropriate intervention programmes, such as domestic violence perpetrator programmes, parenting programmes and services that provide support for families with drug- and alcohol-related problems. When parents have engaged positively, this has resulted in risk reduction and improved outcomes for children.
18. The electronic client database does not support good social work practice. Senior managers are fully aware of the issues, and the system is due to be replaced in 2018. Temporary arrangements have been put in place to attempt to strengthen the current system. However, social workers raised issues to inspectors about the additional work needed and about how the different screens needing to be completed do not help them to record ongoing work and key documentation fully. Despite these significant issues, social workers work 'around the system', and much recording is of a good quality. However, this was not consistent on all of the children's files seen by inspectors. For instance, written plans do not always evidence the high-quality work being undertaken.
19. Children who have disabilities have their needs assessed promptly and comprehensively, and, as a result, they receive packages of care and support that reflect and meet their individual needs. Individual children's cases seen by inspectors were supported to a high standard. The team of experienced childcare social workers has recently transferred to adult services as part of a 'whole life' approach to supporting disabled people and to improving the transitions between children's and adult services. It is too early to see improvements in outcomes. Potential risks have been evaluated, and a report has been produced for the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (NTSCB) on the potential benefits of this new approach.
20. Children are regularly visited by their social workers, who engage in age-appropriate direct work with them. Inspectors saw the use of various tools, including 'three houses, three islands' exploration and analysis of children's own drawings and writing, which enables children to share their feelings and understanding of their experiences. The child's voice is at the core of social work practice, and social workers have a sound understanding of children's needs, which leads to effective planning.
21. Individual children at risk of child sexual exploitation or missing receive timely and robust multi-agency consideration from the missing, sexual exploitation

and trafficking group (MSET). Good partnership working and coordinated information sharing mean that risks are promptly assessed and inform safety planning to reduce risk and keep children safe. Intelligence is effectively shared across the multi-agency group to inform local understanding of high-risk areas to influence disruption activities. Social workers have a good understanding of risks associated with child sexual exploitation, resulting in focused and comprehensive support packages to reduce risk.

22. All missing children receive a 'safe and well' check from the police. The appointment of a designated missing persons' worker has improved planning. In 96% of missing episodes, children were offered a return interview in a timely manner, with 19% refusing the offer. The information gathered is used effectively to inform strategy discussions, risk assessments and care planning and to further protect children.
23. Procedures for children missing education are well established and effective. The Children Missing Out on Education (CMOOE) task force focuses on absence levels of vulnerable pupils. Effective links are in place with social care, and regular half-termly meetings track and monitor individual children. Daily checks are carried out on all referrals for children missing from education. Pupils who cannot be traced are added to the lost pupil database. A range of checks continue to be made, for example to housing and health colleagues and, in exceptional circumstances, to the Border Agency, to locate missing pupils. As a result, the central register provides an accurate picture of children and young people, known to the authority, who are not attending school. At the time of the inspection, the local authority has 27 open cases of children missing education in which enquiries are ongoing.
24. Good arrangements are in place to support children who are electively home educated. The Alternative Placement Team encourages parents to register and, once this has occurred, a home visit is offered. In the majority of cases, the authority successfully registers those families who come to their notice, so they can support them, make suitable checks to ensure that children are safe and assess the quality of provision. Currently, 41 pupils are being educated at home. The Alternative Placement Team makes concerted efforts to ensure that parents are well informed about the most suitable education for their children. The team offers home visits, support, advice and guidance to parents.
25. There is a good range of services to address domestic abuse, including victim and perpetrator programmes and services for substance misuse. The Harbour and Freedom Programme provides victims with a range of support to enable them to safeguard themselves and to protect children. The risk to children of living in families with multiple needs, such as domestic violence, substance misuse and parental mental ill health, is well understood and effectively managed by the MARAC and MAPPA. Operation Encompass also effectively ensures that nurseries and schools are alerted when incidents of domestic abuse occur, so that children can receive timely support.

26. Support for 16- and 17-year-old young people at risk of homelessness is strong. Social workers undertake timely and thorough assessments, and complex cases are heard at the joint housing and social care protocol panel, ensuring a holistic consideration of broader emotional, practical and educational needs. There is a good range of accommodation options, including emergency crash pads and fully supported, semi-independent and self-contained accommodation, which enables young people's differing needs to be met. Appropriate consideration is undertaken as to whether children should be looked after to ensure that their welfare is promoted. No young person has been accommodated in unsuitable accommodation, including bed and breakfast provision, in 2016–17 and this is good practice.
27. The local authority has undertaken steps to increase awareness of private fostering in North Tyneside. At the time of the inspection, there were four children identified as living under private fostering arrangements. The services provided to the children were not consistently good. In the cases seen by inspectors, a number of issues were identified, including delays in assessing and confirming arrangements. (Recommendation)
28. The management of allegations of abuse by professionals against children is robust, and this ensures that children are safeguarded. However, investigations are not always completed in a timely manner. (Recommendation)
29. The local authority and its partners have a robust joint strategy in place for children who may be at risk of radicalisation. Although there have been no referrals to the multi-agency Channel panel, an exercise was undertaken by agencies in May 2016 to gain assurance of the effectiveness of the process. Training has been provided to staff to identify and respond to risks of radicalisation and female genital mutilation. There has been one case of female genital mutilation in North Tyneside, and the judge dealing with this wrote to the local authority commenting on the sensitive and efficient way in which social workers had managed the case.

<p><b>The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence</b></p>	<p><b>Good</b></p>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Services for children looked after are good and outstanding for care leavers. Children become looked after when this is in their best interests, and edge of care services help to prevent them from becoming looked after unnecessarily. When it is required, decisions for children to become looked after are timely and appropriate. Prompt action to seek legal advice ensures that permanence for children is timely. A wide range of permanence options are available, providing children with safe and secure placements when needed.</p> <p>The health needs of children looked after are well met, and there are effective responses to support children’s emotional well-being and attachment disorders. Current educational progress for children looked after is positive, and a significant majority of pupils make expected levels of progress. The pupil premium is being used creatively to help to support the educational progress of children looked after.</p> <p>Responses to children who are missing and/or at risk of sexual exploitation are good and have resulted in improved outcomes, especially for those children living in children’s homes.</p> <p>The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is highly influential and effective in challenging professionals and politicians to ensure that services for children looked after are good and improving.</p> <p>In a few areas, the local authority needs to improve to make services for children looked after even better. Examples include IROs challenging the progress of plans for children, reducing the number of changes of social workers for children and improving timeliness of life story work.</p> <p>The local authority is committed to securing permanence through adoption and is working to improve timeliness for children waiting for a match and to ensure more consistent and timely delivery of good-quality life story work. Tenacious family finding for harder-to-place children and therapeutic post-adoption support demonstrate positive impact for children.</p> <p>Excellent, aspirational services and support mean that the vast majority of care leavers are engaged in education, training or employment, and all live in safe and supportive housing arrangements. Staff work tirelessly to help them to reach their potential. Care leavers are very regularly consulted and feel valued. This has resulted in ensuring that the service they receive is outstanding.</p>	

## Inspection findings

30. Children in North Tyneside only become looked after when it is in their best interests and, in these instances, the response is timely and appropriate. The number of children looked after at the time of the inspection was 298, a slight increase from 291 in 2015–2016, which is above the England averages but below that of statistical comparators.
31. Effective edge of care services, working closely with multi-agency professionals, including education, health, youth offending, Raising the Health and Education of Looked After Children (RHELAC) and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), provide good, targeted work to prevent children from becoming looked after and to support them when they return home. A parenting programme delivered to 13 families of children looked after was very successful and resulted in eight children returning home and staying at home.
32. Good use of the Public Law Outline (PLO) ensures that decisive action is taken when children need to be looked after. Letters before proceedings clearly set out what families need to do to support children. Family group conferencing (FGC), commissioned from a national charitable organisation, is increasingly used, so that all options are considered before children become looked after. FGC has been effective in helping children to remain with their own families and in improving relationships within families to sustain good outcomes for children.
33. The local authority has forged productive working relationships with the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass). Effective communication, particularly with IROs, and performance monitoring of the use of the PLO, means that children and young people benefit from efficient and timely progression through the court system. The average duration for care proceedings is 27 weeks: better than the national average of 30 weeks in 2015–16. Assessments and reports for court are detailed, and there is evidence of managerial oversight of quality.
34. When the plan is for children to return home, comprehensive assessments are undertaken to evaluate any risks, so that children are protected and supported. Children placed at home are visited regularly by social workers, and the frequency of visiting is adjusted according to risk. Oversight by managers ensures that, when appropriate, necessary action is taken to discharge care orders or escalate any concerns.
35. The local authority is achieving permanence for children in a timely way. Monitoring is also used successfully with children who are accommodated under section 20, to assure that this is the best legal option to promote their welfare and to ensure permanency. As a result, the number of care proceedings has increased and the percentage of children accommodated

under section 20 has reduced from 31% (90) in 2015–2016 to 27% (81) currently.

36. Short-term and long-term placement stability is better than that of comparator authorities. This success is maintained because there is a wide range of permanence options. SGOs and regulation 24 placements with connected persons are increasingly being used as permanence options for children, which helps them to maintain close bonds with people they know. The local authority also has five children's homes, two of which are increasingly evolving their services in response to children's needs, including 'staying close' and staff supporting the edge of care services.
37. The local authority fostering service is very responsive. The fostering strategy has clear priorities to meet the complex and changing needs of children looked after. In response to the rise in the number of older children becoming looked after, there is a focus on developing the specialist fostering scheme for teenagers. There are also a small number of mother and baby placements and foster carers who focus solely on brothers and sisters living together. Most placements for children (92%) are within 20 miles of the child's own community, and the large majority (67%) are within North Tyneside. This enables children to retain their local support networks and friends, promoting stability and security and, importantly, their feeling of identity in 'belonging'.
38. Placements for those children living out of area in excess of 20 miles are usually specially commissioned services for children who have complex needs and display challenging behaviour. In those instances seen by inspectors, there is good access to specialist health provision, education and support. However, there are sometimes delays in transferring children to local CAMHS.
39. The needs of children are prioritised well by the local authority fostering service. Foster carers value the good support from the service, which is responsive, approachable and friendly. As a result, 98 foster carers have remained with the local authority for longer than six years, and 12 in excess of 21 years. This means that children benefit from stability and consistency from committed carers. Foster carers receive a good range of flexible support and training to help them to care for children. Assessments for new foster carers are completed within timescales, and this is tracked on a daily basis. Training is efficiently managed and well organised, and there is a good monitoring system in place to track gaps in foster carers' training, which has led to a 50% increase in take up on the training offer since December 2016. Training, including access to parenting programmes, is also offered to connected persons and SGO carers. Carers value the experienced staff and quality of training provided, which enables them to provide appropriate care for children, some of whom have very complex needs.
40. Independently chaired annual reviews of foster carers are detailed and analytical and incorporate the views of children. This helps to ensure that foster carers continue to be able to meet the needs of children. Independent



unannounced supervisory visits of foster carers further strengthens oversight of foster carers and safeguards children.

41. A dedicated worker, who knows the needs of carers and children well, undertakes placement matching for children requiring a foster placement. Placement planning meetings take place in a timely way to make sure that all aspects of a child's care plan are considered within a day of placement, whenever possible. There is a clear priority given to identifying a suitable in-house match. Proposals to place brothers and sisters together or separately are addressed in children's plans. Appropriate assessments, including independently commissioned assessments, are undertaken to fully consider issues relating to age and the impact and appropriateness of different placement options for brothers and sisters.
42. Supervised contact is well supported and managed. Social care assistants are allocated to a number of families to support contact arrangements and provide consistency for children. There is good provision of contact venues available for supervised contact as well as a variety of community-based activities and facilities. Supervised contact referral forms provide all necessary information in relation to any specific issues, frequency and duration of contacts.
43. Care team meetings are an example of excellent practice. Professionals, young people and, when appropriate, family members meet on a monthly basis to ensure that the plan is being implemented and any risks are addressed. Although detailed agency reports are produced for the children looked after reviews, formal assessments are not updated on a regular basis. This means that the changing needs, circumstances and ages of children are not always fully considered. The quality of assessments in respect of court applications is variable. In a few instances, this can lead to unnecessary delays in decision-making and planning for children's futures. (Recommendation)
44. Overall, plans for children looked after are detailed, with clear actions and timescales. These are regularly updated at children looked after reviews with any changes or new actions to further progress outcomes for children. Although the good outcomes for children in North Tyneside and the support by dedicated staff who know children well are acknowledged, the quality of assessments to inform ongoing work and plans with children is not consistent.
45. Supervisory visits to children are regular, and the recording demonstrates good consideration of children's plans and children's views. However, children and carers report that, despite the more recent stability of workers and regular statutory visiting, there have been too many changes in social workers, which have resulted in some children being unable to develop long-standing, trusting relationships with social workers. Social work team structures have recently been changed to improve this situation. (Recommendation)

46. Despite a recent emphasis on life story work through training and support by the Participation Team, and some recent good examples seen of life story books, delays in progressing this work mean that some children do not always have important information about their lives, families and histories. Children, carers and IROs all expressed concerns about this and about the impact on children. (Recommendation)
47. Current educational progress for children looked after is positive, and a significant majority of pupils make expected levels of progress. Cohorts are small in most cases, which accounts for variations in annual performance in key stage 1 and key stage 2. In addition, a significant number of pupils have additional needs, and a third attend special school provision. Despite this, progress in mathematics at key stage 2 remains above the national average. Proactive interventions by virtual school staff are ensuring that those pupils at key stage 4, a high number of whom have additional needs, are on track. The pupil premium and pupil premium plus are being used creatively to help to support the educational progress of children looked after. This includes counselling and additional resources to support crisis situations.
48. The vast majority of pupils (90%) attend good or outstanding schools within North Tyneside. Attendance is well monitored, and attendance rates for children attending in-borough schools is high, at 97%. There have been no permanent exclusions for a number of years.
49. Children looked after not in receipt of full-time education are provided with a wide range of good-quality alternative provision. Two key partners provide the bulk of the service. Currently, 16 pupils looked after are accessing 25 hours of alternative provision. In very occasional circumstances, a young person might access less than 25 hours education per week, for example when they are re-integrating into mainstream provision following long-term illness, but this is very much the exception. Quality assurance arrangements are suitably rigorous, and providers submit regular quality reports on pupils' achievement and attendance. All providers are also subject to annual visits from the authority to ensure that young people are receiving good-quality education that best suits their needs.
50. Following a full-quality audit, the virtual school recognised the need to improve the quality and timeliness of personal education plans (PEPs). As a result, PEPs were redesigned two years ago, with the help of social workers, carers and young people. The resulting PEP is much simpler to complete, and most are good.
51. Good attention is paid by virtual school staff to identifying any child looked after who has concerns about bullying. A recently appointed counsellor is being used well to support any young people identified as at risk of being bullied. The CiCC Care 4 Me group is providing training to schools to improve their understanding of the specific needs of children in care. The Mind Your

Head lesson plan helps to support teachers to raise awareness of mental health issues.

52. Children looked after in North Tyneside are encouraged to access leisure facilities and are provided with free passes. A free pass is also available to any friend who wants to accompany them. The passes can be used for gyms, swimming pools and a range of classes and activities. The CiCC is also involved in organising an annual Christmas party and celebration of achievements events. Carers receive prompt information and confirmation of their delegated authority. This helps them to enable children to access any leisure activities and not to feel different from other children.
53. Children who are at risk of offending are given good, well-considered holistic support. The youth offending team works closely with education, police and health staff to look at appropriate resources and support for young offenders who have undiagnosed health needs.
54. A well-established healthcare team, most of whom are co-located with the RHELAC team, including designated paediatrician, lead nurse, school and specialist nurses, provides very good health support for children and their carers. North Tyneside demonstrates consistently strong performance across all health measures, including 100% of initial health assessments and reviews, immunisations and developmental checks and 93% of dental checks completed on time.
55. Much good work is being done in relation to supporting children's emotional well-being and attachment disorders through the RHELAC team counsellor, and the dedicated education psychologist. In addition, CAMHS provide a daily triage for all children at high risk. Other CAMHS assessments are completed within a 12-week period. As a result, the mental health and well-being services for children looked after and care leavers up to age of 18 are well coordinated, and children generally receive a prompt service.
56. The influence of the voice of children in North Tyneside is very strong and results in services for children looked after that are increasingly responsive and effective. The CiCC, comprising three different groups according to age, is highly motivated and influential. The CiCC is well supported by the local authority Participation Team. The CiCC has been proactive in developing training so that multi-agency professionals understand what it is like to be looked after. The CiCC undertakes quality assurance inspections of children's homes, assists with training and carries out assessments of foster carers and their homes.
57. The CiCC, supported by the Participation Team, is very good at providing information to children looked after. A monthly newsletter is sent out to all children looked after, including those who live out of area. This helps to ensure that children are aware of their rights and entitlements. The introduction of the Mind of My Own (MOMO) application (app) gives children

an opportunity to contact their IRO or worker to give their views, comments or complaints. Advocacy is provided for all children and young people who are or have been looked after, up to the age of 25. Advocates are tenacious in resolving issues for children and only cease their involvement once the issue has been resolved.

58. Caseloads for IROs are high. IROs have caseloads for both child protection cases and children looked after. Despite the high caseloads, children looked reviews are timely, with 99% within timescales. The vast majority of children (94%) also participate in their reviews, and more children are able to contribute to their reviews using the MOMO app. Due to the poor quality electronic client recording system, IROs struggle to have an overview of progress between reviews, and their impact and challenge are not always evident in the children's files. (Recommendation)
59. Robust responses to when children go missing and/or are at risk of child sexual exploitation have been instrumental in safeguarding children. Recent data, April 2016 to February 2017, shows that in most instances (96%) children were offered a return interview and most of the interviews (92%) were completed within 72 hours of the child returning home. The information collated from the interviews is used efficiently to inform strategy discussions, risk assessments and care planning. Evidence of the effectiveness of this work can be demonstrated in the reduction, by more than half, of children missing from in-house residential care. There has been an increase in overall missing and absent episodes in 2016–2017. However, the local authority has a clear understanding of the reasons why and has responded appropriately.

Pre-put

**The graded judgement for adoption performance is that it is good**

60. North Tyneside is committed to securing permanence through adoption, and is working to improve timeliness for all children waiting for a match with adopters. It has robust oversight of parallel planning from when children first become looked after until a permanent placement is identified, through regular tracking meetings and scrutiny of performance information.
61. Experienced workers support permanence planning and are tenacious in finding permanent homes for harder-to-place children. Successful adoptive placements have been achieved for sibling groups and older children. Recent data shows that nearly half of children adopted in the last 12 months were aged five or over. For a small number of children, adoption plans have appropriately changed in favour of other permanence options, and there is a clear rationale underpinning such decisions, based on children's views and updated assessments of need and attachments. Overall, there have been 19 children adopted in the last 12 months, which is slightly fewer than the 25 adopted in each of the previous four years. This is in line with national trends and the increased and appropriate use of SGOs as an alternative route to permanence in the local authority.
62. Recent adoption performance data evidences an improving picture of timeliness for children with an adoption plan in the last 18 months. The vast majority of children are now meeting scorecard timescales for both key indicators, and effective use of the tracker ensures that plans for permanence are closely monitored and progressed in a timely way.
63. Arrangements for the recruitment, assessment and training of adopters are effective and timely. The quality of the prospective adopter reports (PARs) is good, and clear analysis of applicants' strengths and areas for development underpin matching considerations. The completion of PARs includes a quality assurance visit, undertaken by the manager prior to approval recommendations presented to panel. Assessments for approved adopters completed in the last 12 months have all been within timescales. Adopters particularly value the access to therapeutic input for extended adoptive family members. This has helped adopters and their wider family to develop greater understanding about attachment issues and to feel more prepared to help children to settle into their new families. Adopters spoken to were very positive about the helpful and supportive service, felt well prepared throughout the process and welcomed the expertise provided.
64. Many adopters are identified for children locally, but, when this is not possible, regional and national processes are used in a timely way. Two approved adopters are currently waiting for a match, and have been linked to the national adoption register and other regional and national initiatives, ensuring

that there is good support to help them to identify a potential adoptive placement.

65. Pre-matching meetings are effective in identifying the best possible match for adopters and children. The service consistently discusses the potential for foster to adopt placements with all adopters, as part of the assessment process and has utilised such placements effectively to place a small number of children. Family finding efforts are extensive and creative, making good use of adoption activity days to identify potential families for older children and sibling groups. Family finding efforts are under way for two children with a placement order, and potential adopters have been identified for both children, including an older child for whom a national search has taken longer to identify a suitable family.
66. The adoption and fostering panel is timely and efficient and offers appropriate scrutiny and challenge to all matching decisions and approval recommendations. The chair is independent and experienced, and there is an appropriately constituted group of panel members who are knowledgeable about the needs of children for permanence, in relation to both fostering and adoption. The chair ensures that the rationale for decision-making is recorded clearly. The agency decision-maker ratifies decisions in a timely manner, ensuring that children and families are informed promptly. The panel is effective in listening to the views of children and includes representatives from the CiCC on annual panel training. This has led to children's views on improving the quality of life story work informing the work of panel, which has been taken forward by the participation team in the local authority.
67. The vast majority of adopters receive good support when children first move to their care. Therapeutic assessments of attachment enhance adopters' understanding of children's needs, including those of brothers and sisters placed together.
68. Life story work and later life letters for some children can take too long to complete and are of variable quality. The service has plans in place to ensure greater consistency, and recently has provided a rolling programme of training on life story work to social workers, which has resulted in some improvement. (Recommendation)
69. Effective post-adoption support plans are detailed. They are based on therapeutic principles and show clear actions and responsibilities, including financial support when it is required. There is a good range of support offered to adopters, utilising the adoption support fund, including Theraplay, Safebase and independently commissioned attachment training. Adopters reported to inspectors that the training is 'incredibly helpful and uplifting'. They have access to a range of support groups in the region, and effective work is undertaken with birth families to support appropriate letterbox contact. The post-adoption social worker also offers support and advice to schools and

ensures that adopted children are very well supported by school staff, in accordance with their assessed needs.

Pre-publication

**The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is outstanding**

70. Outstanding services for care leavers mean that the vast majority of them are either in education or training or employed. Many of them have benefited from work experience with the council, and a significant number have gone on to complete apprenticeships locally. All of them live in safe and supportive housing that includes staying put with their foster carers or successfully managing their own tenancies. As a result of building open and trusting relationships with staff, care leavers make excellent progress in developing their independent living skills and taking full responsibility for their health and the choices that they make. They have also been instrumental in making improvements to the service, for example in relation to pathway plans, and these developments are helping the vast majority to make significant progress towards successful adult lives.
71. Staff and managers are extremely effective in staying in touch with young people. Workers on the care leavers' team are passionate and committed and work tirelessly in supporting young people, being persistent especially with those who are more difficult to engage. As a result, they are in touch with 100% of care leavers. Care leavers have an excellent understanding of their rights and entitlements, and their achievements are rewarded and celebrated. They have been fully engaged in developing the care leavers' pledge, and regular efforts are made by staff to further canvass their views.
72. Highly effective collaborative working with health colleagues results in care leavers being very well supported in ensuring that their health needs are identified and met. Care leavers have been fully involved in developing a health passport, which provides them with a copy of their health background. The passport also provides excellent health guidance, for example on matters such as promoting good sexual health, quitting smoking and receiving help with drug and alcohol issues. To ensure high-quality continued healthcare for care leavers, a copy of this passport is shared with their general practitioner (GP), which is excellent practice.
73. Workers assess and manage risk very well and, as a result, care leavers feel safe. Pathway planning helps to drive the work with young people. Plans are comprehensive, regularly reviewed and used as a working tool to help young people to focus on their next steps and on reducing risks.
74. North Tyneside is a very good corporate parent, and is highly aspirational for care leavers. The authority listens to them, acts on their suggestions very well and provides consistently excellent support to enable them to move successfully into adulthood. Care leavers who met inspectors were very



positive about the support that they receive from the council, the dedication of politicians and senior managers, and ways in which they are actively involved in the development of future services. As a result, participation and involvement by care leavers are very high and demonstrably impact on improvements in services.

75. Care 2 Work is an extremely successful council initiative, working across the region to help care leavers into work. High numbers of care leavers have benefited from bespoke training opportunities, for example vocational taster programmes, English and mathematics and work experience. Young people are extremely positive about the support that they receive. As one apprentice put it, 'I could never have done this without the support of the team and I probably would not have completed my education. Now I am a mother and also have a career which I love.' Apprentices are located across the whole authority. So far, a high number of young people (19) have benefited from either extended work experience, apprenticeships or traineeships within the authority.
76. Staff and managers have very high expectations for all care leavers. This helps to account for the 84% of care leavers engaged in education, training or employment. This compares favourably to 61% of care leavers nationally. When young people are not engaged, they tend to be the older, 19-plus cohort, 58% of whom are engaged in comparison to 49% nationally. This reduction in engagement post 19 has been recognised by the authority that is taking robust action. For example, a monthly not in education, employment or training (NEET) monitoring group focuses on individual cases, and there is an excellent peer mentoring programme, which is re-engaging young people and giving them a mentoring qualification.
77. There is excellent support for young people to help them to move successfully towards independence, particularly in managing everyday living tasks. The proportion of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation is extremely high at 98%. This is because innovative and effective work is being undertaken to develop and improve the housing options for care leavers in North Tyneside. The care leaving team and the strategic housing lead work very closely together to ensure that a wide range of provision is available. Twenty care leavers currently benefit from staying put arrangements.
78. Accommodation providers and other partners communicate extremely effectively, ensuring that everyone involved with care leavers is kept informed about their progress. Care leavers reported to inspectors that they feel extremely well supported and grow in confidence in relation to such things as budgeting, getting their driving licence and managing to cook for themselves. Many of them are able to achieve an additional social development qualification.
79. Excellent guidance is in place to assist young people in tenancies with external providers and in local authority tenancies. This ensures that high-quality

planning, support and preventative work are in place, to assist young people when things are not going well or if there is a potential threat of eviction. The housing advice team, community protection team and leaving care workers communicate closely and aim to work proactively with young people at all times to reduce and prevent any evictions.

80. Support for leisure activities and sporting opportunities is excellent. Care leavers have access to Ease Extra cards, which entitle them to visit any public leisure facility in the borough free of charge. They can take a friend with them also free of charge. They can use gyms and swimming pools and access a range of classes and activities during the day and in the evening. Young people spoken to by inspectors were particularly appreciative of this facility, especially of being able to take a friend. They said that it helps them to become fitter and gives them something positive to do.

Pre-publication

<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Senior managers, leaders and politicians provide a clear vision to improve outcomes for children and young people. Core social work practice is good and means that services for children and families contribute positively to improving their daily lives. The alignment of strategic plans provides a shared sense of ownership and ambition across partnerships, with a clear drive to enhance children’s lives. Engagement and participation are highly visible in the evaluation and development of services. Consultation with parents, carers, social workers and children and young people is central to the everyday workings of the local authority, and this ensures that senior managers and leaders have a comprehensive understanding of frontline practice.</p> <p>The director’s efforts are well focused on understanding local need and demand for services, forming the basis of a local authority transformation programme to target services. The director takes an open and transparent approach to understanding frontline services and uses this to improve and strengthen social work practice. Social workers spoken to by inspectors feel highly supported and valued.</p> <p>A whole-council approach to corporate parenting ensures that this responsibility is held across the local authority and that the ‘family firm’ provides work experience and apprenticeship opportunities, and uses strong partner relationships to secure ownership of corporate parenting across services and local businesses. The corporate parenting board is highly ambitious for its children and young people and tightly monitors their progress. The CiCC is highly effective in shaping and improving local services, and in leading on regional standards that all children looked after can expect from their home authority.</p> <p>Good commissioning of services, performance monitoring and quality assurance contribute to delivering effective services and solid social work practice. Weekly performance information is circulated to all managers, allowing them to interrogate and act on identified issues. There is a significant programme of audits identifying service strengths and where practice needs improvement. Resultant action plans, however, are not always specific and measurable and with timescales. The electronic client database does not support good recording and consistent social work practice, and the local authority has improved some of its functionality prior to a new system being introduced in 2018.</p> <p>Children and carers reported to inspectors that their main concern is changes in their social workers. Increased turnover in staffing is new to North Tyneside, but the reasons are well understood by the local authority and it is taking assertive action to retain and recruit staff to ensure continued high-quality services.</p>	

## Inspection findings

81. Improving outcomes for children and young people is a clear priority across North Tyneside. The local authority has strategically aligned a number of plans with the Our North Tyneside plan. This identifies three clear priorities to ensure that children are ready for school, ready for work and life, and are safe, supported and cared for. These outcomes form the foundation of the corporate parenting plan, the children and young people's plan, and the joint health and well-being strategy. Each plan details how partners work together strategically with the single focus on improving services for children and young people, which provides a shared sense of ambition and a commitment across the council and its partners. These are translated into actions that are well coordinated and, more importantly, underpin the effective services that are delivered to children and make a difference to their lives.
82. Leaders and managers are proud and passionate about the services for children in North Tyneside. They ensure that safeguarding is firmly embedded in all council activity. Monthly leadership forums for all managers hold them to account and explore national areas of safeguarding, learning and local concerns raised by children and young people. Actions are agreed and swiftly implemented. For example, national learning led to more council staff receiving training to recognise concerns relating to child sexual exploitation.
83. Senior managers and leaders have a clarity about what is happening at the front line, through regular communication with children, carers, parents and social workers, and this has influenced decision-making. When young people raised issues about housing options, the local authority reviewed its housing stock and developed two-person supported accommodation, enabling young people to live with their friends.
84. The voice of children and young people is woven into the fabric of the local authority. Despite times of austerity, a highly effective and dedicated team has been developed, providing participation, advocacy and engagement and focusing specifically on ensuring that the voice of children is heard and taken seriously in the local authority. The CiCC is a significant strength and is successful in influencing service design, delivery and evaluation. Its influence is far reaching, not only locally but also on a regional scale. North Tyneside has led a Regional Children in Care Council Campaign, which has agreed a memorandum of understanding to ensure consistency of services for all children in care across the region.
85. Governance and accountability are clear are well established. A dedicated children, education and skills scrutiny subcommittee meets on a monthly basis and has a particular focus on children and young people. This provides a broad overview of how children and young people are helped and protected. When particular areas of concern arise, thematic subgroups are developed with a specific purpose to review current provision and provide direction.

86. There are well-established lines of accountability between the NTSCB, the DCS, chief executive and deputy chief executive, through regular scheduled meetings. Relationships are based on respectful challenge, and the NTSCB chair is a critical friend, informing and shaping service strategies and testing what this means for safeguarding children.
87. The DCS has worked for North Tyneside for eight years, two of which have included the role as director for children services, while already holding responsibility for adult social care. She has successfully forged solid partner relationships and invested heavily in understanding local demand to prevent children coming into care. The use of extensive research to identify the needs of children and families and their communities forms the basis of North Tyneside's ambitious transformation programme and the remodelling of early help services into localities with the highest need, providing a broad and developing range of support. Given the breadth of the director's responsibility, this has been assurance tested independently to ensure that she has sufficient capacity to fully meet the demands of the two roles.
88. Partnership working is built on strong and established trusting relationships, enabling the local authority to be nimble in identifying and addressing specific areas of concern. For example, a twice-yearly corporate assurance group brings together senior officers with responsibility for safeguarding, including police and health. Recently, this identified a number of children and adults engaging in the use of 'legal highs', and through the development of a 'places of concern meeting', chaired by the deputy chief executive, intelligence was shared, leading to effective, targeted disruption activity.
89. North Tyneside takes a whole-council approach to corporate parenting. Led by tenacious and dedicated senior leaders, the lead member for children and the elected mayor ensure that all areas of the council understand the challenges faced by children looked after and take responsibility as a corporate parent to improving children's lives. The local authority successfully uses its influence to ensure that partners and local businesses recognise their responsibilities and play an active role in providing care leavers with bespoke training opportunities, creating apprenticeships and work experience opportunities to enhance the offer already provided by the local authority.
90. The corporate parenting committee is ambitious for its children and receives regular reports on education, health and placements and meets regularly with the CiCC to monitor progress of care leavers and children looked after. For example, effective data analysis ensures that pupil progress is well tracked and monitored. Educational achievement for children looked after is a high priority, and there is regular scrutiny by the committee.
91. The local authority meets its sufficiency duty and ensures that children remain close and connected to their community, when possible, and an impressive 93% live within 20 miles of their homes. The local authority analysed the changing needs of children it cares for, identifying that children who have

more complex needs entering care are older, and this led to the development of specialist foster placements. Effective regional consortium relationships enable commissioners to actively manage the children's placement market to achieve the best outcomes. The alignment of children, adults and public health commissioning in the same directorate provides efficiency of effort and shared strategic priorities. The commissioning cycle is well embedded within the strategic planning framework, and, because the prevalence of need is well understood through the joint strategic needs analysis (JSNA), this ensures that a sufficient range of provision is available to meet local need.

92. The director is committed to improving social work and has taken an open and transparent approach to understanding and strengthening frontline practice, through commissioning a number of external and independent reviews. This includes peer reviews, independent assessors, external audit and targeted consultation, to work alongside staff to identify what good looks like. More recently, additional senior management capacity has been created to focus on improving the quality of its services. It has been five years since the last Ofsted inspection of children's services, and this judged services for help and protection and children looked after to be good. The quality of the support and outcomes achieved by children continues to be of a high standard because the local authority has continued to build on the solid foundations of good practice that were identified at the last inspection in 2012.
93. An extensive suite of information, tailored to meet the needs of its audience, monitors performance at all levels. Thematic audits and the recent introduction of systematic case reviews completed by managers have effectively identified key themes for improvement, the learning from which is disseminated through regular learning forums and team meetings and is impacting on improving practice, including assessments, strengthening the voice of children, and better care planning. However, subsequent action plans are not always specific, measurable or with timescales. (Recommendation)
94. The current electronic client database does not facilitate good recording, management oversight of practice, or quality assurance by IROs. The local authority has commissioned a new electronic system, which is being introduced in 2018. Meanwhile, it has been working on improving the current system's functionality, utilising a number of short-term measures. Although the system is acknowledged to be poor and makes recording and retrieval of performance information difficult for social workers, managers and IROs, inspectors did not find that this had a direct negative impact on the outcomes for children.
95. Social workers and managers told inspectors that management oversight is strong and co-location of all managers alongside their teams facilitates regular communication. However, due to the deficiencies in the electronic client database, this is not evident in all children's records. Regardless of the longer-term solutions identified, recorded oversight of practice and supervision require improvement. Although all social workers receive regular supervision,

this is not recorded in a consistent way. Where this is weaker, the recorded supervision does not demonstrate professional challenge, clarity and direction, and, where actions are agreed, no timescales are given, resulting in a lack of progress against tasks. (Recommendation)

96. Children spoken to by inspectors reported that they are concerned about changes in social workers and that this impacts on their ability to form stable relationships. Historically, North Tyneside has had a stable workforce. However, there has been a recent increase in staff turnover, due to increased wages and benefits being paid elsewhere in the region. Agency staff are providing temporary cover: this has increased from 4% in 2015–16 to 11% at the time of the inspection. The local authority has swiftly responded, offering staff a market supplement as part of their recruitment and retention package in the short term, while a longer-term competitive remuneration package is being agreed. The impact of the increased use of agency staff is recognised and action is taken, including utilising the agency staff in the main in short-term teams, ensuring effective case handover arrangements, good quality staff induction and training opportunities. All managers are permanent members of staff.
97. There is good investment in developing a culture for good social work to flourish, with a strong emphasis on continuing professional development leading to solid social work practice. This includes good levels of support for newly qualified social workers, practice teacher training, leadership development programmes, monthly 'learning forums' and an annual 'pride of practice' event, and improved support and mentoring provided by experienced senior practitioners based within social work teams. Engagement in frontline graduate programmes and step up to social work have successfully led to employment. The local authority has decided to introduce a model of social work practice and, at the time of the inspection, all staff and managers were receiving the relevant training to support the implementation of that chosen model of practice. The authority has also successfully addressed issues of high caseloads. These are regularly reviewed and monitored, and social workers told inspectors that these are now manageable.
98. Social workers and managers spoken to by inspectors were highly positive about their experiences of working in North Tyneside, and the director places high importance on ensuring that staff are well supported and feel valued. Social workers and managers told inspectors that North Tyneside promotes a nurturing, personable culture, with visible and supportive management at all levels of the service, which enables social workers to deliver good, solid social work practice that benefits children in this authority.

## The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

**The Local Safeguarding Children Board is good**

### Executive summary

The North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (NTSCB) is an efficient and reflective Board, meeting its statutory requirements, and effectively coordinating and assuring itself of the quality of multi-agency safeguarding work.

Governance arrangements are strong, and constructive working relationships between senior partnership managers ensure multi-agency ownership and prioritisation of safeguarding.

The chair of the NTSCB is central in developing a culture of openness and challenge, along with the business manager, who has ensured that efficient board processes are in place to support effective board functioning.

Focused multi-agency performance information, audit activity and specific reports mean that the Board is appropriately sighted on all areas for which it has responsibility, and this supports the effective prioritisation of board activity.

There is positive identification and dissemination of learning, and a wide-ranging flexible training programme is linked to board priorities. However, clear actions with timescales, including ways in which the impact of learning will be evaluated, are not consistently in place to further support improvements in frontline practice.

The voice of children and young people is evident in discrete areas of work, but does not sufficiently inform wider board activity and developments.

The Board is influential in multi-agency service planning, through rigorous scrutiny of plans and evaluation of practice. This ensures that safeguarding practice is not compromised and the implementation of strategic developments is effectively supported. The annual report 2015–2016 comprehensively describes services. However, further improvements could be made in the Board's evaluation of their effectiveness.



## Recommendations

99. Ensure that the outcomes of all learning activities are supported by clear actions with timescales, including ways in which the impact of the activity will be evaluated.
100. Ensure that the voice of children and young people effectively informs wider board activity and developments.
101. Ensure that the annual report rigorously and succinctly reflects the evaluation and effectiveness of safeguarding services in North Tyneside.

### **Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board**

102. The NTSCB has made clear and continuing improvements since the current chair came into post in April 2014, and effective arrangements are in place to ensure that the Board fulfils its statutory functions.
103. Strong governance arrangements, NTSCB membership of key strategic boards and constructive working relationships between senior partnership managers ensure that there is effective prioritisation, coordination and multi-agency ownership of safeguarding work in North Tyneside.
104. The independent chair of the NTSCB has been instrumental in steering the board developments, setting a culture of openness and challenge and influencing senior management engagement with the safeguarding agenda. The chair is appropriately held to account by the deputy chief executive, through regular meetings, which also include the DCS. The lead member is regularly briefed to ensure that he is sighted on key board issues. The local authority commitment to the work of the NTSCB is further evidenced by additional funding for a part-time business support post, which has contributed to increased efficiency of the Board.
105. The NTSCB is constituted in line with statutory requirements. Development work by the Board and preparation and support for individual board members have ensured effective multi-agency ownership of and contributions to board activity, including by lay members. The Board has clear priorities, supported by a detailed business plan. The voice of children and young people is evident in discrete work areas, but does not sufficiently inform wider board activity and developments. (Recommendation)
106. The Board is well managed and operates very efficiently, with limited direct resources. Sub-groups of the Board are chaired by partnership managers of sufficient seniority and board processes, including timely circulation of good-

- quality reports and clear work plans, and coordination of the sub-groups supports effective board functioning.
107. The Board has appropriate oversight of all practice areas for which it has responsibility. Multi-agency performance management data, including trends and comparator information, supports a clear overview of key areas and identification of where more detailed or qualitative assurance is required.
  108. Audit activity gives a qualitative view of frontline work and enables practice themes to be identified. Recommendations arising from the audits are not sufficiently focused and do not have clear timescales to support more timely practice improvement. The audit programme is planned, reflecting areas of board priorities. Multi-agency audits are effectively supplemented by single-agency audit activity as part of the quality assurance for the Board. Some areas of work have also been subject to re-audit, to evaluate impact and progress. (Recommendation)
  109. The Board has been effective in increasing the coverage of section 11 and section 175 audits to assure partners about the quality of wider agency safeguarding practice across the partnership. The most recent audits have been further evaluated by an external provider who has been commissioned to evaluate and lead a planned challenge event.
  110. Clear reports to the Board on specific work areas, supported by board manager quality assurance, underpin effective oversight and challenge. The Board has been sighted and influential in a number of practice areas and in structural changes within agencies that impact on safeguarding practice. Examples include the improvements required for children who are privately fostered and the structural changes for children who have disabilities, prior to the service being moved to adult services to implement a whole-life approach, and ways in which robust safeguarding arrangements would continue. Another example is the plans to move health visiting and school nursing to the local authority, which have been subject to rigorous board scrutiny to ensure that safeguarding capacity and practice are not compromised. The Board's oversight of early help has also ensured that any practice deficits identified by audits have been directly addressed by management planning.
  111. Effective processes are in place to identify cases from which there may be learning, and information gathering and decision-making in relation to SCRs are timely and in line with national guidance. Cases are brought to the relevant sub-group for consideration by a range of agencies. There have not been any recent SCRs published. However, the NTSCB is contributing to a significant case review, following a serious incident occurring to a Scottish child placed in North Tyneside. The Board has undertaken learning reviews to identify where practice can be further improved. Learning is effectively disseminated through a variety of methods, and the Board has ensured that learning from previous reviews and local and national SCRs are embedded in ongoing training.

112. The North of Tyne child death overview panel (CDOP) is a collaboration between North Tyneside, Newcastle and Northumberland LSCBs. It benefits from an independent chair and maximises available information and data to identify and act on areas for learning and development. Examples of positive impact include a contribution to a reduction in maternal smoking rates following targeted intervention, improving consent for child health immunisations and increasing awareness of safe sleeping. The CDOP demonstrates a learning approach to improving its function and effectiveness, and there is evidence of challenge from the Board and chair to support this. The annual report is clear and accessible.
113. The NTSCB policies and procedures, including practice guidance, are appropriate and clear, cover key areas of responsibility and are updated in a timely way.
114. The Board has been instrumental in providing support and challenge to developing and evaluating effective partnership responses to children at risk of child sexual exploitation and those who go missing. The oversight of the work is undertaken jointly with the Safeguarding Adults Board. There has been clear coordination between the sub-groups in undertaking audits and reviews, providing and refining relevant training and evaluating and evidencing direct improvements in frontline practice. The voice of young people has been central in developing more effective and timely responses when they go missing.
115. Effective induction and support have ensured the development and maintenance of an extensive pool of trainers to deliver a wide-ranging and well-regarded NTSCB training programme. Training is delivered in line with board priorities, and a range of methods support flexibility in the timeliness and targeting of delivery. NTSCB training is effectively overseen by an experienced workforce leader who also leads local authority training. Methods of evaluation continue to evolve, with electronic methods used to provide feedback at key points after the training to assess implementation and impact.
116. The annual report for 2015–16 describes key areas of safeguarding activity, but does not analyse the effectiveness of this with sufficient clarity. The report also has much content on the challenges for improving board effectiveness, but the overall improvements evident in board functioning and oversight in the last year should support a more succinct and evaluative annual report for 2016–17. (Recommendation)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the local safeguarding children board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted and three additional inspectors.

### The inspection team

Lead inspector: Neil Penswick

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North Tyneside Council

## Post-Inspection Action Plan

North Tyneside Council has prepared this response in compliance with The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities Regulations 2007) following publication on 13 June 2017 by Ofsted of the report on their inspection North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

	<b>Ofsted Recommendation</b>	<b>Actions that will be taken</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Measure of Success that will be used</b>
1.	<b>Ensure that assessments are regularly updated to reflect the changing needs of children and that they fully consider children's identities, contingencies and research.</b>	a. Early Help Assessments to be regularly and systematically updated with an assessment of a child's needs.	31/10/2017	All assessments for all children and young people, regularly and systematically updated, with Early Help Assessments no more than six months old and an accurate reflection of the needs of the child.
		b. The Single Assessment to be used as the updating Social Work Report to Review Child Protection Conference and Looked After Review, facilitating the regular and systematic updating of the assessment of a child's needs.	31/10/2017	All assessments for all children and young people, regularly and systematically updated, with Single Assessments no more than six months old and an accurate reflection of the needs of the child.

	<b>Ofsted Recommendation</b>	<b>Actions that will be taken</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Measure of Success that will be used</b>
		c. Training of all practitioners undertaking assessment in how to clearly record a child's ethnic, cultural and religious heritage, disability and communication needs and how to consider the implications of these factors in assessment, planning and intervention.	31/12/2017	All assessments for all children and young people include an accurate record of a child's ethnic, cultural and religious heritage, disability and communication needs and a consideration of the implications of these factors.
		d. Training of all practitioners in the Signs of Safety model of practice, including how to construct clear and concise 'Danger Statements' and 'Bottom Lines' with which to inform contingency arrangements that manage risk effectively.	30/11/2017	Early Help Assessments, Single Assessments and Plans clearly record and articulate contingency arrangements.
		e. All Social Workers to have access to the 'cclnform' research website, awareness of the contribution that it can make to high quality assessment and intervention and trained on how use the website to inform their practice	30/09/2017	Social Work practice with children and young people, parents and carers informed by up-to-date, relevant and evidence-based research.
2.	<b>Ensure that support to children who are privately fostered is timely, managed well and effectively meets the needs of children.</b>	e. Designated Manager for Private Fostering responsibilities will transfer to another manager	11/09/2017	New Designated Manager appointed with proactive understanding of Statutory requirements of the role
		f. The management of Private Fostering Notifications, Assessment, Review and Statutory Visiting to be transferred to the MASH and Social Work Assessment Teams to ensure a timely and effective response	30/09/2017	MASH and Social Work Assessment Teams ensure that notifications are promptly responded to, high quality assessments undertaken and children and young people subject to Private Fostering arrangements, parents and carers appropriately supported

	<b>Ofsted Recommendation</b>	<b>Actions that will be taken</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Measure of Success that will be used</b>
		g. Quality Assurance Audit Tool for Private Fostering cases developed and implemented	31/10/2017	New QA framework implemented with audit activity providing assurance that children and young people subject to Private Fostering have their needs effectively met
		h. General awareness of Private Fostering Regulations by Social Workers improved through Staff Briefings and Learning Forums.	31/12/2017	Social Work staff group fully aware of statutory framework relating to Private Fostering
3.	<b>Improve the timeliness with which designated officers complete investigations.</b>	i. Increase the capacity of the LADO Service from current single post holder for greater resilience and improved performance.	30/09/2017	Two Designated Officer posts.
		j. The LADO Service transferred to the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub).	30/09/2017	Effective, timely responses to the management of allegations against those who work or volunteer with children.
		k. The LADO Service Case Management System for recording case work transferred onto Liquid Logic LCS.	31/03/2018	LADO Service record and monitor progress of investigations on a bespoke, single view case management system.
4.	<b>Improve the oversight of IROs of the progress of plans between child protection conferences and between children looked after reviews, and evidence this on the child's records.</b>	l. Change to the recording of the Mid-Point Review process by developing and implementing a 'Midway Monitoring Form' to enable clear recording on the child's record of the oversight of the Independent Reviewing Officer in relation to progress of Child Protection Plans and/or Care Plans.	31/08/2017	Consistent and effective practice by IRO's in relation to the monitoring and recording of progress of Child Protection Plans and/or Care Plans and evidence of this activity on the child's record.



	<b>Ofsted Recommendation</b>	<b>Actions that will be taken</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Measure of Success that will be used</b>
		m. IRO Quality Assurance Framework to be amended to include monitoring and review of Mid-Point Review process.	31/08/2017	Mid-Point Reviews by IRO's are consistently undertaken, of good quality and contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people.
5.	<b>Ensure that life story work and later life letters are of consistently good quality and completed in a timely way to ensure that children and their adopters have a clear understanding of a child's history in preparation for placement and for later life understanding.</b>	n. Creation of a 'Permanency Champion' post to support, review and champion timely and effective care and care planning for children and young people, including Life Story work and Later Life letters.	31/10/2017	Every child or young person with a plan for permanence has timely commencement and completion of high quality Life Story Work and a Later Life Letter as appropriate.
		o. Training of all Social Work Staff on the preparation and completion of Life Story Work and Later Life Letters	31/12/2017	Life Story Work and Later Life Letters prepared for children, young people and their permanent carers are of high quality and support a clear understanding of the child's history.
6.	<b>Ensure that supervision for all staff is consistently of good quality because it is reflective, directive, regular and well recorded.</b>	p. Training of all Supervisees and Supervisors in the Signs of Safety model of practice, including how the approach supports and underpins good quality reflective and directive Case Supervision.	30/11/2017	Case Supervision is of high quality, underpinned by and consistent with the Signs of Safety model
		q. The Supervision Policy is changed to be consistent with, reflect and facilitate the Signs of Safety model of practice	30/11/2017	Case Supervision is underpinned by and consistent with the Signs of Safety model
		r. Review, development and implementation of performance management information relating to Supervision	30/09/2017	The regularity of Case Supervision is monitored, with any deficits in performance robustly addressed

	<b>Ofsted Recommendation</b>	<b>Actions that will be taken</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Measure of Success that will be used</b>
		s. Introduction of Direct Observation of Supervision by Senior Managers as part of quality assurance activity	01/01/2018	The quality of Case Supervision of Social Workers is assured by Senior Managers
		t. Review, development and implementation of enhanced question set in relation to the experience of Supervision as part of the bi-annual Social Workforce Health Check	30/09/2017	The quality, regularity and perceived experience of Case Supervision is assured through the bi-annual Social Workforce Health Check
		u. The recording of Case Supervision recording case work transferred onto Liquid Logic LCS.	31/03/2018	Case Supervision is recorded on the child's record on Liquid Logic LCS
7.	<b>Ensure that actions identified as a result of audits are specific and measurable and have timescales.</b>	v. Change the format of planning documents resulting from audit activity to a format which facilitates SMART Planning, with a particular emphasis on more specificity of actions and success measures and more precise timescales.	31/12/2017	Audit activity results in SMART Action Plans which directly contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people, parents and carers

### **Endorsement of Plan**

Signature

Ms. Jacqui Old  
Director of Children and Adults Services

Date:

Signature

Cllr. Ian Grayson  
Council Member for Children, Young People and Learners

Date:

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Cabinet

### Date: 11 September 2017

#### ITEM 6(h)

Title: Calculating  
Financial Support for  
Special Guardians

Portfolio(s): Children Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area: Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

Responsible Officer:

Jacqui Old, Head of Service

(0191) 643 7295

Wards affected: All

## PART 1

### 1.1 Executive Summary

Special Guardianship provides a child or young person who cannot be cared for by their parents with legally permanent care. It is an alternative to adoption and long-term foster care or residential care. Unlike adoption it does not absolutely sever contact for the child with birth family. Unlike long-term fostering or residential care, the child is not Looked After by the Authority and decision-making responsibility rests with the carers.

Special Guardians are assessed by the Authority to assure their suitability to be carers for the child or young person requiring permanent care. The Authority is also required to assess what support the Special Guardians may require, including financial support. The Authority is required to support Special Guardians financially where otherwise suitable Guardians have financial issues such that without financial support they would not be able to become Guardians for a child or young person. This is a matter determined through calculation by the Authority.

Legislation, guidance and case law are clear that the maximum amount an eligible Special Guardian is entitled to should equate to the maximum amount a Foster Carer is entitled to by way of Fostering Allowance. For the Authority to be compliant the current method of calculation requires revision.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet authorise the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to implement a new policy, as set out in this Report, revising the calculation used to determine the amount that eligible Special Guardians are entitled to receive as an allowance from the Authority to support permanent care of a child or young person.

### 1.3 Forward Plan

Twenty eight days notice of this Report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 14 August 2017.

## 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The Our North Tyneside Plan states that 'Our people will':

- Be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Be ready for school – giving our children and their families the best start in life
- Be ready for work and life – with the skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, economic independence and meet the needs of local businesses
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, wellbeing and independence
- Be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable

This report relates to the way in which the Authority supports achieving permanent alternative care for some of the most vulnerable children within the Borough. The Authority must assure itself that it does not preclude potential Special Guardians from become carers as a result of inaccurate financial assessment.

## 1.5 Information

### 1.5.1 Background

Legislation, guidance and case law require that the maximum amount to which an eligible Special Guardian is entitled should equate to the maximum amount a Foster Carer is entitled to by way of Fostering Allowance. Accordingly the current approach adopted by the Authority for calculating the allowance requires revision.

### 1.5.2 Current method of calculation

According to case law, the method used by a Local Authority to calculate the maximum amount that a Special Guardian would be eligible for, subject to means-tested deductions, must use the maximum Fostering Allowance that would be paid to a foster carer to care for the child. The Authority's current method of calculation is not consistent with this principle and requires amendment.

The Authority's current policy *Financial Support & Initial Information for Special Guardians 2016-17* (December 2015) is clear that the Authority utilises a percentage-based methodology to calculate the maximum amount that eligible Special Guardians are entitled to (emphasis added):

*The Local Authority maximum Payment is a percentage of the Fostering Allowance based on the child's age, which is at the discretion of the Service Manager.*

The application of the current policy results in a failure of the maximum Special Guardianship Allowance paid to eligible Special Guardians to equate in financial terms with the Authority's Fostering Allowance.

### 1.5.3 Methods of Calculation in use in other Local Authorities within the Region

The Authority's approach to such allowances is at odds with the approach in use in a majority of Authorities across the region. A review revealed that although all twelve regional Authorities used the applicable Foster Carer Allowance as the maximum payment available only this Authority and one other calculated the actual Special Guardianship Allowance payments as a percentage of the maximum amount. Accordingly, only the Authority and one other use a different methodology to the remaining Authorities in the area.

#### 1.5.4 Proposed Method of Calculation

It is proposed that the Authority's current policy *Financial Support & Initial Information for Special Guardians 2016-17* (December 2015) be revised to end the use of the percentage-based method of calculation.

In common with a majority of Local Authorities within the Region, the Authority will adopt a method of calculation based upon equivalence between the maximum Fostering Allowance that would be paid to a foster carer to care for the child and maximum amount that eligible Special Guardians could receive, subject to means-tested deductions.

It is proposed that the policy be amended as follows (changes underlined):

*The Local Authority maximum payment will be equivalent to the Fostering Allowance based on the child's age, plus any additional enhancement that would be payable to meet any special needs of the child or exceptional circumstances which require such an enhancement which is at the discretion of the Service Manager.*

This will ensure that there is equivalence between the maximum Fostering Allowance payable by the Authority – based upon the core allowance paid for the child (dependent on age) and 'enhancements' (amounts additional to the core allowance based upon attributes of the specific child or young person to be cared for) – and the maximum Special Guardianship Order Allowance.

#### 1.5.5 Implications of revision to the Method of Calculation

The required change in the Policy will result in a higher level of Special Guardianship Allowance being payable to affected carers. Work is currently underway to assess the financial implications for the allowance. However current estimates indicate that the pressure on the relevant budget will be approximately £500k.

### **1.6 Decision options:**

The Authority must revise the method used to calculate eligibility for a Special Guardianship Allowance to ensure that the Authority is complies with current legislative requirements.

### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Following approval of the recommended option, the Authority will revise the method of calculating eligibility for a Special Guardianship Allowance by ensuring that the maximum allowance payable to Special Guardians is equivalent to that which would be payable to foster carers as a Fostering Allowance. This ensures that the Authority complies with the current legal position.

The necessary change in the policy will ensure that children and young people within the Borough who require permanent care by Special Guardianship are supported to do so by carers who are not financially disadvantaged and/or prevented from caring.

### **1.8 Appendices:**

There are no appendices.

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Nik Flavell, Senior Manager for Quality Assurance, Children, Young People and Learning (0191) 6437219

Helen Coombs, Legal Manager Safeguarding and Litigation, Law and Governance (0191) 643 5337

Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, Finance (0191) 643 7038

## **1.10 Background information:**

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

*Special Guardianship Guidance: Statutory guidance for local authorities on the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 (as amended by the Special Guardianship (Amendment) Regulations 2016), Department for Education, February 2016*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/586406/Special\\_Guardianship\\_Statutory\\_Guidance\\_20\\_January\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586406/Special_Guardianship_Statutory_Guidance_20_January_2017.pdf)

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

The Report has concluded that the method of calculation of eligibility for a Special Guardianship Order Allowance has used a percentage of the maximum allowance rather than the maximum allowance. Consideration will be given to the financial position of the current Special Guardians.

Current estimates indicate that applying the amended allowance rates will result in additional cost of £0.500m during 2017/18. There is currently no budget provision for this additional cost. This area of service – Corporate Parenting and Placements is facing total budget pressures of £2.168m across the service area as set out in the Financial Management Report to 31 July 2017. Details underlying this pressure is being reported to Cabinet as part of this meeting. This overall pressure includes the impact of changes to financial support for Special Guardians and the service has a number of actions in progress to reduce the in-year pressure. Progress with regard to the actions will continue to be reported to Cabinet as part of the normal financial management reporting cycle.

### **2.2 Legal**

Legislation, guidance and case law are clear that the maximum amount an eligible Special Guardian is entitled to should equate to the maximum amount a Foster Carer is entitled to by way of Fostering Allowance. As a result the current method of calculation must be revised.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

No specific consultation or engagement in relation to the change of policy has taken place however enquiries of other Local Authorities within the North East region about their approach to the calculation of the Special Guardianship Allowance were undertaken.

Those affected by the change in the policy will be advised accordingly.

## 2.4 Human rights

Children and young people have a right to life within their wider family (Article 8). The calculation of financial support by the Authority for potential Special Guardians must comply with the current requirement to calculate eligibility on an equivalent basis to the Fostering Allowance.

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

The calculation of financial support by the Authority for potential Special Guardians must comply with the current requirement to calculate eligibility on an equivalent basis to the Fostering Allowance to ensure that the Authority does not discriminate.

## 2.6 Risk management

The introduction of a revised policy for the calculation of the Special Guardianship Allowance will minimise the future risk of challenge to the Authority's policy.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy

# North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**ITEM 6(i)**  
**Complaints Service  
Report 2016-17**

<b>Portfolio(s):</b> Elected Mayor  Adult Social Care, Public Health and Wellbeing  Children, Young People and Learning	<b>Cabinet Member(s):</b> Norma Redfearn  Councillor Margaret Hall  Councillor Ian Grayson
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**Report from service area:** Law and Governance

**Responsible Officer:** Vivienne Geary (Tel: 643 5339)  
Head of Law and Governance

**Wards affected:** All

## PART 1

### 1.1 Executive Summary:

To provide Cabinet with a Report on complaint related activity during 2016-17 and to comply with the requirement to publish a Report on Complaints under the relevant statutory complaint legislation.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes the complaint related activity during 2016-17 as set out in the Complaints Service Report (Appendix 1);
2. approves the above Report for publication by the Head of Law and Governance; and
3. receives the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints concerning North Tyneside Council for 2016-17 (Appendix 2).

### 1.3 Forward plan:

28 days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 31 July 2017.



## **1.4 Council plan and policy framework**

This report relates to the following priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan “Our People” and “Our Places”, as lessons learned from complaints are a key driver in service improvement and ensuring best value for money.

## **1.5 Information:**

### **1.5.1 Background**

The Authority undertakes millions of transactions with its 203,307 residents, and 5.54 million visitors to the Borough, throughout the year. Against that background, the number of complaints received by the Authority remains consistently low, reflecting the excellent services our customers receive and the Authority’s ability to resolve swiftly any issues that do arise at the first point of contact.

The number of formal complaints increased during 2016-17 compared to the previous year as the Authority continues to take a proactive approach to encouraging our residents and service users to provide feedback. The Authority’s complaint leaflet entitled “How to complain about Council services” is widely available in the Authority’s buildings and to download from the Authority’s website. It is also now very easy for our customers to contact us on-line, and Social Care Service users are provided with a complaint leaflet at the first point of contact.

Customer satisfaction with the complaints process remains relatively high and the Authority continues to resolve the vast majority of complaints at Stage 1. The Authority welcomes complaints as valuable feedback from its customers, and complaint outcomes provide valuable lessons learned to further improve and enhance the Authority’s services and procedures.

The Authority operates statutory complaint procedures for Adult Social Care and Children and Young People’s Services and Public Health. It also provides a Corporate Complaints Procedure for all other services. The Customer & Member Liaison Office (CMLO) Manager is the main contact with the offices of the Local Government Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman (LGO & HO). This involves responding to initial enquiries, gathering information, and arranging access to files and interviews of staff under the instruction of the LGO and HO investigators, and providing advice and assistance to the Authority’s Officers who may be the subject of a complaint.

All work in supporting the operation of these services is undertaken by the CMLO within Law and Governance.

### **1.5.2 Local Government and Housing Ombudsman**

In 2016 the Authority responded to LGO enquiries in a timely fashion and was well within the required timescale for response of 28 days. The LGO’s Annual review of complaints for 2016-17 is at Appendix 2. The HO only came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and complaints referred to the HO are referred to in the Authority’s Report at Appendix 1, as they do not intend to produce an annual report for Local Authorities at the present time.

### 1.5.3 Complaints Report

The Authority's Complaints Service Report for 2016-17 is attached at Appendix 1. Cabinet is invited to note that the overall number of formal complaints increased by 19% from 933 in 2015-16 to 1,107 in 2016-17. The number of complaints received remains consistently very low given the huge volume of transactions the Authority undertakes every year with its customers.

### 1.5.4 Corporate Complaints

There were 836 Corporate Complaints received during 2015-16, this increased by 19% to 992 in 2016-17. The increase in complaints relates to several service areas, with the biggest increases being as follows:

- Environment – complaint numbers were 255 in 2015-16 and increased to 326 in 2016-17.
- Housing - complaint numbers were 155 in 2015-16 and increased to 206 in 2016-17.

The Authority recognises that it is important to deal with complaints well as this is central to providing a good customer service. Services seek to address complaints and learn from these complaints so that the Authority can continually improve services.

The results are set out in detail in Section 3, Table 8 of the Report at Appendix 1.

### 1.5.5 Social Care Complaints

The number of Social Care complaints (relating to both Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's Services) increased slightly from 97 in 2015-16 to 115 in 2016-17. This equates to 54 cases in Children's Social Services and 61 cases in Adult Social Care.

The results are set out in Section 2, Tables 2 to 6 of the Report at Appendix 1.

### 1.5.6 Customer Survey

A survey of complainants' experiences of, and satisfaction with, the complaints service undertaken in respect of complaints handled during 2016-17 resulted in 16% of forms being returned. The majority of those responding found it easy to find information about the service and said that staff were helpful, that they were happy with the length of time taken to respond to their complaint, and that the content of the response letter was easy to understand. Overall 66% of customers thought the complaints process was good.

### 1.5.7 Future Developments

One key aim of the complaint process is 'learning' from complaints and this is a core driver in all future developments. A number of changes were made to procedures and practice in services as a result of complaints resolved during 2016-17. Examples have been listed on page 10 of the Report.

A continuing area of development is partnership working, where services are provided on behalf of the Authority in conjunction with other public, voluntary and private sector organisations. Such change has potential for complaint processes to become complex, so arrangements are in place to ensure the customer's experience is as straightforward as possible. Securing the efficient handling of complaints is a vital component of ongoing arrangements with our current and any potential future partners.

#### **1.5.8 Conclusion**

Complaints are now widely recognised as integral to the provision of quality services at both individual and strategic levels. The Authority's successful history and current good practice in effective complaint handling will be an integral service improvement driver in the current rapidly changing culture. The demands of maintaining, and increasing levels of customer satisfaction, coupled with organisational changes across public and partner sectors, will be well supported by the current robust complaint handling procedures and electronic system in place.

The Report will be published on the Authority's website and will be available on request from the Customer and Member Liaison Office.

#### **1.6 Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

##### Option 1

Note the content of the Report and approve publication of the report.

##### Option 2

Cabinet may refer the report back to officers and request that further analysis and information is provided.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

#### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reason:

All local authorities providing 'social service functions' including North Tyneside Council are required to publish an annual report on complaints received. Publication of a Report also supports community engagement, and promotes transparency and opportunities for organisational improvement.

#### **1.8 Appendices:**

Appendix 1: North Tyneside Council Complaints Service Report 2015-16

Appendix 2: The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review of complaints about North Tyneside Council 2016-17.

#### **1.9 Contact officers:**

Vivienne Geary, Head of Law and Governance, tel 643 5339

Yvette Monaghan, Senior Manager Customer, Member, Governor and Registration, tel 643 5361

## 1.10 Background information:

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

- The Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 and Guidance (Children)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1738/contents/made>
- The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and Guidance (Adults)  
[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/DH\\_120361](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/DH_120361)
- North Tyneside Council Corporate Complaints Procedure  
<http://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/479/complaints-procedure>
- The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities Regulations 2012  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/3094/introduction/made>

## PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

### 2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial or other resource implications arising directly from this report. The delivery of the service is provided for from existing budget provision. Compensation payments are funded from existing budgets in the relevant Service areas.

### 2.2 Legal

Local Authorities with Social Service functions are required to publish regular reports on Complaints and Ombudsman investigations in accordance with The Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006.

### 2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Internal Consultation

The Report has been circulated to Heads of Service, Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care, **Public Health and Wellbeing** and Children, Young People and Learning. Comments received have been incorporated where relevant in the Report.

### 2.4 Human rights

The service promotes equal access to complaint services and opportunities to contribute to service improvement.

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

The service promotes equal access to complaint services and opportunities to contribute to service improvement. Material is available in different formats and the CMLO actively provides assistance for people with individual needs as required. Equality monitoring is undertaken and published within NTC's Annual Equality and Diversity Report.

## 2.6 Risk management

A risk assessment has taken place. All risks identified can be managed through North Tyneside Risk Process and will be added to the Authority's Risk Register.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

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

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

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

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy

# COMPLAINTS SERVICE REPORT 2016-17

If you would like this report in a different format,  
please contact: the Customer and Member Liaison  
Office on (0191) 643 2280

**Date:** August 2017

**Author:** Yvette Monaghan

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North Tyneside Council

## COMPLAINTS SERVICE REPORT

APRIL 2016 – MARCH 2017

### Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Authority's complaints services for the last year between April 2016 and March 2017. It covers complaints under the Children Act 1989 and the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, which are often referred to together as the 'social services' procedures. It also includes other 'corporate complaints' about other services provided by the Authority, and Complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and Housing Ombudsman (HO).

The Authority aims to provide high quality services and customer care at all times. However, it recognises there are occasions when people may wish to register dissatisfaction with those services. When this happens, the Authority wants to hear about people's experiences and, where something has gone wrong, to put it right, so far as is possible and this process in turn drives improvements generated from complaints. Therefore we have a comprehensive complaints service that covers not only the statutory Social Services arena, but also all other services of the Authority under a Corporate Complaints Procedure. The procedures for dealing with Corporate and Children Services complaints are attached to this report as Appendix 1 and 2.

We also welcome comments, compliments and suggestions to provide a broad, balanced and reflective picture of people's experiences of our services.

### Executive Summary

The number of complaints continues to be very low compared to the millions of transactions the Authority has with its 203,307<sup>1</sup> residents and 5.4 million<sup>2</sup> visitors every year, but the overall number of formal complaints to the Authority increased by 17% from 976 in 2015-16 to 1,139 in 2016-17. This increase was due to greater numbers in the big service areas of Environment and Housing.

Complaint leaflets are widely available in the Authority's buildings and to download from the Authority's website. It is also now very easy for our customers to contact us online. Satisfaction surveys are now issued to all complainants following the closure of their complaint, regardless of the complaint outcome. During 2016-17 a survey of complainants showed 66% of complainants overall were happy with the complaints process. Appendix 3 provides a full breakdown of the survey results.

<sup>1</sup> 2016 Mid-year population estimate

<sup>2</sup> 2015 STEAM Visitor Trend Data



As a result of complaints received during the year a number of changes to practice and procedure were introduced; examples are summarised under 'Number and Analysis of Complaints' below.

In keeping with the principle of resolving problems as quickly as possible, the proportion of Corporate complaints resolved at Stage 1 remains high at 87% in 2016-17 and 93% for Children Social care complaints, 5% being ongoing at the time of writing this report. Adult Social Care complaints have a one stage process and if the complainant remains dissatisfied they may complain to the LGO, resulting in all such complaints being resolved at Stage 1 of the Statutory complaints procedure.

The LGO found three cases of maladministration with injustice against the Council. The complaints related to :

- (1) the Authority's delay in deciding planning applications for a development and below acceptable administrative standards in communicating with residents about that development.
- (2) the failure of the Authority to keep the complainant sufficiently informed about what action it was taking in response to her concerns about her mother's care in a care home
- (3) the way the Authority responded to a request from another Council for an assessment of need for a young man.

All recommendations made by the LGO were actioned in a timely way by the Authority.

## **Procedures**

### **Overview**

The Council aims to respond positively to all complaints and other representations so that it can help resolve individual issues and learn from experience how to improve services. We aim to provide comprehensive complaint services, which are widely understood and easily accessible to all. The whole Authority, staff and Members, are committed to effective complaint handling and problem solving as an integral part of customer focussed services and responsive performance management.

There are four separate procedures for Corporate, Children and Adult Social Care and Public Health complaints. Wherever possible, before the 'formal' complaint procedures are used, efforts are made at an operational level to resolve any difficulties.

### **Corporate Complaints (see Appendix 1)**

Once the formal procedures are entered into for Corporate Complaints, there are, in essence, three stages:

1. Complaint referred to team leader or operational manager to try to resolve within 10 working days;

2. If not resolved to the customer's satisfaction, they can ask for it to be reviewed by a more senior manager within 10 working days; and
3. Ultimately, the Regulation and Review Committee, consisting of up to 5 Ward Councillors, makes the final decision.

### **Children Social Care Complaints (see Appendix 2)**

In Children Social Care cases, the statutory complaints process is governed by the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006. Stage 1 should be responded to within 10 working days and can be extended to 20 working days; at Stage 2 the response is due within 25 working days and may be extended to 65 working days for complex complaints with the complainant's approval; and Stage 3 the complaint is referred to an Independent Review Panel.

The Authority engage Independent Investigators and Independent Persons for Children Act Complaints at Stage 2 as set out in the Regulations. Other independent roles, e.g. members of Independent Complaint Review Panels, are also engaged by the Authority's Complaints Service as and when required.

Children Social Care staff ensure that all children, of an understanding age, who are new to the care system are in receipt of a complaints leaflet.

### **Adult Social Care Complaints**

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 were introduced in April 2009. Under these provisions, the characteristics of individual complaints are assessed and specific plans of how to address the complaint are agreed with the complainant. The approach focuses on the complainant and enables organisations to tailor a flexible response that seeks to resolve the complainant's specific concerns. It is based on the principles of good complaints handling:

1. Getting it right
2. Being customer focussed
3. Being open and accountable
4. Acting fairly and proportionately
5. Putting things right
6. Seeking continuous improvement.

This statutory procedure has no fixed timescales, other than a maximum period of 6 months for handling the complaint and is a one stage process. Complaints about the Public Health Service are dealt with under a similar procedure as Adult Social Care complaints.

### **How to make a complaint**

Complaints can be made in a number of ways, e.g.

- By talking to the staff involved, to let them try to sort the problem out;
- By writing to or telephoning the relevant service department or the Customer & Member Liaison Office in Quadrant.

Write to: Customer & Member Liaison Office  
Quadrant  
The Silverlink North  
Cobalt Business Park  
North Tyneside  
NE27 0BY  
tel. 0191 643 2280  
Email: [cml@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:cml@northtyneside.gov.uk)

- A complaint form is available on line at:
- <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/478/complain-about-council-services>
- By personal visit to any of the Council's Customer First Centres,
- By telephoning the Council's Contact Centre on 0345 2000 101.

### **Help and support**

The Customer & Member Liaison Office (CMLO) is independent of service departments and offers information, advice and help to complainants and staff responding to complaints. The CMLO primary role is to ensure all complaints are looked into properly and any lessons learnt are adopted. The team also provides a comprehensive support service to the Authority's Councillors and this includes processing in the region of 6,000 enquiries per annum on behalf of the Members and residents.

Independent advocacy is available for people wishing to make Social Services complaints, especially children and vulnerable adults. Other assistance can be arranged to suit individual requirements.

Copies of this report and other material can be made available in other formats or languages on request to the Customer & Member Liaison Office.

### **Who can make a complaint?**

Under the Corporate Complaints Procedures, any user of the Authority's Services can complain. This includes residents and visitors. It also includes relatives and carers acting on someone's behalf, e.g. a person living outside the area representing a relative living in North Tyneside.

In the Social Services arena, people can make a complaint if they are someone for whom the Authority has a power or duty to provide, directly or indirectly, a social service and his/her needs for that service have come to the attention of the Authority. This is extended to cover someone acting on his or her behalf, e.g. a relative or carer.

Limited exclusions do apply:-

- when other more appropriate processes already exist, e.g. formal appeal procedures, legal proceedings;
- when the matter occurred more than 12 months before the complaint was made (unless there is good reason for the delay in bringing the matter to the Authority's attention); and
- when the matter has already been properly examined.

It should be noted that where a complaint is made on someone else's behalf, reasonable checks will be made with that person to ensure they are aware of and are happy for the complaint to be considered.

Outlines of the processes are shown in Appendices 1 and 2 and further information is available from the Customer & Member Liaison Office.

## **External review**

### **Local Government & Housing Ombudsman (LGO & HO)**

The LGO & HO look at complaints about Local Authorities in a fair and independent way and their service is provided free of charge. They are independent of all Government departments and have the same powers as the High Court to obtain information and documents. If they find the Authority has done something wrong they will make recommendations to put things right.

The LGO & HO play a vital role for people wishing to make a complaint. It is usual for them to refer a matter to the Authority to look into, if it has not done so previously; they class this type of complaint as "premature".

The LGO Advice Team can be contacted on:

Tel: **0300 061 0614** Text 'call back' to **0762 481 1595**

at: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

or write to: **The Local Government Ombudsman**, PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH

The HO Advice Team can be contacted on:

Tel: 0300 111 3000

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

or write to: **Housing Ombudsman Service**, Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London, E14 9GE

Operational liaison with the LGO & HO is provided by the Customer & Member Liaison Office.

In their Annual Letter for 2016-17 the LGO indicated that in total 36 complaints about North Tyneside Council had been received during the year and they issued decision notices on 37 complaints. The HO do not provide an annual report for each Authority.

The Authority has recorded that 32 complaints were received from the LGO & HO combined during the period. Of the 32 complaints received 3 were outside of their jurisdiction, on 7 occasions they exercised their general discretion not to investigate, 6 were classified as premature and referred to the Authority to investigate, in 8 cases they found no maladministration and they found maladministration and injustice in relation to three complaints.

The LGO's Annual Letter is available on their website or via the Council's Customer & Member Liaison Office.

<b>Complaints referred to the LGO in Tyne &amp; Wear</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Gateshead	44
Newcastle upon Tyne	66
<b>North Tyneside</b>	<b>36</b>
South Tyneside	45
Sunderland	71
Total	262

## Care Quality Commission

In the Adult Social Care arena, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) also plays a similar role within its wider remit of regulation of social care. The Commission can be contacted at:

CQC National Customer Service Centre  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA  
Telephone: 03000 616161  
Fax: 03000 616171  
On line form on website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

## OFSTED

For Children Social Care, and across Children Young People and Learning, OFSTED plays a similar role to CQC. They can be contacted at:

OFSTED  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
Tel. 0300 123 1231  
Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

## Management and Operation

Management and operation of both the corporate and social services processes are provided by the Customer & Member Liaison Office (CMLLO), which is based in Law and Governance in the Chief Executive's Office. The Customer & Member Liaison Office is also the main point of contact for the LGO & HO.

The Office not only manages many individual complaints but also oversees the correct use of the procedures in the various service departments. It does not investigate complaints as service areas are responsible for examining complaints about their own services.

Individual complaints are referred to relevant service managers to examine and respond to the complainant.

The Complaint service is supported by a bespoke Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

## Performance Indicators

A report on the overall performance of the complaints service is submitted to the Authority's Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis and to the Authority's Member Support Group every 6 months. An Annual report is also presented to the Authority's Regulation and Review Committee to update Members on what action the Authority have taken in relation to recommendations made by the Committee at Stage 3.

The Complaints Service carry out an in-house survey of people who have used the complaints process. Returns are summarised in Appendix 3. These show that 55% of respondents said they found it easy to find information about the complaints process; 63% were happy with the time taken to respond to complaints; 66% thought the process was good and 52% were satisfied with the outcome.

There are currently 206,307 residents in North Tyneside. Voluntary diversity monitoring of complainants was introduced several years ago. The following table compares the results of the survey against the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Mid Year Population estimate for 2016 in relation to gender and age, and the latest data in relation to disability, ethnic origin and religion, which is taken from the 2011 Census.

%	O.N.S.	NTC	%	O.N.S.	NTC
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Ethnic Origin</b>		
Female	51.7	52	Asian	1.9	2
Male	48.3	47	Black	0.4	1
Declined		1	Other Ethnic	0.6	2
<b>Age</b>			Mixed	0.9	0
16-24	11.1	7	White British	95.4	93
			Other White	1.2	2
25-34	14.9	8	Chinese	0.5	
35-44	16.1	13	Declined	-	1
45-54	18.1	21	<b>Religion</b>		
55-64		18	Christian	63.8	57
	15.9		Denominati on		
65-74	13.1	23	Hindu	0.3	0
Over 75	10.8	8	Buddhist	0.2	1
Declined	-	1	Muslim	0.7	2
			Sikh	0.2	0
<b>With a disability</b>			Jewish	0	
Yes	20.6	42	Other	0.2	4
No	-	53	None	28.1	29
Not given	-	5	Declined	6.4	7

## Numbers and analysis of complaints

The number of complaints for 2016-17, together with previous years for comparison, is shown in the Tables at the end of this report.

This information is made available for consideration by individual service areas, as part of performance management throughout the year. This helps identify any themes or trends and so informs service improvement initiatives. The Customer & Member Liaison Manager meets with various service management teams to discuss any implications arising from themes or trends in complaints.

The total complaints related activity is set out in Table 1. Formal complaints continue to increase in numbers year on year.

Corporate complaints resolved at Stage 1 remained high at 87% and 93% of Children Social Care complaints closed during the period were resolved at Stage 1. This reflects the the commitment of Managers and Supervisors to resolve complaints at an early stage.

All complaints concluded and closed off on the Complaints Database create a prompt to enter any lessons learnt as a result of the complaint. A number of improvements generated by complaints were made to procedures and services during the year. A number of examples of such improvements are set out below:-

<b>Brief Summary</b>	<b>Lessons Learned</b>
Customer was overcharged for swimming since turning 60 years old.	Ease Card extra forms reviewed to include customers responsibility to notify the Authority of any changes that may impact on concessionary rate.
Poor response to health concerns by leisure centre staff.	Appropriate training delivered to employees when a new dosing system is installed. Changes have been made to operational practises regarding early morning opening, building checks and the management of pool plant.
Change of address issues	Operational working practices reviewed to ensure they keep step with implementation of new systems / channel shift promotion and they remain fit for purpose.
Adult Social Care costs	Forms identifying costs and financial assessment process are now in use due to disputes over responsibility to meet the costs of residential care when patients discharged from hospital.
Care Package Charge	Practice process reviewed in regards to signatures on support plans and ensuring they are signed by client or family member.
Postal / Proxy Voting	More information posted on website about the postal / proxy process and deadlines.
4 Lane Ends Roundabout	Since the completion of the works at Four

	<p>Lane Ends, a new approach has been adopted for communicating major engineering works. This includes the creation of a dedicated single point of contact for all enquiries to help ensure the public receive a quality and timely response to any queries or concerns. The production of fortnightly e-bulletins which are emailed to subscribers and uploaded onto the Council website. Where appropriate information events for the public are held during important phases of work.</p>
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## Future Developments

North Tyneside Council is a rapidly changing organisation. This process will continue and remain a challenge for effective complaints handling as service users experience changes and the organisation evolves internally as a result of changing priorities from central Government and more limited resources being available to the Authority.

There are significant examples of change within the Authority. The Authority has partnership arrangements with Kier North Tyneside, Engie and Capita to provide a range of services. The Authority's Customer & Member Liaison Office will continue to manage complaints for all of the Authority's partners on behalf of its customers.

The overall focus of attention is now very much on 'learning' from complaints and this will be a core driver in all future developments by the Authority.

## Conclusions

The Authority has made a commitment to deliver a successful future for its residents and the borough in the Our North Tyneside plan, but to achieve the outcomes we need to deliver within the resources available and must therefore do things differently. There is not only significantly less money available, but also increasing pressures and challenges from a growing and ageing population and changing needs and expectations.

The 'Creating a Brighter Future' programme is not just a plan for delivery but it will deliver a major culture change and new way of working that will:

- Encourage our customers to be more independent
- Better manage demand for services so people access the right services at the right time
- Focus everything it does to delivering its priorities.

The extent of the changes required will inevitably generate concerns from customers as the changes to service delivery and charging arrangements are implemented.

The rapidly changing culture and demands of increased customer satisfaction coupled with organisational changes across public and partner sectors means that complaints



services must be continually kept up to date. The Authority's successful history and current good practice in effective complaint handling cannot be taken for granted.

By the very nature of this area of work, the complaints services will never satisfy all of the people all of the time. However, the survey of complainants indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service overall.

The Authority is committed to providing effective complaints services for the benefits of individual customers, the Authority and the community alike. Complaints are now widely recognised as integral to the provision of quality services at both individual and strategic levels.

## Background

### Statistics

This part of the report is broken down into the following sections:-

- 1) Overall number of complaints across the Authority
- 2) Social Services Complaints
- 3) Corporate Complaints
- 4) Local Government Ombudsman
- 5) Informal Complaints and Enquiries.

## 1. Overall number of complaints across the Authority

The volume of formal complaint related activity for the period April 2013 to March 2017 is summarised in Table 1.

<b>Table 1 Summary</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Social Service Complaints	81	92	97	115
Corporate Complaints	659	772	836	992
<b>Total</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>1107</b>
Local Government & Housing Ombudsman complaints received by NTC	42	35	43	32
<b>Formal total</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>1139</b>
Pre-Complaint and general enquiries dealt with by the Customer & Member Liaison Office	889	814	550	599
<b>Total complaint related activity</b>	<b>1,671</b>	<b>1,713</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1738</b>

Table 1a

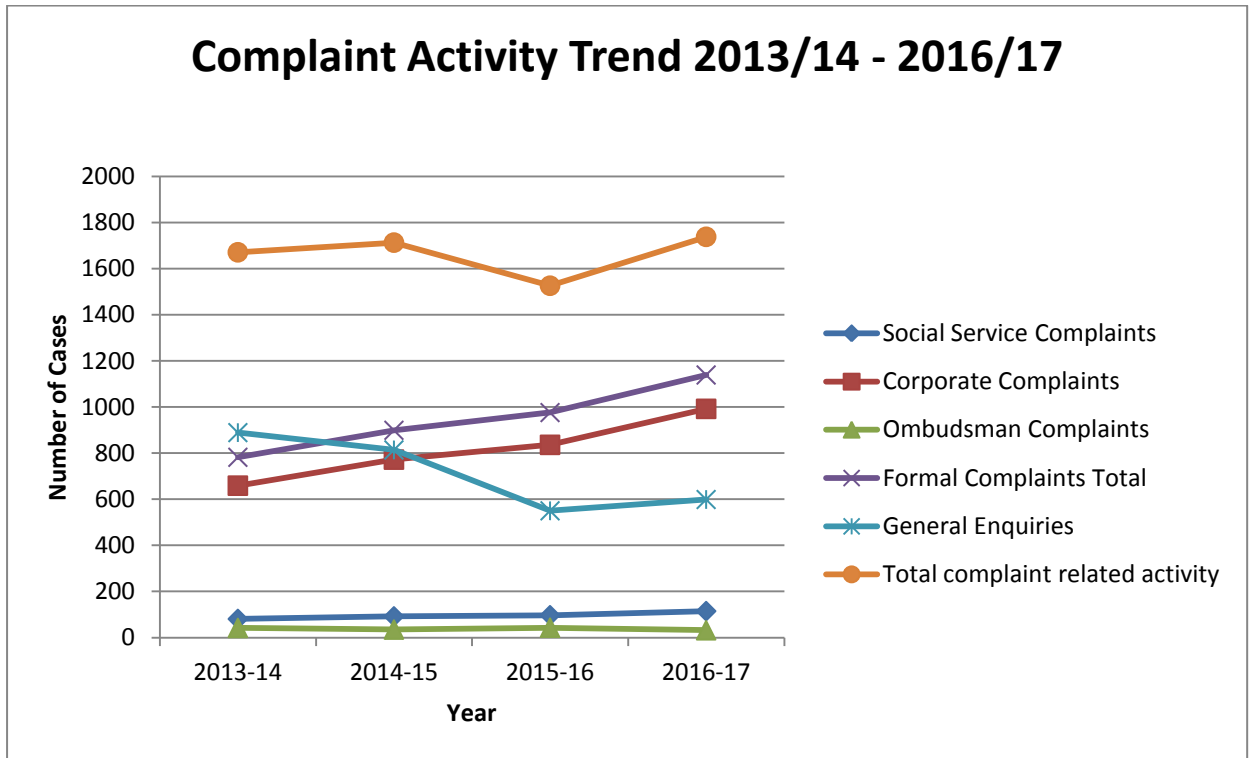
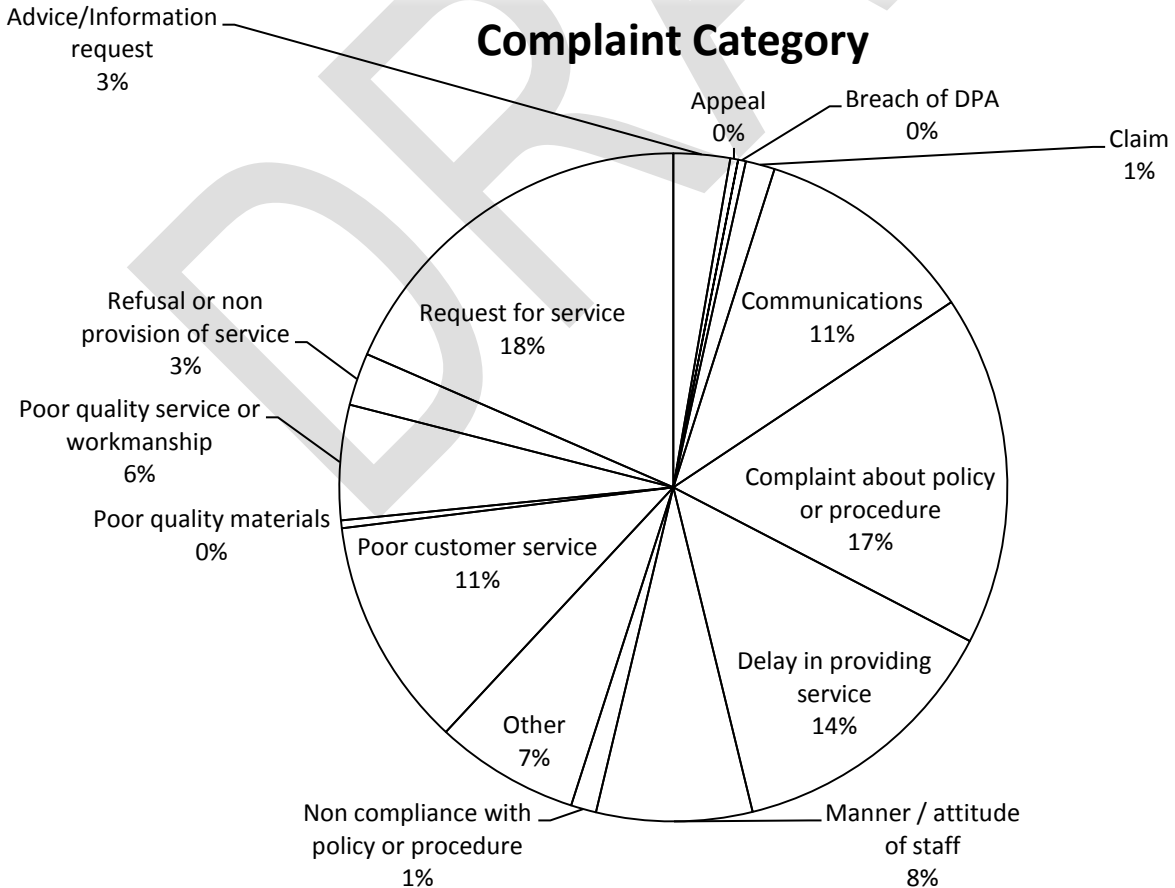


Table 1b – Percentage split by category of all formal complaints to the Council both Corporate and Social Care for 2016-17



There was a slight increase in the number of pre-complaint and general enquiries dealt with by the Customer & Member Liaison Office (CMLO) during 2016-17. The CMLO continue to make sure that as many enquiries as possible are directed to the most appropriate service at the first point of contact. This will ensure customers are given more responsive replies and reduce the inefficiencies inherent in redirection of enquiries within the Authority. All enquiries received by email into the CMLO are acknowledged by email, the majority on the same working day. The customer is also notified of who their enquiry has been sent to and that they should expect a response direct. Enquirers by telephone or letter are also provided with a receipt setting out the same information.

## 2. Social Services Complaints

Social Service complaints dealt with under the relevant statutory processes are split into Children's and Adult Services, as shown in Table 2. In addition there are complaints regarding Children's and Adult Services which were dealt with under the Corporate Procedure (see Table 8).

<b>Table 2 Social Services by Division</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Children & Families Services	38	46	50	54
Adult Services	43	46	47	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>115</b>

There has been an increase of complaints about Social Care Services overall by 19% during the last year, however numbers remain very low.

Within Children Social Care, complaints have been categorised as shown in Table 3.

<b>Table 3 Children &amp; Families Services Categories</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Adoption / Fostering / LAC	8	20	10	7
Safeguarding	12	11	20	22
Child Protection	2	0	0	2
Front Door	14	9	12	12
Commissioning & Investment	2	4	3	0
Other	0	2	5	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>54</b>

Children who are looked after receive a 'complaints form' to use if they wish to raise any point about their care or circumstances generally. Acknowledging that making a complaint can be difficult, young people are encouraged to have the assistance of a mentor or advocate if they want to make a complaint. The units for children with a disability have specially trained advocates to help those who have communication difficulties.

In the child protection system users may feel they have little power to make a complaint and this is acknowledged. To capture issues of user concern the review process and other meetings are forums in which matters which are a worry to the user can be tackled. In this

way the user's view can be heard and services influenced. In addition to the numbers reported above there were 7 complaints about Children Services dealt with under the Corporate Complaints procedure.

Within Adult Social Care, categories are shown in Table 4.

<b>Table 4 Adult Services Categories</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Safeguarding	0	2	2	1
Commissioning	6	3	3	3
Personalisation / Social Work	24	32	36	44
Integrated Services	11	8	4	5
Other	2	1	2	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>

In addition to the numbers reported above there were 15 complaints about Adult Services dealt with under the Corporate Complaints Procedure during 2016-17.

Tables 5 and 6 show the proportions of upheld complaints for Children's and Adults Services over the year.

<b>Table 5 - Children Social Care complaint outcomes</b>	2013-14 %	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %
Not Upheld	58	61	70	46
Upheld in Full	3	7	2	4
Upheld in Part	39	30	26	44
Ongoing	0	2	2	6

<b>Table 6 - Adult Social Care complaint outcomes</b>	2013-14 %	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %
Not Upheld	30	46	49	43
Upheld in Full	7	2	0	3
Upheld in Part	63	52	49	51
Ongoing	0	0	2	3

Problem solving at the earliest opportunity is a key aim of effective complaint handling. This is not only of value to the complainant but also to the Authority in optimising use of resources and enhancing customer care.

Table 7 shows early resolution at Stage 1 of children complaints only. From April 2009 a one stage process was introduced for Adult Social Care complaints.

<b>Table 7 – Children's Social Services complaints resolved at stage:</b>	2013-14 %	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %
One	100	91	96	93
Two	0	7	2	2
Three	0	2	0	0
Ongoing	0	0	2	5

### 3. Corporate Complaints

Table 8, below, shows a breakdown of corporate complaints received from 2013-14 for comparison purposes.

<b>Table 8 – Corporate Complaints</b>					
<b>Department</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Chief Exec & Financial Services	Finance & Resources	2	1	7	7
	Law & Governance	6	15	13	22
	Other (inc Street Lighting)	1	9	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>
Revs, Bens & Customer Services	Benefits	32	55	80	71
	Council Tax	20	41	50	43
	Customer Services	19	31	34	37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>151</b>
Adult Social Care	Transport/Other	7	13	8	9
	Financial Services	5	2	3	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>
Children, Young People & Learning	Children Services	4	7	2	7
	Education	6	10	11	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND HOUSING:</b>					
<b>Department</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Leisure	Indoor Sports & Leisure	16	13	15	15
	Cultural Services Other	2	8	11	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>
Environment	Parking	19	20	20	33
	Planning	19	19	20	27
	Highways	28	41	51	64
	Environmental Health	7	5	12	15
	Other	4	2	1	3
	Street Environment	13	36	39	49
	Property	7	4	6	7
	Waste Management	11	20	16	15
	Recycling/Wheeled Bins/Special Collections	21	20	71	89
	Trees/Shrubs	7	8	15	21
	Winter Maintenance	-	-	2	-
	Bereavement Services	1	2	2	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>326</b>

Housing	Debt Recovery/Income	17	15	12	20
	Day-to-day Repairs	18	13	12	16
	Allocations/Letting	20	27	24	40
	Housing Estates	60	73	45	79
	Empty Homes / Voids	9	7	12	5
	Quality Homes for Older People	-	2	10	7
	Homelessness / Advice	9	15	7	6
	Housing Investment	4	8	25	11
	Safer Estates	6	3	3	10
	Leasehold	2	2	2	2
	Other	7	8	3	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>206</b>
Kier North Tyneside	Day-to-day Repairs	162	156	126	156
	Gas Services	38	24	23	26
	Housing Investment	21	16	27	19
	Empty Homes / Voids	23	14	14	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>217</b>
Business & Economic Development	Business & Economic Development	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>659</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>992</b>

The number of Corporate Complaints increased by 19% from 836 in 2015-16 to 992 in 2016-17.

### Environment Complaints:

Complaint numbers were 255 in 2015-16 and increased to 326 in 2016-17 (+28%). In the context of the 90,000 households in the borough the number remains small. Every effort is made to ensure all complaints are kept to a minimum and that residents satisfaction is maintained.

### Housing Complaints:

Complaint numbers were 155 in 2015-16 and increased to 206 in 2016-17 (+33%). Again in the context of the hundreds of thousands of transactions with Council tenants over the year the number remains small.

Table 9 shows the proportion of corporate complaints upheld or not.

<b>Table 9: Corporate complaints outcomes</b>	2013-14 %	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %
Not Upheld	34	39	40	46
Upheld in Full	40	33	32	24
Upheld in Part	26	28	28	29
Ongoing	-	-	-	1

Table 10 shows the stage at which corporate complaints were resolved, again indicating a high level of early problem solving overall and again is consistent with previous years.

<b>Table 10: Corporate complaints resolved at Stage:</b>	2013-14 %	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %
One	84	86	87	87
Two	15	13	12	12
Three	1	1	1	0
Ongoing	0	0	0	1

### Policy complaints

Complaints about the policies of the Authority are recorded and responded to at Stage 1 but not considered further within the complaints process.

## 4. Local Government and Housing Ombudsman (LGO & HO)

The next stage after the Authority's complaints procedures is the Local Government or Housing Ombudsman.

Table 11 groups the breakdown by the Authority's Service Areas as recorded by the Authority:

<b>Table 11: Complaints to the LGO &amp; HO</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Environmental & Cultural Services	1	4	5	5
Highways, Transport & Planning	14	6	9	4
Revenues & Benefits	8	4	5	4
Housing	12	11	7	9
Education & Children Social Care	3	3	8	4
Adult Social Care	2	3	7	4
Other	2	4	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32</b>

Table 12 gives the decisions made by the LGO & HO in the given years as recorded by the Authority.

<b>Table 12: LGO &amp; HO Decisions</b>		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Total</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32</b>
Not Investigated	Outside Jurisdiction	9	9	10	3
	Discretion not to investigate	8	5	5	7
	Premature referrals	9	4	4	6
	Discontinued Investigation	3	6	3	2
<b>Total Not Investigated</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>
Investigated	Findings of no maladministration	3	6	15	8
	Satisfied with LA's actions	8	3	0	0
	Findings of maladministration & injustice	2	2	4	3
	Ongoing	0	0	2	3
<b>Total Investigated</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>

## 5. Informal complaints and enquiries

As has been indicated previously, the 'headline' figure of the number of formal complaints does not reflect the number of concerns or problems reported to the Authority, and satisfactorily dealt with by staff and via the Members Enquiries System.

The Customer & Member Liaison Office also monitor the number of enquiries and informal complaints, or 'pre-complaint enquiries' dealt with by its staff, and these figures are shown in Table 14. This information has already proved valuable on a number of occasions as early indicators of developing issues in some service areas.

<b>Table 13 - Pre complaint &amp; general enquiries processed by CMLO</b>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Children, Young People & Learning	21	29	11	18
Adult Social Care	31	25	18	18
Cultural Services	55	39	19	17
North Tyneside Homes	132	114	79	84
Kier North Tyneside	90	46	30	29
Environmental Services	410	417	306	353
Customer Services, Revs & Bens	52	58	36	32
Law & Governance	51	43	23	20
Finance & Resources	43	39	25	21
Other	4	4	3	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>599</b>



# NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

## CORPORATE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

(Amended 1 September 2006)

<p><b>STAGE 1</b></p>       <p>10 working days to respond in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints can be received by any employee/office but usually in a Customer Services Centre, the Telephone Call Centre or Customer Liaison Office.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints are registered on computer and referred to Service Area</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Manager informed, makes enquiries and responds to the complainant in writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>STAGE 2</b></p>       <p>10 working days to respond in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If not satisfied with the Stage 1 reply, the complainant has 10 working days to ask, giving reasons, for a more senior manager to review matters.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case referred to Head of Service or other Senior Manager to review whole complaint and first response.</li> </ul>
<p><b>STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE</b></p>       <p>Held within 28 calendar days of request.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If not satisfied with Stage 2 reply the complainant has 10 working days to ask, giving reasons, for the complaint to be considered by a Committee of up to 5 Councillors.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The complainant and officers are invited to attend and present their cases, supported by all previous correspondence etc.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The decision of the Committee is the final stage of the Council's internal procedure, the decision is communicated to the complainant within 24 hours and confirmed in writing within 5 working days.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FURTHER OPTIONS</b></p>	<p>Complainants advised to consider consulting Citizen's Advice, a solicitor or Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. The Ombudsman will only look into a complaint if the Council has not first examined it in exceptional circumstances.</p>

# NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

## CHILDREN ACT 1989

(\*Amended 1 September 2006)

STAGE 1	<p>Sometimes known as the 'informal' stage.</p> <p>10 working days to respond, can extend to 20 if need be.</p>	<p>Receipt and referral of complaint to Complaints staff</p> <hr/> <p>Service Manager informed of the problem, makes enquiries and responds to the complainant.</p>
STAGE 2	<p>Sometimes known as the 'formal' stage.</p> <p>25 working days to respond can extend to maximum of 65.</p>	<p>Progress to this stage if:-</p> <p>Complainant feels problem not resolved at stage 1, it is a particularly serious complaint, the complainant requests to by-pass stage 1.</p> <hr/> <p>All stage 2 investigations are co-ordinated by Complaints Manager in Customer Liaison Office.</p> <hr/> <p>For Children Act complaints an 'Independent Investigator' and 'Independent Person' are appointed.</p> <hr/> <p>The Head of Service responds to the complainant after consideration of the investigator's report.</p>
STAGE 3  REVIEW PANEL	<p>Held within 28 days of request for Review Panel.</p>	<p>Progress to this stage if complainant is not satisfied at stage 2.</p> <p>A Review Panel considers the complaint, the investigator's report and the response of the Head of Service.</p> <p>*It comprises 3 independent people recruited from outside of the Council.</p> <p>Relevant Director communicates Review Panel outcome to complainant within 15 working days with any actions to be taken.</p>
FURTHER OPTIONS	<p>Complainants will be advised to consider consulting Citizen's Advice, a solicitor or Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint if it has not first been examined by the Council.</p>	

## Summary of Customer Liaison Complaints Survey (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)

16% of survey forms issued were returned

How easy was it to find information about the complaints service?	Easy	Neither	Difficult
	54%	30%	16%

If help was sought from staff, how helpful was it?	Helpful	Neither	Unhelpful
	65%	14%	21%

If a leaflet was received, how helpful was the information?	Helpful	Neither	Unhelpful
	67%	22%	11%

How satisfied were you with the response time?	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied
	63%	11%	26%

Was response easy to understand?	Easy	Neither	Difficult
	81%	10%	9%

Did response letter tell you what to do if unhappy?	Yes	No
	88%	12%

How good was the process?	Very good	Fairly good	Neither	Fairly poor	Very poor
	39%	27%	8%	8%	18%

Were you satisfied with the outcome?	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	26%	26%	8%	9%	31%

20 July 2017

*By email*

Patrick Melia  
Chief Executive  
North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Patrick Melia,

### **Annual Review letter 2017**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2017. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority and the decisions we made during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

The reporting year saw the retirement of Dr Jane Martin after completing her seven year tenure as Local Government Ombudsman. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of Ombudsman in January and look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector in my new role.

You may notice the inclusion of the '*Social Care Ombudsman*' in our name and logo. You will be aware that since 2010 we have operated with jurisdiction over all registered adult social care providers, able to investigate complaints about care funded and arranged privately. The change is in response to frequent feedback from care providers who tell us that our current name is a real barrier to recognition within the social care sector. We hope this change will help to give this part of our jurisdiction the profile it deserves.

### **Complaint statistics**

Last year, we provided for the first time statistics on how the complaints we upheld against your authority were remedied. This year's letter, again, includes a breakdown of upheld complaints to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us.

We have chosen not to include a 'compliance rate' this year; this indicated a council's compliance with our recommendations to remedy a fault. From April 2016, we established a new mechanism for ensuring the recommendations we make to councils are implemented, where they are agreed to. This has meant the recommendations we make are more specific, and will often include a time-frame for completion. We will then follow up with a council and seek evidence that recommendations have been implemented. As a result of this new process, we plan to report a more sophisticated suite of information about compliance and service improvement in the future.

This is likely to be just one of several changes we will make to our annual letters and the way we present our data to you in the future. We surveyed councils earlier in the year to find out, amongst other things, how they use the data in annual letters and what data is the most useful; thank you to those officers who responded. The feedback will inform new work to

provide you, your officers and elected members, and members of the public, with more meaningful data that allows for more effective scrutiny and easier comparison with other councils. We will keep in touch with you as this work progresses.

I want to emphasise that the statistics in this letter comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

### **The statutory duty to report Ombudsman findings and recommendations**

As you will no doubt be aware, there is duty under section 5(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for your Monitoring Officer to prepare a formal report to the council where it appears that the authority, or any part of it, has acted or is likely to act in such a manner as to constitute maladministration or service failure, and where the LGO has conducted an investigation in relation to the matter.

This requirement applies to all Ombudsman complaint decisions, not just those that result in a public report. It is therefore a significant statutory duty that is triggered in most authorities every year following findings of fault by my office. I have received several enquiries from authorities to ask how I expect this duty to be discharged. I thought it would therefore be useful for me to take this opportunity to comment on this responsibility.

I am conscious that authorities have adopted different approaches to respond proportionately to the issues raised in different Ombudsman investigations in a way that best reflects their own local circumstances. I am comfortable with, and supportive of, a flexible approach to how this duty is discharged. I do not seek to impose a proscriptive approach, as long as the Parliamentary intent is fulfilled in some meaningful way and the authority's performance in relation to Ombudsman investigations is properly communicated to elected members.

As a general guide I would suggest:

- Where my office has made findings of maladministration/fault in regard to routine mistakes and service failures, and the authority has agreed to remedy the complaint by implementing the recommendations made following an investigation, I feel that the duty is satisfactorily discharged if the Monitoring Officer makes a periodic report to the council summarising the findings on all upheld complaints over a specific period. In a small authority this may be adequately addressed through an annual report on complaints to members, for example.
- Where an investigation has wider implications for council policy or exposes a more significant finding of maladministration, perhaps because of the scale of the fault or injustice, or the number of people affected, I would expect the Monitoring Officer to consider whether the implications of that investigation should be individually reported to members.
- In the unlikely event that an authority is minded not to comply with my recommendations following a finding of maladministration, I would always expect the Monitoring Officer to report this to members under section five of the Act. This is an exceptional and unusual course of action for any authority to take and should be considered at the highest tier of the authority.

The duties set out above in relation to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are in addition to, not instead of, the pre-existing duties placed on all authorities in relation to Ombudsman reports under The Local Government Act 1974. Under those provisions, whenever my office issues a formal, public report to your authority you are obliged to lay that report before the council for consideration and respond within three months setting out the action that you have taken, or propose to take, in response to the report.

I know that most local authorities are familiar with these arrangements, but I happy to discuss this further with you or your Monitoring Officer if there is any doubt about how to discharge these duties in future.

### **Manual for Councils**

We greatly value our relationships with council Complaints Officers, our single contact points at each authority. To support them in their roles, we have published a Manual for Councils, setting out in detail what we do and how we investigate the complaints we receive. When we surveyed Complaints Officers, we were pleased to hear that 73% reported they have found the manual useful.

The manual is a practical resource and reference point for all council staff, not just those working directly with us, and I encourage you to share it widely within your organisation. The manual can be found on our website [www.lgo.org.uk/link-officers](http://www.lgo.org.uk/link-officers)

### **Complaint handling training**

Our training programme is one of the ways we use the outcomes of complaints to promote wider service improvements and learning. We delivered an ambitious programme of 75 courses during the year, training over 800 council staff and more 400 care provider staff. Post-course surveys showed a 92% increase in delegates' confidence in dealing with complaints. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for England  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

**Local Authority Report:** North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council  
**For the Period Ending:** 31/03/2017

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:  
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

## Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
7	4	5	6	6	3	3	2	0	36

## Decisions made

Decisions made				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
1	0	18	11	4	3	43%	37

### Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.  
 The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

### Complaints Remedied

by LGO

3

Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement

0