



North Tyneside Council



# 2012-2015 Council Strategic Plan and Budget Setting Process:

Council Strategic Plan and Budget  
Summary Engagement Activity  
18 - 31 January

widening  
**horizons**

[www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)

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### 1. Introduction

On 18 January 2012 Cabinet agreed the Council Strategic Plan and Budget Engagement Summary, delegated authority was granted to the Elected Mayor, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Chief Executive, the Interim Strategic Director and the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources to consider any comments received after that date from residents and stakeholders on the council strategic plan and budget proposals, which was provided to Cabinet on 18 January 2012 and is provided to Council along with this report.

This report provides a summary of comments received between 18 January 2012 and 31 January 2012, and is an addendum to the main engagement summary report.

An overview of the engagement process and activities is outlined in the main Engagement Summary Report (Cabinet Report 18 January 2012, page 196).

This report provides:

- an overview of any potential new issues raised between 18 - 31 January 2012
- a themed summary of the areas raised between 18-31 January 2012

In total throughout the whole consultation period, there have been over 100 events held. There have been 4,637 hits on the website and 46 e-mails provided with feedback from residents. There have also been two petitions in relation to Monkseaton library and Howdon community centre.

### 2. Overview

There are no new issues arising from this ongoing period of engagement.

### 3. Themed summary

Set out below is a themed summary of the main areas raised since 18 January together with information on what the Council is doing to address them. This was via meetings and events as well as feedback on the Council's Website.

In the same way as for the engagement which took place before 18 January, there has been general support for the proposals and a recognition that the Council has to take some tough decisions in order to meet its financial challenges.

- **Delivering sustainable growth**

Meetings with Council tenants have welcomed the increase in the repairs budget and council housing. There has been a positive response to the proposals to build around 950 new council homes over the next 30 years. There was some concern about the potential impact of the rent increase on those people affected. However, it was felt that it was better to have this rent increase rather than have having to reduce housing services now and in future years.

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- **Supporting people to be healthy and independent and protecting the vulnerable**

A number of events held with residents who use Adult Social Care services, and service providers reflect the key messages that have been summarised into the main report. There were suggestions as to how people can be signposted to services. Providers suggested that service monitoring should be coordinated between Local Authorities and the NHS.

Some concerns have been raised, in writing, in relation to the proposals regarding clubs for young people. A number of bowling clubs have responded to the council's proposals regarding this area. The Council is continuing discussions with users of these services to agree the best way forward and there has been a positive response from some clubs who are seeking the opportunity to take on more responsibility for facilities.

There have been a number of additional responses regarding the effect of the proposals for the refugee service on individuals and families trying to access services such as housing, education and social services. The Council will continue to work to ensure that mainstream services are available for everyone.

It was suggested that the warden service should be retained. However, there was an acknowledgement that there is potential to provide the service in a different way, with Carecall providing a service to all tenants when the wardens are not available. People welcomed the fact that consultation meetings are to be held in each sheltered scheme to discuss the proposals further.

- **Protecting and enhancing the environment**

Some concerns have been received regarding the proposed increase in charges for allotments and the removal of the Ease Cards discount. Provision will be made in the proposals for any existing allotment tenant to downsize their plot, if they wish to do so. There is currently an approximate waiting list of 1,500 for the 1,924 plots in use. Any vacated or downsized plot would be offered up to those on the waiting list. Allotment tenants will also be able to pay in four instalments.

- **Making change happen, improving customer service and facing up to our financial challenges**

There was a continued response from residents, including children and young people regarding the remodelling of the library service.

The proposals for community centres were accepted. However, residents felt that the Community Based Trust services and venues should be maintained to the current quality. Comments have also been raised regarding the proposals for Shiremoor community centre and Howdon community centre, with concerns as to whether an organisation could manage the facilities. A petition has been received in relation to Howdon community centre. Meetings are currently being

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arranged with ward councillors and stakeholders to clarify the proposals regarding management options.

The introduction of charges for staff parking at Quadrant has also been raised as a concern. Discussions with staff will continue.

### **5. Equalities**

We are having due regard to all aspects of equality and diversity legislation. Through the very broad ranging engagement process, the full spectrum of different minority groups has had the opportunity to respond and provide feedback on the proposals.