

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Enquiries to: Jackie Roll
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Date: 27 June 2017

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL** to be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, on **WEDNESDAY 5 JULY 2017** at **3.00 pm** to transact the business mentioned in the accompanying agenda paper.

Yours faithfully,



Interim Chief Executive

To the members of the County Council

Daljit Lally – Interim Chief Executive

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NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

5 JULY 2017

AGENDA PAPER

Business to be transacted at a meeting of the County Council, to be held on the 5th day of July 2017

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(a) Minutes of the Annual Meeting 24 May 2017

Minutes of the annual meeting of the County Council held on Wednesday 24 May 2017, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, signed by the Business Chair and sealed with the Common Seal of the Council (**see pages 11-28**).

(b) Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 April 2017

At the Council's annual meeting held on 24 May 2017, a point of accuracy was raised regarding the 5 April minutes (Minute No.4 relating to a question raised by Councillor G. Jones) without sufficient detail for it to be debated. The further detail regarding the issue is set out below for members to debate:-

Councillor Jones' verbatim comment raised under the minutes of the Corporate Performance OSC:-

"On Saturday 1st of April I received an email from a County Councillor alleging that they had been harassed and that this harassment was subject to a Police investigation. On Monday 3rd of April I was called by the Police stating that they had raised an incident on the 3rd of April and asking whether I had received a letter, presumably related to the alleged harassment.

I have been subjected to a long campaign of harassment and intimidation and it does not appear that Northumbria Police has provided me with the same level of service. What will the Council do to ensure me a similar duty of care and what will the Council do to ensure that I and all other councillors are treated fairly and equally by Northumbria Police when subjected to harassment and intimidation?"

The minute stated:

"With regard to Minute No. 23.2 (Performance Management - Hate Crime), Councillor G. Jones commented that he had been subjected to a long campaign of harassment and humiliation with no protection from Northumbria Police. He asked what the Council would do to support him on this. The Business Chair responded that he would ask Councillor Simpson to pursue this issue through the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Safer Northumberland Partnership."

Council asked whether the minutes of 5 April 2017 should be amended to reflect this verbatim comment.

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest) they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room

NB Any member needing clarification must contact Liam Henry, Legal Services Manager, on 01670 623324. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

- 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS** by the Business Chair, Leader and Head of the Paid Service.
- 5. CORRESPONDENCE** (if any) to date of meeting.
- 6. QUESTIONS** to be put to the Business Chair, a member of the Cabinet or the Chair of any Committee or Sub Committee, in accordance with the Constitution's Rules of Procedure No.10.
- 7. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER MINUTES** from the following Committees:-
 - (1) **Audit Committee** (see pages 29-34)

8. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ECONOMY

Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy

To inform Council's consideration of the following motion in relation to the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Draft Plan which was submitted to Government for independent examination on 7 April 2017 following approval at the meeting of Council on 22 February 2017:

- Rescind the previous decision to approve the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Pre Submission Draft Plan (as modified) for submission to Government for independent examination;
- Formally withdraw the Core Strategy from the independent examination process and advise the Secretary of State of this decision;
- Instruct Officers to undertake a full review of the housing and employment numbers, and strategic land use allocations, required during the Plan period to sustain County-wide and regional economic growth; and
- Resolve to undertake the work required to carry out the review and progress any necessary associated work and public consultation to enable the Council to reconsider approval of the Core Strategy for submission to Government as soon as practicable (**see pages 35-42**).

9. NOTICE OF MOTION

Motion No.1

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure No.10, Councillor P. Jackson to move the following motion, received by the Democratic Services Manager on 13 June 2017:-

"We call upon the Council to review its decision made on 22 February 2017 to approve the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Pre Submission Draft Plan (as modified) and submit it to Government for independent examination.

It is important for Northumberland County Council to support an economic and housing growth agenda aimed at creating sustainable and successful communities across the County. It is equally important that the Council fully commits to the ambitions of the North East LEP Strategic Economic Plan. Ongoing support for, and commitment to, the North of Tyne devolution agenda is also critical.

Whilst acknowledging the above, we have serious reservations relating to the level of new housing development proposed in the Core Strategy. The

proposed level of new housing in the County, at 24,320 by 2031 plus the inclusion of up to an additional 2,000 houses at Dissington Garden Village over and above objectively assessed need, are significant issues. Recent and anticipated national publications on housing and population projections, together with the recent refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan, present an opportunity to review the housing numbers required for Northumberland to play its part in securing long term sustainable economic and housing growth across the whole of the North East.

This would require further work and consultation in relation to the Core Strategy and this should be undertaken in a timely manner in order to minimise the period that Northumberland has without an up-to-date Plan in place. It is therefore proposed that Council:

- *Rescinds its previous decision to approve the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Pre Submission Draft Plan (as modified) for submission to Government for independent examination;*
- *Formally withdraws the Core Strategy from the independent examination process and advises the Secretary of State of this decision;*
- *Instructs Officers to undertake a full review of the housing and employment numbers, and strategic land use allocations, required during the Plan period to sustain County-wide and regional economic growth; and*
- *Resolves to undertake the work required to carry out the review and progress any necessary associated work and public consultation to enable the Council to reconsider approval of the Core Strategy for submission to Government as soon as practicable”.*

Motion No.2

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure No.10, Councillor S. Bridgett to move the following motion, received by the Democratic Services Manager on 9 May 2017:-

The twelve inpatient beds at Rothbury Community Hospital were closed in September 2016 by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and the Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group.

Since then, both organisations have proposed the permanent removal of these beds. As such they have only consulted on one option in the recent consultation, not even giving residents of my area in Rothbury, Coquetdale, Whittingham Vale, Glanton and Elsdon the possibility of considering another option.

Whilst the Council is not directly responsible for this matter, it does have statutory and political options that it could consider. I would therefore propose that this Council:

- 1. Formally opposes the proposed removal of the twelve inpatient beds at Rothbury Community Hospital;*
- 2. Recommends that the Council's Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee refers the matter to the Secretary of State with the powers given to it under Statutory Instruments No 218, The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, Part 4, Section 23, Paragraph 9; and*
- 3. The Council carries out a full Risk Appraisal report that investigates the possibility of loaning Northumbria Healthcare Trust the money required to buy themselves out of the PFI contract currently held on Rothbury Community Hospital but with the caveat of the potential annual savings being used to re-open the beds at Rothbury Community Hospital. A similar proposal was undertaken by the previous administration with regards to Hexham Hospital.*

10. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Appointment of External Auditors

This report outlines the outcomes of a collaborative procurement exercise for a local (external) auditor undertaken jointly by Northumberland County Council, North Tyneside Council and Newcastle City Council.

Northumberland County Council has acted as the lead contracting Authority in this collaborative arrangement. The report explains the recommendation of the Independent Auditor Panel (convened as required by statute to advise on the selection of local auditor) that Ernst and Young be appointed by full Council as Northumberland County Council's local (external) auditor, for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2023. The report also explains the value for money that this procurement will be likely to deliver for all three Authorities involved in this collaborative procurement (**see pages 43-56**)

11. REPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

Local Area Council Boundaries

Further to the decision of Council on 5 July 2017, and following consideration with the local members involved, Council is asked to agree the following changes to the Local Area Council boundaries (**see also pages 57-60**):-

Stakeford Electoral Division - moves from Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley LAC into Castle Morpeth LAC

Bothal Electoral Division - moves from Castle Morpeth LAC into Ashington and Blyth LAC

12. INDEPENDENT MEMBERS ON AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Council's Audit Committee currently has two non voting independent members, Mr A. Haywood-Smith and Mrs I Walker, who have served on the Committee since December 2012. Independent members bring additional skills and experience to the work of the Audit Committee and their inclusion on the Committee reflects best practice.

It has recently come to light that the existing term of office of the independent members has expired. In order to provide some continuity and to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee, Council is asked to agree the continuation of the term of office of the two existing members, and the continuation of their special responsibility allowance, until 6 September 2017, when Council will then be asked to review the existing arrangements for independent members.

13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES CHAMPION

To consider the annual report of the Armed Forces Forum (**see pages 61-64**)

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

Name (please print):

Meeting:

Date:

Item to which your interest relates:

Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):

Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):

Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?

1. Registerable Personal Interests – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

- a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or
- b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

2. Non-Registerable Personal Interests - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

3. Non-Participation in Council Business

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.