

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 19 March 2024 at 1.00 pm

Meeting to be held: Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF.

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AGENDA

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North of Tyne Combined Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5 December 2023

(1.00pm - 2.40 pm)

Meeting held: Chamber 0.02, North Tyneside Council, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY

Minutes

Present:

Chair: B Flux

Councillors S Fairlie, J Harrison, L Marshall, J Montague, C Seymour, G Stone and L Wright

20 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

21 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Caroline Ball.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

23 AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2023

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

24 ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET

Submitted: Report of Head of Inclusive Growth (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

L Mills (Head of Inclusive Growth) presented the report which provided an update on the performance of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) in the academic year 2022-23. The report outlined the adult education opportunities created and the plan to devolve the AEB to NEMCA for the 2024-25 academic year.

In presenting the report L Mills highlighted the following key points:

- 44% of enrolments were in the top 10% of deprived wards across NTCA.
- 53% of enrolments were undertaken by residents with no or low qualifications.
- 72% of enrolments were undertaken by unemployed residents.
- Areas to build on were identified as;
 - improving analysis of Community Learning, focusing on positive outcomes and value for money;
 - improving analysis of learner destinations and progression;
 - monitoring demand for ESOL provision, working with providers to maximise opportunities for residents.
- Enrolment opportunities were increased by 2,491 on the previous academic year, with 35,200 enrolment opportunities undertaken during the year. Of those undertaken, 91% were completed and of that figure, 96% were achieved.
- The pandemic and cost of living crisis shifted priorities and a number of flexibilities were introduced to target where it was needed most. For example, the requirement for employed residents to contribute 50% towards the cost of their learning was removed.
- Stakeholder engagement events had been held in preparation for the delivery of NEMCA's devolved AEB. Grant fundings agreements had been endorsed and remaining funds would be commissioned through a competitive procurement process open to all providers.

Questions were then invited and in discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- i. There was ring-fenced funding for community learning and further analysis work was underway to identify where it was taking place and what value it was adding.
- ii. Learning support funding had enabled providers to offer things such as bus fares and childcare in order to support learners and improve accessibility.
- iii. Work with grant providers is undertaken when delivery plans are submitted around the locations and specific venues the provision will be provided from. The team therefore has oversight on all delivery plans in order to monitor. Data showed it was reaching communities and as well as online opportunities the whole geographical area was covered although it was acknowledged that there is always more that could be done.
- iv. During the pandemic there was a significant volume of online learning. However, for some residents that would not be suitable and it was noted that there is more outreach learning underway. Through business plans the service would ask for specific information regarding the balance between online and in-person learning.
- v. Vocational level 3 qualifications, equivalent to A-Levels were available in key growth sectors. It was noted that many of which were recognised by universities. Progression opportunities continued to be built on, although primarily it was targeted at residents at the lower level of progression to get them into jobs.

- vi. Progression data was patchy and further work was underway to improve upon that this year. Going forward providers would be asked to deliver data regarding their learners employment. During 2024/25 the DfE would be looking at earnings data and providers would be asked to confirm if learners progressed into a job within the same sector as their qualification.
- vii. Ward data will be brought back in future updates.
- viii. Overall enrolments have increased year on year. There were 35,000 learning opportunities undertaken in 2022/23, 91% were completed and of those completed 96% were achieved.
- ix. Within the contracts with providers, the Authority set out its expectations in terms of marketing the courses offered and encouraging take up.
- x. In response to a question regarding value for money, it was noted that there was the same amount of money as there was in 2017/18, however enrolments had increased and therefore the number of residents able to access courses had increased, which demonstrated that value for money had increased. It was noted that specific value for money details would be a focus for 2024/25 work.
- xi. In terms of learners who complete courses but do not achieve the accreditation, there was the chance for assessments to be re-taken, however this would potentially fall into the following academic years data.
- xii. Further information would be provided at a future date regarding; how many learners moved to employment, type of employment, increased job capacity or first time jobs as well as earnings data. In addition, figures around deprivation would also be provided.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

- i. Noted the performance of NTCAs devolved AEB in AY 2022-23
- ii. Endorsed the approach to managing NTCAs devolved AEB in AY 2023-24
- iii. That Committee members comments be noted to help shape the policy planning for NEMCAs devolved AEB in preparation for delivery from AY 2024-25 onwards.

25 **CHILD POVERTY PREVENTION PROGRAMME**

Submitted: Report of Senior Programme Manager, Child Poverty Prevention (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

J Unthank (Senior Programme Manager, Child Poverty Prevention) presented the report to Committee on the impact and development of the Child Poverty Prevention Programme (CPPP) for the North of Tyne.

In presenting the report J Unthank highlighted the following key points:

- Child poverty remained a barrier to an inclusive economy in the area. Most recent estimates showed a worsening picture of child poverty.
- A significant proportion of children living below the poverty line were from working households, therefore part of the work of the programme was focussed on employment.
- Following consultations, the programme was developed around three pillars of work; poverty interventions in schools, welfare support through the school gate and working with employers to tackle child poverty.

- Pilot interventions were taken up by 96 schools across the combined authority. Schools could choose the most appropriate interventions for their pupils and community.
- 15 schools benefited from a poverty proofing audit and school uniform support was delivered in two schools, which impacted on over 800 pupils and families.
- 1340 pupils benefitted from after school clubs, 650 participants engaged in family learning courses and grant funded projects were delivered in 23 schools.
- Access to welfare guidance was brought to 33 schools and supported over 600 families, which resulted in over £500,000 benefit gains.
- Work was undertaken with 25 organisations in the combined authority area to support them to implement strategies to help alleviate in-work poverty of staff. This work covered an employee community of 14,203 employees, of which 9,770 lived within the NTCA.
- Further funding was secured for another year to build on the pilot phase of work undertaken in the 2022/23 academic year.
- Delivery of phase 2 began in September 2023 and the programme was expanded to include a further pillar; the critical 1,001 days. The aim of this was to reduce the disadvantage on babies and children from conception to school age. Through this pillar, the regional Baby Box pilot was planned to be expanded.
- Engagement work would continue with schools, partners and public health teams and evaluations from last year would be used to inform work going forward.

Questions were then invited and in discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- i. Mapping of schools and participating employers would be shared with the Committee. Work to target schools was done with local authority officers who knew where targeted work was required.
- ii. When the pilot was developed it was anticipated that a significant number of schools would take up the school uniform support. However, there was only a small uptake due to the DfE review of statutory guidance regarding school uniforms which meant a requirement for schools to provide second hand uniforms.
- iii. The Baby Box was introduced by the Children's Foundation and was a take on the Scottish Baby Box. It was noted that the large box doubled as a sleeping space and included a plethora of engagement items to promote positive parenting behaviour and bonding in early days. 750 boxes have been funded for targeted intervention for new parents on the vulnerable parent pathways.
- iv. In response to a question regarding engagement beyond mainstream school, it was noted that delivery of the programme was focussed on schools but that within schools they monitored needs in terms of SEN and health for example. It was also noted that within the scope of pillar 3, this would provide support to a wide range of children.
- v. Just under a quarter of schools were undertaking CPPP initiatives, however work was underway towards a cross fertilisation between the Education Improvement Partnership and the CPPP, where there is engagement in over 75% of schools across the North of Tyne area. Work was underway to develop relationships with those schools although it was acknowledged that schools cannot be forced to participate. It was also recognised that school leaders would be challenged in terms of monitoring those children in poverty and the CPPP would work towards lessening the burden on schools as far as possible.

- vi. Pillar four of phase two was a gentle step away from schools and evidence showed that children in households with under 5's were most affected by child poverty.
- vii. In response to a question regarding the targeting of the programme it was noted that, in order to ensure work was not being duplicated, a detailed mapping exercise was undertaken as some settings were already being supported by Local Authority teams. Therefore, resources and support were mapped out and initiatives targeted to where would have the most impact. Further information on the mapping of schools would be provided to the Committee.
- viii. Evaluation of the Baby Box had started in relation to its roll out in Newcastle and Gateshead and information would be drawn out from that in terms of rolling out across the combined authority.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee examined the progress made in delivering the programme and that Committee members reflections be noted.

26 **POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION**

Submitted: Report of Senior Programme Manager, NTCA (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

J Unthank, Senior Programme Manager, presented a report on progress towards NTCA's Poverty Truth Commission (PTC). The report provided an update on key achievements since the last update in November 2022.

In presenting the report J Unthank highlighted the following key points:

- The North of Tyne PTC was the first Commission to occur on a Combined Authority footprint. Children North East was appointed to deliver the PTC over two years.
- Since the last update, progress continued through the four stages and the commission was extended by six months to January 2024, due to the initial Covid-related delay in recruitment.
- Over the last year working groups were established around the three themes; food/fuel poverty, caring responsibilities and health. It was noted that monthly meetings continued to be held and projects were underway in each thematic group.
- Children North East (CNE) had completed the third 'Experiment' stage and projects were close to completion. Following completion, CNE would produce a final report.
- NTCA officers will be evaluating the methodology and implementation of the PTC between November and January. There would be an opportunity to develop a direct relationship between PTC commissioners and NTCA.

Questions were then invited and in discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- i. In response to a question around whether the project had been successful, J Unthank stated that the ambition was to develop the NTCA's workstreams, to link with communities and allow opportunities for them to influence policy. It was acknowledged that work had not yet completed and was somewhat at

arms-length, however there were examples of where lived experience had influenced policy. It was noted that there was a huge amount of learning to be taken from this work.

- ii. It was difficult to quantify outputs but further information was requested to come back to the Committee once the evaluation had been completed.
- iii. In terms of the phases outlined, it was anticipated that elements would be embedded by January but that there would be more to come thereafter.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report and agreed that a further update be brought back to a future meeting.

27 **NORTH EAST COMBINED AUTHORITY INITIAL BUDGET PROPOSALS AND CORPORATE PLAN**

Submitted: Report of Senior Governance Officer and Scrutiny Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

J Gillespie, Director of Finance, introduced the report which set out the initial budget proposals for the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA).

In presenting the report J Gillespie highlighted the following key points:

- Areas outstanding that were being worked on were around the pension fund contributions and what they would look like. Also, a prudent assumption was taken on staff turnover.
- Work has been undertaken to set out the overarching objectives in terms of the approach to developing an overall investment strategy for NEMCA.
- In terms of the draft overall investment fund, indications of those known revenue and capital streams of funding until 2029 were provided and a breakdown of different funds and North of Tyne commitments.

Questions were then invited and in discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- i. In response to a question regarding the deliverability around transport it was confirmed that there were current clear indications for future years, however they had not been built in yet until transport funding levels had been confirmed.
- ii. Initial budget proposals for NEMCA had been taken to NTCA Cabinet and NECA Leadership Board for approval as the existing governance arrangements. Further consideration of the budget proposals would be taken by the first meeting of the new NEMCA Cabinet, expected to be in June 2024.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Examined and considered the North East Mayoral Combined Authority 2025-2029 Initial Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Proposals, which were submitted to and approved by NTCA's Cabinet and the NECA Leadership Board on 28 November 2023.
- b) Referred its comments to the Director of Finance in relation to the initial proposals to be taken into account in formulating the final proposals.
- c) Agreed to convene a budget workshop to be held on 16 January 2024 to enable members of the Committee to examine in more detail the final budget proposals.

- d) Invited members of the North East Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Transport Committee's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to attend the workshop.
- e) Authorised the Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Committee, to formulate the wording of any observations and/or recommendations arising from the workshop for submission to the NTCA Cabinet to be held on 30 January 2024.

28 **Q2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

Submitted: Report of the Director of Finance (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

J Gillespie (Director of Finance) presented the report to inform Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 2023/24 NTCA second quarter budget position. The report highlighted the forecast financial position for the Corporate, Investment Fund, Brownfield Housing Fund and Adult Education Budget.

In presenting the report J Gillespie highlighted the following key points:

- The main variations in relation to the corporate budget were due to additional staffing budget, funded through additional grant income.
- Investment Fund at the end of September showed the total committed programmes and allocated funds was just over £154m. The period end spend was £55m, with the ambition to spend £100m by this financial year end. It was acknowledged that there were a lot of projects now in full delivery so there was confidence the level of spend would be achieved.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the report on the 2023/24 Q2 NTCA Budget Monitor Report and appended Mid-Year Treasury Management Report which was presented to Cabinet on 28 November 2023.

29 **SCRUTINY PROTOCOL FOR ENGLISH INSTITUTIONS WITH DEVOLVED POWERS**

Submitted: Report of Senior Governance Officer and Scrutiny Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

M Robson introduced the report which set out details of the Scrutiny Protocol for English Institutions with Devolved Powers ('the Scrutiny Protocol') and how the guidance might be adopted locally.

In presenting the report M Robson highlighted the following key points:

- The protocol set out the government's expectations of scrutiny in combined authorities and included 18 key principles of good scrutiny.
- The protocol was not statutory guidance but government would expect that combined authorities and scrutiny committees would be adhering to the principles.
- The protocol provided an opportunity for early consideration and comment and there would be further opportunities to look at it during the workshop in January.

Questions were then invited and in discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- i. Members were keen to see effective scrutiny arrangements built into NEMCA and welcomed the protocol.
- ii. Best practice was highlighted in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire and therefore it was suggested that examples from those areas be shared at the workshop.
- iii. There were potential difficulties in terms of ensuring a geographical balanced membership and concerns were also raised around ensuring the most appropriate representatives were part of the new scrutiny arrangements in NEMCA.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the guidance set out in the Scrutiny Protocol and commented on how the principles might be adopted locally by the NEMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

30 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 19 March 2024 at 1pm in Conference Rooms 1 and 2, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF.



Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Brownfield Housing Fund programme including its aims, impact and performance to date and how the programme will be extended and developed as part of the transition to the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Note the sites awarded Brownfield Housing Fund funding and review the impact to date.
3. Acknowledge the award of an additional £17.4m Brownfield Housing Fund resources to support delivery in Local Authority areas to the South of the Tyne within the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority and note progress to date.

1 Brownfield Housing Fund Context

- 1.1 In the 2020 Budget, a £400 million Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) for Mayoral Combined Authorities to unlock stalled Brownfield sites was announced. In July 2020, the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) was awarded a £23,853,618 to unlock between 1,500 and 2,500 new homes. A further extension to the Brownfield Housing Fund was confirmed in the Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022. NTCA was awarded an additional £7,976,893 share to unlock an additional 600 units, bringing the total amount of BHF awarded to £31,830,511 to unlock at least 2,100 new homes. This funding is to run over a five-year period, with expenditure to be contracted by no later than 31 March 2025.
- 1.2 NTCA and Local Authorities have worked closely to develop the pipeline of proposals for the BHF which was endorsed by the Housing & Land Board and Investment Panel in Autumn 2020 and an updated pipeline was endorsed as part of the BHF Delivery Plan in July 2022 and August 2023, as a result of additional funding secured through the NE Devolution Deal. Schemes which pass the initial gateway process have been added to the pipeline and invited to prepare full business cases. Once business cases are finalised, they are externally appraised and presented to Technical Officers Group and Investment Panel as part of the NTCA Assurance Framework for investment consideration and approval.
- 1.3 As part of the North East Devolution Deal, an additional £17,409,710 BHF was secured to expand the programme across all constituent authorities of the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) area. This funding is to be contracted by 31 March 2026 to unlock at least 1,134 new homes. On 8 September 2023 a pipeline of sites was agreed for Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Local Authority areas and it was agreed that NTCA would act as the accountable body for the whole programme. These schemes are being progressed alongside the North of Tyne Brownfield Housing Fund and its pipeline of sites. Overall, the Brownfield Housing Fund totals £49,240,221 with a commitment to unlock over 3,200 homes. This is detailed in the table below.

Brownfield Housing Fund	Fund Allocation	Housing numbers to be unlocked
BHF NTCA 1	£23,853,618	1,500 – 2,500
BHF NTCA 2	£7,976,893	600
BHF NEMCA South of Tyne	£17,409,710	1,134
Total	£49,240,221	3,234+

1.4 The BHF Programme provides an important opportunity to help meet the housing objectives of the region and to leverage private and public sector investment.

2. Aims and Eligibility of the Brownfield Housing Fund

2.1 The aim of the BHF is to bring forward stalled sites for development and thus unlocking the land for housing development. All schemes considered and funded through the fund must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Located on brownfield sites with a capital funding request
- HMT Green Book compliant business case with a minimum Benefit Cost Ratio of 1
- Demonstrate proven market failure and could not happen without the financial support of the fund
- Spend the Brownfield Housing Funding and start the construction of housing by 31 March 2025 in areas to the north of the Tyne or March 2027 in areas to the south of the Tyne
- Included in an updated or emerging Local Plan
- Compliant with UK Subsidy Control Act 2023 (Formerly State Aid)
- Create synergies with other government funds where applicable
- Use local SMEs / supply chains where possible

2.2 All levels of funding will be considered but the amount requested needs to be evidenced through a development appraisal for the scheme. The fund is focused on site development and eligible capital expenditure that it can support includes site acquisition and investigation, site remediation and clearance, installation of utilities infrastructure, demolition, pre-drilling, retaining wall construction, energy infrastructure ground preparation, grouting of seams and professional fees as part of land assembly processes. The fund enables the delivery of housing on sites which otherwise would not have progressed due to site constraints leading to poor financial viability.

3. The BHF Programme and Sites

3.1 The BHF Programme for the NTCA 1 and 2 allocations (£31, 830,511) is fully committed, with an agreed pipeline as previously reported. Since the last update provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2023 the following schemes have been approved:

Scheme	Local Authority (LA) Area	BHF Award (£m)	Units
Walker Riverside	Newcastle	4.87	277
Lyndon Walk	Northumberland	0.39	13
Hadston Industrial Estate	Northumberland	1.19	75
Benwell Dene	Newcastle	3.00	146
Social Housing Sites	North Tyneside	1.44	67
Total		10.89	578

3.2 These five approved schemes commit a further £10.89m of BHF and contribute to the total value of approved schemes of £29.63m (93% of the programme allocation) helping to unlock a further 578 units. The table in Appendix 1 details the sites within the North of Tyne BHF programme and status of each scheme. Two schemes remain on the pipeline and in appraisal, whilst delivery routes and viability constraints due to increasing costs are considered. It is planned that resolutions will be

brought forward in April 2024. Another scheme has been withdrawn and one is on hold while viability is re-assessed.

- 3.3 To support delivery and mitigate risk across the BHF Programme, the agreed pipeline for the North of the Tyne has been overprogrammed in terms of spend (6.91% against the £31.8m BHF award) and outputs (15.23% against the minimum 2,100 units). This is an appropriate level for a programme of this scale. The commitment of resources and remaining schemes will be progressed in early 2024/25.
- 3.4 The NEMCA allocation (£17,409,710) pipeline has been agreed and work is ongoing to review and develop schemes. The first three schemes were recommended for approved by Investment Panel on 29 February 2024, awarding over £5.98m that will unlock 407 new homes.

4. Programme Impact and Performance

- 4.1 To date BHF investment has unlocked 339 units, with housing starts commencing on four sites. These include Scotswood Phase 2, Esplanade, Newbiggin Hall and Commissioners Quay (full units claimed once the first housing construction has commenced as per government guidance). These schemes were able to progress quickly once funding was announced and were regarded as 'shovel ready'. A further three schemes are due to commence in early 2024/25 which will see another 878 units unlocked including Bellingham Mart, Lyndon Walk and North Shields Masterplan. The remaining housing delivery is programmed to commence in the latter half of 2024/25.
- 4.2 All schemes are delivering good value for money and meeting the required thresholds based on their appraised and approved position, ongoing monitoring will be undertaken as schemes move into delivery. Schemes are providing construction jobs for the local economy, providing apprenticeship opportunities, contributing to the delivery of higher quality and more efficient homes, supporting wider regeneration objectives by removing vacant properties which are a source of anti-social behaviour and providing specific affordable housing needs. The programme is also supporting net zero commitments with some developments delivering air source heat pumps, photovoltaic solar panels and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Schemes are primarily funded through additional public sector funding (Homes England, Council, Brownfield Land Release Fund or Prudential Borrowing) and/or private sector funding. Some schemes have sought additional funding to support the delivery of affordable homes, including Newbiggin Hall and Bellingham Mart, from Homes England.
- 4.3 External evaluators have been appointed to consider the impact of programme, wider benefits and to ensure that as the programme develops, we continue to improve monitoring processes, maximise investment and support delivery. Revenue funds have been used to support the project development of schemes which has incorporated design and costings work and site investigations. Expert appraisers and surveyors are being used to consider development appraisals. This work does consider costs and viability on a site-by-site basis.
- 4.4 As is to be expected with a programme of this nature, involving complex sites and significant market failure, programmes have been reprofiled to respond to a number of factors including the time taken to secure planning, land negotiations, securing development partners or reconsidering delivery mechanisms due to construction cost inflation. To manage this risk the programme has been overprogrammed and NTCA continues work closely with applicants to understand delivery and cost pressures, to expediate final schemes into delivery and with DLUHC to keep them informed on the overall programme position.

- 4.5 An annual report for the BHF Programme will be produced in April 2024, taking account of the final claims within 2023/24 and to consider the wider impact benefit from the site delivery to date. Delivery of the programme will continue into the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority.
- 4.6 The emerging NEMCA Housing and Land Portfolio will continue to drive forward delivery of the BHF Programme to remediate brownfield land, tackle site viability constraints and unlock new homes that support greater housing choice for residents across the NEMCA region.

A. Impact on NTCA Objectives

1. The BHF provides an important opportunity to help meet the organisation's housing objectives within the NTCA Corporate Plan and Interim NEMCA Corporate Plan by accelerating new housing delivery, remediating land and supporting wider place based regeneration, as well leveraging private and public sector investment.

B. Equalities implications

1. Equalities Impact Assessments are undertaken and the implications reviewed on a scheme by scheme basis. The Combined Authority is committed to driving equality and diversity and fairer choice in housing. The schemes will assist the Combined Authority to meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010, particularly around advancing equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics, specifically with regard to socio-economic background. The provision of new affordable housing in well connected places are not anticipated to have any negative impacts.

C. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing implications

1. The BHF programme contributes to the delivery of the inclusive economy objectives of the NTCA. By providing opportunities to access models of housing that provide affordable and private market sale opportunities. The programme supports wider housing led economic regeneration and community growth tackling vacant empty properties and anti-social behaviour, as well as providing high quality, energy efficient and accessible homes.

D. Climate Change implications

1. The programme contributes to the delivery for the climate change objectives of the NTCA. Schemes demonstrate a range of methods to mitigate impacts such as using modern methods of construction, use of low carbon technologies, use of local suppliers and the provision of new more thermal efficient homes. Some schemes will deliver Air Source Heat Pumps, Photovoltaic panels or install electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of development. All of which benefits residents directly and look to reduce carbon emissions.

E. Consultation and engagement

1. NTCA works with Local Authorities and Homes England, with regular advice and oversight from a Housing, Land Board comprised of senior level private, public and social sector partners. Appropriate governance of the BHF programme work is ensured by Mayor Redfearn as Portfolio Holder (and Housing and Land Board Chair), and NTCA Cabinet. Each scheme is reviewed by the Technical Officers Group and approved by the Investment Panel. Schemes undertake extensive engagement within communities about proposals and as part of statutory planning processes to enable them to be brought forward for development.

F. Appendices

Appendix 1 - North of Tyne Brownfield Housing Pipeline

G. Background papers

NTCA Delegated Decision 8 September 2023, Brownfield Housing Fund Programme South of Tyne Pipeline <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/DD-RECORD.pdf>

H. Contact officer(s)

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Heather Orton, Principal Housing and Infrastructure Manager, heather.orton@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

I. Glossary

BHF – Brownfield Housing Fund

NTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

NEMCA – North East Mayoral Combined Authority

DLUHC – Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities

LA – Local Authority

SMEs – Small and Medium Enterprises

Appendix 1 – North of Tyne Brownfield Housing Pipeline

Scheme	LA Area	BHF (£m)	Units	Status
Scotswood Phase 2	Newcastle	2.9	243	Complete and housing construction underway
Newbiggin Hall	Newcastle	0.5	43	Complete and housing construction underway
North Shields Masterplan	North Tyneside	6.38	802	In delivery and housing construction to commence early 24/25
Commissioners Quay	Northumberland	0.05	41	Complete and housing construction underway
Bellingham Mart	Northumberland	1.36	63	In delivery and housing construction to commence early 24/25
Scotswood Phase 3, 5 &5a	Newcastle	4.64	231	In delivery
Ellington Colliery Phase 3 & 4	Northumberland	1.29	152	In delivery
The Esplanade	North Tyneside	0.38	12	Complete and construction completed
Walker Riverside	Newcastle	4.87	277	Approved
Lyndon Walk	Northumberland	0.39	13	In delivery and housing construction to commence early 24/25
Hadston Industrial Estate	Northumberland	1.19	75	Approved – to commence April 2024
Benwell Dene	Newcastle	3.00	146	Approved – to commence April 2024
Social Housing Sites	North Tyneside	1.45	67	Approved - to commence April 2024
Howden Metro/Meadows	North Tyneside	5.00	230	Appraisal
Buddle Road	Newcastle	0.6	25	Pipeline
Ouseburn Mouth	Newcastle	0	0	On hold
Moorside Newbiggin	Northumberland	0	0	Withdrawn
	Total	34	2,420	

Title: *Delivering Devolution Together* North of Tyne Combined Authority Final Report
Report of: Dr. Henry Kippin, Chief Executive

Report Summary

Each year at this point the NTCA produces an Annual Report to set out the Authority's achievements and the work of the Mayor and Cabinet over the past year. This year will be the final Annual Report of the NTCA and as such will reflect the lifetime of the Authority. The *Delivering Devolution Together* report includes information on how NTCA is delivering its Vision through its portfolios of work and cross-cutting themes.

In addition, there are also annual updates from the Inclusive Economy Board, the Housing and Land Board and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Group.

The report emphasises the collaborative nature of NTCA's programme – reflecting on strong delivery partnerships and the cross-party political leadership that has consistently underpinned this.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

- a) Review the contents of *Delivering Devolution Together*, the final NTCA annual report;
- b) Reflect on the Authority's achievements and the work of the Mayor and Cabinet over the past year and over the lifetime of the Authority and how NTCA is delivering its vision through its portfolios of work and cross-cutting themes; and
- c) Identify any topics or themes to emerge from the report for inclusion in the work programme of the new North East Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A. Context

1. Delivering Devolution Together

- 1.1 Working Together: Our Corporate Plan 2023-24 set out the North of Tyne vision which is of a dynamic and more inclusive economy, one that brings together people and opportunities to create vibrant communities and a high quality of life, narrowing inequalities and ensuring that all residents have a stake in our region's future.
- 1.2 In October 2023 the Committee were presented with proposals to produce a record of NTCA's work to date which would celebrate its success, sets out its learning and creates a record of its existence. Members were invited to consider the approach and they provided feedback on the proposed review and suggested areas of work for inclusion in the review.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 12 March 2024, Cabinet will be asked to endorse the culmination of that work in the form of the fourth and final annual report of NTCA entitled *Delivering Devolution Together*. The report records the work of NTCA in:
 - creating more inclusive and vibrant communities through investment, engagement and co-designed projects;
 - accelerating the delivery of new homes, regenerating our places and maximising the opportunity of new infrastructure investment;
 - building our capacity to innovate and create future jobs, through major investment in our transition to clean growth, green jobs and a modern digitally connected economy;

- delivering year-round events, tourism and innovation activities which create jobs, support sector growth and boost economic potential of our creative, events, tourism and rural industries;
- expanding opportunities through skills, education and inclusion through our devolved adult education budget, new inclusion, education and employment and skills programmes.
- building a truly inclusive region where children and young people have equal opportunities to realise their potential and thrive

- 1.4 An annual report is published in March each year and is designed to enable residents to see at a glance the impact of NTCA; a signpost to the more in-depth information that is available on the website through our press releases or cabinet reports. The report will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 1.5 The report includes stories have been chosen to show the range and impact of NTCA, examples are:
- inclusive training for young people in the creative and film industries, with the Making Creativity Works course covering an introduction to video and editing, storyboarding and working together as a production team before progressing on to specialist skills training and career advice;
 - supporting schools to tackle poverty by funding new advisors in offering families welfare advice. The support of these advisors is a lifeline for families and is potentially life changing for children;
 - Verisure Global Security, with NTCA Inward Investment support, established a base in North Tyneside and have rapidly expanded, twice as fast as expected, creating 639 jobs
- 1.6 The report demonstrates that NTCA adds value through strong collaboration with its local authority partners, universities, businesses and the voluntary and community sector, one example of which is the support for digital inclusion during the Covid-19 pandemic; the scheme not only delivered equipment to children to continue schoolwork from home but also included people who had lost their jobs and needed the internet to find work, and people in care homes staying in touch with their loved ones.
- 1.7 Further information on what we've achieved is included on the final page of the report, showcasing quickly and succinctly other work and successes of NTCA with statistics and information to demonstrate the impact of Devolution and the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

2. Working in partnership

- 2.1 NTCA works collaboratively and in partnership with many organisations across the region. It has two advisory bodies, the Inclusive Economy Board and the Housing and Land Board with cabinet members and our partners as members. NTCA also has a Mayoral Ambassador for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector who Chairs a VCSE stakeholder group.
- 2.2 The work of these Boards and group is an important part of how NTCA listened to and served the people of the region and their annual updates are attached as appendices to this report.

B. Impact on NTCA Objectives

1. The final annual report is a reflective document which shows how NTCA has worked to reflect and be consistent with the priorities set out by the Mayor and Cabinet.

C. Key risks

1. There are no specific risks relating to the recommendations in this report.

D. Financial and other resources implications

1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

E. Legal implications

1. There are no direct implications arising directly from this report

F. Equalities implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and fosters good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and also considers the implications for people from different socio-economic backgrounds/low pay as a protected characteristic. NTCA set its Equalities Objectives at the beginning of this municipal year, and these are considered in the context of its work.

G. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of NTCA's inclusive economy ambitions. There are no direct inclusive economy implications arising in the report itself, however as a reflective document it showcases NTCA's inclusive economy ambitions and the five characteristics of an inclusive economy: participation; equity; growth; stability and sustainability. NTCA has established a Wellbeing Framework which has ten social, economic, environmental, and democratic outcomes to improve the wellbeing of everyone living in the North of Tyne and these ambitions are reflected in the report.

H. Climate Change implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful that the North of Tyne Combined Authority and all three constituent Local Authorities have declared a Climate Emergency; the impact of the NTCA's decisions on climate is taken into account and its work in this area is reflected in the Annual Report.

I. Consultation and engagement

1. The Mayor, Cabinet and the whole NTCA team have been involved in the formulation of the Final Report. The NTCA is a collaborative and supportive team and this report and the Corporate Plan are aligned with the internal work programme, targets and spend so each team can see how their individual effort contributes to the whole.

J. Appendices

Appendix 1 *Delivering Devolution Together* Final Report of NTCA (to follow)
Appendix 1a Inclusive Economy Board update
Appendix 1b Housing and Land Board update
Appendix 1c VCSE Stakeholder Engagement Group

K. Background papers

[Working Together: NTCA Corporate Plan](#)

L. Contact officer(s)

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M. Glossary

NTCA North of Tyne Combined Authority
VCSE Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Group

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**Inclusive Economy Board
Annual Report 2023/24**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update for the Annual Report 2023/24 on the work of the Inclusive Economy Board, outlining the achievements and progress from the past twelve months.

“2023 has been another important year for NTCA’s Inclusive Economy Board. My thanks to members and the Chair for helping us to shape and deliver a programme of work focussed on creating an inclusive economy that everyone can contribute to and benefit from”.

Cllr Karen Kilgour
Cabinet Member for Education, Inclusion and Skills
Vice Chair of the Inclusive Economy Board.

2. Background

NTCA’s Inclusive Economy Board is a unique feature of our Devolution Deal: independently chaired it is multi-sector and cross-area. The Inclusive Economy Board encourages NTCA to think creatively about the widest implication of a more inclusive economy – whether through digital inclusion, rural opportunities and access or wellbeing. This is underpinned by an ongoing commitment to understand and respond to some of the widening inequalities experienced by residents across the North of Tyne geography.

We continue to be grateful to serving members from across business, civil society, education, academia and Government Departments including the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUCH).

3. Achievements

The Inclusive Economy Board met four times during this period focussing their efforts on key areas of work including Child Poverty Prevention, Poverty Truth Commission and the Wellbeing Framework. The Board also had the opportunity to explore and discuss the emerging evidence base to support the identification of early priorities and decision making ahead of further devolution.

The North East Devolution Deal includes a commitment to build on the work of the current Inclusive Economy Board. The insights and reflections of current Board members are essential to shaping what comes next. Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Chair of the Board, facilitated two online discussion groups to draw out learning from members. A summary of these discussions is detailed below.

- The Board has helped the inclusive economy conversation take hold effectively and with great depth. What started as a marginal agenda is now driving the ambitions of partners across the region.

- The Board represents true independence within the system. The independent Chair sets a positive and inclusive tone. Contributions from members are equally invited and valued. There is a shared responsibility for driving an inclusive economy.
- The Board has been bold and ambitious. It has instigated some key inclusive economy interventions that cut across multiple portfolio briefs. It has done this on the front foot and with real credibility. The progress achieved by the Board has been a real success story and bodes well for what might come next.
- The inclusive economy agenda should be at the forefront of NEMCA's ambition. It should be a cross-cutting theme that runs through all strategies.

4. Next Steps

We are currently exploring options for a final Board meeting in March 2024. This would provide an opportunity to update members on emerging NEMCA plans as well as thanking them for their commitment and contribution to date.

Housing and Land Board Annual Report 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update for the Annual Report 2023/24 on the work of the Housing and Land Board, outlining the achievements and progress from the past twelve months.

2. Background

The remit of the Housing and Land Board is to oversee a strategic approach to the delivery of more and better homes across the North of Tyne from a baseline of 1,800 net new homes a year to 3,000 net new homes a year by 2032. The Board does this by acting as a strategic and advisory sounding board that works for the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) collaboratively with our partners to oversee an integrated housing pipeline, and to advance work on place-based policy and delivery.

Membership of the Board is drawn from the Local Authorities, the Combined Authority and Homes England as well as a wide cross-section of the housing sector, including – but not limited to - registered providers, private developers, institutional investors, and organisations representing residential landlords.

The Board is led by Dame Mayor Norma Redfearn, portfolio holder for housing and land at the NTCA, with strategic input from the wider NTCA Cabinet. We are fortunate that Duncan Sutherland, Vice Chair of Homes England, assists with the drive and focus of the Board thus helping to cement a strong working relationship with Homes England.

The work of the Board has helped inform the Housing and Land priorities in the new devolution deal and provides a strong platform to develop this portfolio of work to continue to benefit our communities.

3. Achievements

Over the past year, the Board has maintained a consistent focus on matters relating to:

- Housing policy and research
- Brownfield Housing Fund
- Partnership working with Homes England including North East Strategic Place Partnership development
- Strategic economic corridors – Northumberland Line and the River Tyne, and, place based interventions in our High Streets and strategic housing sites such as Forth Yards and emerging North East Investment Zone.
- Early North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) regeneration capital funding
- North East Housing Partnership Prospectus

The following paragraphs outline this in further detail.

3.1. Policy and research focus

In terms of housing policy and research, the Board has taken a strong interest in a number of areas over the last year including, community led housing, housing retrofit and national planning policy.

Community Led Housing – The Community Led Housing Task Group have worked with NTCA to commission Communities CAN, who are the umbrella organisation in the North East for Community Led Housing, to explore new models of delivery and to develop a pipeline of schemes. Communities CAN continue to support organisations with technical and capacity expertise who are interested in this housing delivery model. The New Economics Foundation have also been commissioned to undertake some further research to scope and define what community housing is and identify the scale of opportunity across the North of Tyne Combined Authority area.

Energy Retrofit – To develop investible retrofit propositions, The Energy Savings Trust were appointed to work with Local Authorities, Registered Providers and Communities to identify priority projects and undertake technical work. Following the development of the business model, a One Stop Shop energy efficiency programme has been designed, procured and launched. Partners continue to support retrofit as a key priority across the North East Housing Partnership, recognising the scale of investment and support required and need to maximise procurement and skills requirements needed.

National Policy Planning Framework – considered a range of guidance and statements published in December 2023 that look to update the framework and introduce a new system. Implications were considered for the public and private sector in terms of requirements to update Local Plans, capacity and impact on housing delivery and pressures on housing delivery targets.

3.2. Brownfield Housing Fund and delivery

The Board has taken a keen interest in the delivery of the £31.8 million North of Tyne Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF). A pipeline sites have been invited to progress to full business case and the following sites have been considered by Investment Panel: Newbiggin Hall, Scotswood The Rise Phase 2, North Shields Masterplan Area, Commissioners Quay, Bellingham Mart, Scotswood The Rise Phases 3, 5 and 5A, Moorside, Ellington Colliery Phases 3 & 4, The Esplanade, Lyndon Walk, Walker Riverside and Hadston Industrial Estate. These sites will unlock more than 2,000 homes.

As part of the NEMCA Devolution Deal an additional £17.4million Brownfield Housing Fund was secured to unlock over 1,100 homes on brownfield land in those local authority areas to the south of the Tyne: Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. A pipeline of sites has been agreed and business cases are being developed. These schemes are being progressed alongside the North of Tyne Brownfield Housing Fund and its pipeline of sites. Combined, the north and south of Tyne Brownfield Housing Fund totals £49.2 million with a commitment to unlock over 3,100 homes by March 2026.

The Board has helped to shape the development of the programme in the North of Tyne by providing their expertise and support which will help the Combined Authority successfully deliver the Brownfield Housing Fund. An evaluation of the programme continues to consider the impact, learning in terms of processes and considers how the funding is specifically being used to address viability challenges and contributing to the delivery of affordable housing and net zero objectives. The scope of this will be widened to cover the wider NEMCA geography.

3.3. Partnership Working with Homes England and North East Strategic Place Partnership development

Through our Memorandum of Understanding we continue to work closely with Homes England and our Local Authority partners to develop a joint pipeline of housing sites and to identify what investment is required to unlock their development. Both organisations have supported schemes through market assessments, infrastructure plans, design and site investigation work for key schemes.

This work has developed further in 2023 to expand across the wider NEMCA region, working with the four Local Authorities to the south of the Tyne, Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. A pipeline is being developed and prepared to underpin the proposed North East Strategic Place Partnership, a commitment within the NEMCA Devolution Deal, that will see NEMCA and Homes England enter into a formal partnership to drive forward the delivery of new homes and revitalise places. The SPP will be formalised through a MOU and underpinned by a Partnership Business Plan that sets out governance, delivery priorities and resources requirements.

In relation to Strategic Sites, we are working in partnership with Homes England, Newcastle Council and Network Rail to develop a common vision and drive forward regeneration for Forth Yards, in Newcastle. We are also working with Homes England to explore how we can support Newcastle University's ambitions for the Health Innovation Neighbourhood.

3.4. Economic Corridors

The Northumberland Line Economic Corridor presents significant potential to unlock both economic and housing growth. The investment programme continues to be developed and delivered in line with the agreed Ten Point Plan. The Housing and Land Board were presented with an update on the Economic and Housing Growth Study that has been undertaken to consider land available to accommodate growth within the Northumberland Line Economic Corridor. To realise the full potential further investment, skills and viability issues would need to be considered.

The Tyne Taskforce and the Tyne Powered brand continue to provide cross-sector collaboration, partnership working with businesses, the Port of Tyne and our neighbouring authorities of Gateshead and South Tyneside, whilst supporting region-wide plans for economic recovery and connectivity. Over the last year the Taskforce has focused on addressing key barriers for investment on the Tyne including business cases to support investment in infrastructure. The Taskforce continues to consider what skills are needed to support the growth and to maximise investment to capitalise the offshore sector.

The Board have been updated on the development the North East Investment Zone that will cover the wider NEMCA region to support economic growth, targeted employment site investment and incentives.

3.5 High Streets

The North of Tyne High Streets and Towns Innovation Programme, funded through the Investment Fund and UKSPF is to be completed by March 2025. Activity is underway in Wallsend, Ashington and the inner east of Newcastle. Significant consultation has taken place with businesses and residents to ensure that the investment in the high streets meet their needs. Support to businesses has been available in each area ranging from 1:1 tailored support, shop front improvement grants, grants to bring empty properties back into use and an innovative Green Street pilot in the inner east of Newcastle which

encourages businesses to look at all aspects of their trading to maximise their environmental impact.

Designs and spatial plans have been developed to improve the quality of place and connectivity. Schemes include improving linkages from the town centre to the new station in Ashington and between Wallsend Town Centre and the World Heritage Site, Segedunum. Delivery will continue in 2024/25.

All of the High Street schemes have embraced the following three pillars of the programme, strong strategic leadership, developing and testing new delivering models and looking at how the North of Tyne's funding can stimulate long term investment to bring about lasting change.

We have developed a strong partnership with Power to Change which will help embed social uses and investment across our High Streets Programme.

4. NEMCA Development and Early NEMCA regeneration capital funding

The Board have been kept updated as work continues to progress and prepare for additional devolution within the region and the creation of NEMCA. Discussion has focused on Housing and Land, along with the early priorities linked to releasing brownfield land that unlock housing development and capital resources to support regeneration.

This has included the development of a regeneration capital pipeline of projects across the full NEMCA region, working with Local Authorities and partners. Projects will be funded by £20m Capital Regeneration Funding, as negotiated as part of the North East Devolution Deal, as well as £14m of NEMCA Capital Investment Funding, totalling £34m. Decisions on the capital regeneration schemes are required to be made in advance of NEMCA being created, as Government has specified that the schemes funded through the Capital Regeneration Fund must deliver spend targets by March 2025. NTCA are acting as the accountable body to support programme delivery.

Due to this a call process was undertaken earlier in 2023 and all NEMCA Local Authorities were invited to submit an Expression of Interest for funding. A pipeline of 7 projects was developed which reflected initial priorities and were expedient to be delivered within the constraints and the terms of the funding available. Business cases have been developed, appraisals undertaken and cases for investment being present to Investment Panel January and February 2024. The investment will be used to drive place-based regeneration, contributing to growth and levelling up in the North East. The first approved three schemes will provide enabling infrastructure to realise ambitions at Gateshead Quays, NETPark in County Durham and Durham City Innovation District.

5. North East Housing Partnership

The NEHP brings together social housing providers from across the North East. The Board were invited to the launch of their new prospectus in November 2023 that articulates four challenges that region faces and that the partnership want to tackle collaboratively: Regeneration, development and placemaking; Net zero and sustainability; Employability and social inclusion; and Health, care and homelessness.

NEHP have a strong track record for delivery affordable homes and are keen to continue to support delivery across the North East, in partnership with the North of Tyne Combined Authority and planned NEMCA. The Board welcomed the importance for the region to have a full voice from all housing providers and the need for affordable housing to be at the forefront of housing plans for the region.

6. Next Steps

Over the next year, it is proposed that as part of the transition to the North East Mayoral Combined Authority, the remit and function of the Housing and Land Board forms the foundation for a new terms of reference and a refreshed membership to reflect the new wider geography, broader scope and emerging priorities.

The Board will champion the emerging NEMCA Housing and Land Portfolio and will continue to focus on delivery that supports housing growth, regeneration, place making and economic growth. The Board's guidance and insight will remain important to support delivery, helping the work to progress smoothly, capitalise partnership working and drive ambition.

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**VCSE Stakeholder Engagement Group
Annual Report 2023/24**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update for the Annual Report 2023/24 on the work of the VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) sector Stakeholder Engagement Group, outlining the achievements and progress from the past twelve months.

“The VCSE sector makes an invaluable contribution to the North of Tyne region as a significant delivery partner and employer. Our volunteer workforce alone contributes the equivalent of around £600m per year to the local economy in terms of their time. The ongoing work of the Stakeholder Group is critical at a time of rising pressure on the sector. We’ve been able to influence the delivery of funding programmes delivered by NTCA and we have seen some real progress in the way we’re working together and making best use of our collective strengths to support the economic and social wellbeing of our residents and communities.”

Lisa Goodwin MBE
Mayoral Ambassador for the VCSE sector
Chair of the VCSE Stakeholder Engagement Group.

2. Background

The VCSE Stakeholder Engagement Group was established in 2019 and formalised in 2020. It is chaired by the Mayoral Ambassador for the VCSE sector. The Group brings together Chief Executive Officers from the local infrastructure bodies for the voluntary sector, as well as Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE) and Volunteer Centre Newcastle, working in partnership with lead officers from our three constituent authorities.

The group meets quarterly and aims to work together to build an inclusive economy, as set out in its Terms of Reference. Its work is underpinned by our VCSE Accord, approved by Delegated Decision in March 2020. The Group is passionate about bringing together people and opportunities to build thriving, vibrant communities. It does this by advising NTCA Cabinet on the wealth, wellbeing and social inequalities in North of Tyne communities. It provides specific expertise in co-design and co-production, helping to ensure the voices of all residents inform NTCA’s work and ambitions.

We continue to be grateful to all serving members.

3. Achievements

During this reporting period the group continued to focus their attention on three key areas - supporting the capacity of the VCSE sector to support our communities, developing the North of Tyne as an area of excellence in volunteering and ensuring the

VCSE sector can play a full role in shaping and delivering NTCA's UKSPF Investment Plan.

Members of the Stakeholder Engagement Group have also represented the VCSE sector in key decision-making and advisory forums including Cabinet and the Inclusive Economy Board.

Reflecting on the aims set out in the NTCA VCSE Accord, members of the group identified significant progress in terms of strengthening the relationship between NTCA and the VCSE sector.

- We have been able to develop a better understanding of the scale and economic contribution of the VCSE sector thanks to the data and intelligence shared by VCSE sector colleagues.
- NTCA is utilising the VCSE sector as a key delivery partner to extend the reach and impact of NTCA investments.
- Specific funding and contracts have been awarded to VCSE organisations to deliver targeted support to people and communities.
- VCSE sector input has enabled NTCA to design programmes that will have the greatest impact.
- NTCA has been able to co-deliver work in partnership with the VCSE sector.
- NTCA has played a key role in providing leadership and convening partners around joint challenges such as child poverty, digital inclusion and good work
- NTCA made an early commitment to our relationship with the VCSE sector by developing an Accord and appointing the Mayor's VCSE Ambassador. Senior NTCA staff have taken time to engage with VCSE sector orgs.
- Building relationships has taken time and has benefitted from informal, open and honest meetings and a commitment to collaboration.

4. Next Steps

Our VCSE sector plays a crucial role in supporting the wellbeing and prosperity of our communities and places both as a significant contributor to the economy and a provider of essential services. We know that the sector is facing significant challenges relating to increased costs, increasing demand and workforce issues. The VCSE Stakeholder Group is committed to pursuing opportunities to build capacity and sustainability within the sector so it can continue to be a catalyst for an inclusive economy.



Title: Poverty Truth Commission
Report of: Joanna Unthank, Senior Programme Manager, NTCA

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on completion of NTCA's Poverty Truth Commission.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and provide any specific reflections to designated contact officers (section I).

A. Context

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that Poverty Truth Commissions (PTCs) are models of direct engagement where civic and business representatives are brought together with people with lived experience of poverty (community commissioners). Commissions work to understand the specific features of poverty in their areas and work collaboratively to come up with practical solutions – delivering policy change in partnership. Central to the PTC model are the principles of fairness and equity.
- 1.2 PTCs are usually supported by local authorities but not led by them. They are usually hosted independently to ensure their work is genuinely equitable and collaborative. PTCs aim to help to facilitate a wider range of voices to join decision-making, intending to make better decisions as a result.
- 1.3 Poverty Truth Commissions tend to:
 - Run on average for two years.
 - Recruitment from a wide range of communities of place and interest, prioritising the voices of groups which are rarely heard in traditional methods of engagement.
 - Secure funding from a mix of public, civic and/or business sources to support collaboration.

2. Purpose, Timing and Funding of a PTC for the North of Tyne

- 2.1 At the end of 2020 NTCA became the first Combined Authority to support a post-Covid Poverty Truth Commission with the aim of exploring and responding to the unique effects of economic exclusion in the North of Tyne as a result of the pandemic. This report provides the Committee with key achievements since the last update to the committee in November 2022 and invites members to provide reflections from the communities they represent.
- 2.2 The North of Tyne PTC is unique: it is the first Commission to occur on a Combined Authority footprint and post-Covid.
- 2.3 The model has been funded through NTCA's Investment Fund with match funding from the Community Foundation for Tyne, Wear and Northumberland and supporting funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF).

3. Progress of the Commission

- 3.1 In July 2021, following an open procurement exercise, local charity Children North East (CNE) was appointed to deliver the PTC over two years.
- 3.2 In December 2023, Officers reported the progress of the Commission to Members, highlighting progress against CNE's four-stage approach. At that point, CNE were just completing the third 'Experiment' stage of the commission and projects are nearing completion. Commissioners were being supported to develop their 'call to action' event on 24th January 2024.
- 3.3 Since then, working groups have completed their project work and in January, CNE and commissioners hosted the final 'call to action' event, which showcased the work of the commission and the projects developed by each of the working groups. The thought-provoking event was led by PTC Commissioners and an invitation was extended to Committee members.
- 3.4 Children North East are finalising their report relating to the North of Tyne Poverty Truth Commission, which outlines the process, the challenges, the learning and the impact of the commission. This report draws out the impacts of the commission within three contexts: personal, organisation, regional and challenges the reader to make a change in the context of the learning of the commission. The full report will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 3.5 Between November and January, NTCA's Senior Evaluation Specialist led on work to evaluate the methodology and implementation of the PTC through a series of interviews and focus groups with commissioners and stakeholders. The findings and recommendations focus on the learning journey of the commission and the lessons learnt for the design of future policy interventions of this nature. The full report will be circulated to members prior to the meeting.

B. Impact on NTCA Objectives

A PTC for the North of Tyne supports NTCA's ambition to engage and co-produce with our communities, creating real opportunities for citizens to influence policy as outlined in the [corporate plan](#).

C. Equalities implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and fosters good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and also considers the implications for people from different socio-economic backgrounds/low pay as a protected characteristic.
2. An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and has found the impact of a PTC for the North of Tyne to be broadly positive. This will be particularly the case as poverty is often the direct result of disadvantage experienced by people with protected characteristics and experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

D. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing implications

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of the NTCA's inclusive economy ambitions and the five characteristics of an inclusive economy: participation; equity; growth; stability and sustainability and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken these fully into account. The PTC will specifically support the

development of an inclusive economy in line with the following characteristics:

- Participation – Delivering a people-centred approach to local economic development by co-designing responses to COVID-19 which are based on the lived experience of our residents, especially those whose voices are least heard.
- Equity – Tackling inequality in the North of Tyne by creating a mechanism whereby the voices and view of residents experiencing poverty and socio-economic disadvantage are given parity with the experience of public sector and business and civil society commissioners.
- Growth – Informing the quality of NTCA policies, programmes, and projects to target and effectively address poverty, directly targeting poorer communities, families and individuals.

E. Climate Change implications

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful that the NTCA's and the three constituent Local Authorities have declared a Climate Emergency and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken climate change fully into account. There are limited direct climate change implications for the PTC project, however the PTC will offer NTCA the opportunity to learn about residents' experiences and views of climate change from the perspective of lived experience of poverty.

F. Consultation and engagement

Under the direction of Cabinet members, NTCA officers presented these proposals to the Inclusive Economy Board in September 2020 for early advice and support. Officers have worked closely with both the independent Poverty Truth Commission Network and JRF as an experienced PTC partner and funder, to build on best practice. The three constituent local authorities have been actively involved throughout and Officers have sought support and advice from other regional Poverty Truth Commissions.

G. Appendices

To follow

H. Background papers

- [Poverty Truth Commission](#), NTCA Cabinet Report, 24 November 2020
- [Poverty Truth Commission](#), Overview and Scrutiny Report, February 2022
- [Poverty Truth Commission](#), Overview and Scrutiny Report, November 2022
- [Poverty Truth Commission](#), programme update June 2023
- [Poverty Truth Commission](#), Overview and Scrutiny Report, November 2023

I. Contact officer(s)

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J. Glossary

CNE	Children North East
JRF	The Joseph Rowntree Foundation
PTC	Poverty Truth Commission
NTCA	North of Tyne Combined Authority

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Title: NTCA Quarter 3 Budget Monitor Report 2023/24
Report of: Director of Finance

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the third quarter budget monitoring report on the 2023/24 NTCA financial position to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review. The report brings together the forecast financial position the forecast financial position for the Corporate Budget and all funding streams as at 31 March 2024, with a snapshot of balances and funding from 31 March 2024 to the establishment of the new combined authority on 7 May 2024. The report also sets out the indicative reserves position on 7 May 2024.

Recommendation

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to review the 2023/24 Quarter 3 NTCA Budget Monitor Report.

A. Context

1. Background Information, Proposals and Timetable for Implementation

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the 2023/24 budget on 31 January 2024. Included in that budget was the estimated expenditure across the year for the Corporate Budget, Investment Fund, Brownfield Housing Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Adult Education Budget and Bootcamps.
- 1.2 The 2023/24 Quarter 3 budget monitor report is attached as Appendix 1. It reflects the forecast financial position of the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) as at 31 March 2024, with an additional forecast financial position for the period from 1 April 2024 to 6 May, 2024, being the extended year end position prior to the establishment of the new North East Combined Authority (NEMCA).
- 1.3 The budget monitor report was considered by Cabinet on 30 January 2024 when it:
 - a) noted the forecast budget monitoring position;
 - b) approved the issuing of "in-year growth" awards totalling £1.366m for further Adult Education Budget (AEB) provision during the Academic Year 2023-24;
 - c) approved the issue of 'letters of comfort' to identified Grant Providers setting out their indicative funding allocations for delivery of the devolved AEB from 1st August 2024;
 - d) approved the issue of Flexible Adult Skills Framework Agreements to the organisations who submitted a successful tender to the procurement of the Framework in November 2023; and
 - e) authorised officers to approve any subsequent grant agreements and/or call-off contracts procured from the Flexible Adult Skills Framework for the delivery of skills programmes from 1st April 2024.

B. Impact on NTCA Objectives

1. The North of Tyne Combined Authority Vision document sets out the strategic objectives of the Authority. The 2023/24 budget position against which the budget is monitored against demonstrates the Authority has properly discharged its functions and assisted in delivering the Authority's vision, policies, and priorities.

C. Equalities implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and fosters good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and also considers the implications for people from different socio-economic backgrounds/low pay as a protected characteristic. An equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken because as there are no direct equalities impact to consider in light of this report.

D. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of NTCA's inclusive economy ambitions and the five characteristics of an inclusive economy: participation; equity; growth; stability and sustainability and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken these fully into account. NTCA's Wellbeing Framework sets out ten social, economic, environmental, and democratic outcomes to improve the wellbeing of everyone living in the North of Tyne now and in the future. The NTCA outturn and budget reports provide transparency and assurance that public funds allocated to the region have been used appropriately in line with the vision and ambitions of the NTCA.

E. Climate Change implications

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful that NTCA's and the three constituent Local Authorities have declared a Climate Emergency and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken climate change fully into account. There are no direct considerations in relation to climate change arising from these specific finance reports other than reporting on the budget and expenditure in relation to climate change projects.

F. Consultation and engagement

1. The creation of the North of Tyne Combined Authority has been subject to significant and regional consultation. The 2023/24 budget was subject to wide consultation across the North of Tyne Region. The constituent authorities have been consulted directly on the production of the outturn statement.

G. Appendices

Appendix 1: 2023/24 Q2 NTCA Budget Monitor Report

H. Background papers

[Notice of Decisions - Cabinet - 30 January 2024](#)

I. Contact officer(s)

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J. Glossary

NTCA	North of Tyne Combined Authority
NEMCA	The North East Mayoral Combined Authority
AEB	Adult Education Budget

Title: NTCA Q3 2023-24 Budget Monitor Report
Report of: Director of Finance
Portfolio: All

Report Summary

This report is the third quarter monitoring report to Cabinet on the 2023-24 financial position. The report brings together the forecast financial position for the Corporate Budget and all funding streams as at 31 March 2024, with a snapshot of balances and funding from 31 March 2024 to the establishment of the new combined authority on 7 May 2024. The report also sets out the indicative reserves position on 7 May 2024.

The report sets out in Section 11 details of the early priority actions being undertaken in advance of the establishment of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) where NTCA is acting as the accountable body. This includes the approach being taken to ensure delivery of the devolved AEB and Skills Bootcamps is underway by the timescales of 1 April 2024 for Skills Bootcamps and 1 August 2024 for devolved AEB.

Recommendations

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the 2023/24 forecast budget monitoring position for the Combined Authority as set out in Section 2 Corporate Budget, Section 4 Investment Fund (including capital spend), Section 5 Creative Growth Programme, Section 6 UK Social Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) including Multiply and Rural England Prosperity Fund, Section 7 Brownfield Housing Fund, Section 8 AEB, Section 9 and 10 Bootcamps Wave 3 and 4 and Section 12 Reserves position; and
2. Approve the issuing of “in-year growth” awards totalling £1.366m for further AEB provision during the AY year 2023-24 as set out in paragraph 8.7.
3. Approve the issue of ‘letters of comfort’ to identified Grant Providers setting out their indicative funding allocations for delivery of the devolved AEB from 1st August 2024. The letters of comfort will precede the issue of Grant Agreements to these providers once NEMCA is established as set out in section 11.
4. Approve the issue of Flexible Adult Skills Framework Agreements to the organisations who submitted a successful tender to the procurement of the Framework in November 2023 as set out in section 11.
5. Authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and portfolio holder for Education, Inclusion and Skills to approve any subsequent grant agreements and /or call-off contracts procured from the Flexible Adult Skills Framework for the delivery of skills programmes from 1st April 2024 as set out in section 11.

A Context

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the 2023/24 budget on 31 January 2023. Included in that budget was the estimated expenditure across the year for the Corporate Budget, Investment Fund, Brownfield Housing Fund, UKSF, Adult Education Budget and Bootcamps.
- 1.2 The 2023/24 Q3 budget monitor reflects the forecast financial position of the North of Tyne Combined

Authority (NTCA) as at 31 March 2024, with an additional forecast financial position for the period from 1 April 2024 to 6 May, 2024, being the extended year end position prior to the establishment of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA).

- 1.3 NTCA is now in year 6 of delivery after successfully passing the first five-year gateway review securing ongoing funding for continued and increased delivery, £154.245m has been allocated to date. Since the budget for 2023/24 budget was approved, NTCA has been awarded regional capital monies (£15.350m) from the Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities for three specific schemes. Creative Growth Programme is another new area of delivery where the Combined Authority is now acting as accountable body for the North East seven local authorities. UK SPF continues to gain momentum alongside Multiply and Rural England Prosperity Fund. Adult Education Devolved Budget alongside Bootcamp funding continues to deliver against the NTCA's Strategic Skills Plan targeting a number of priority sectors, i.e. tech and digital, green growth and energy, health and ageing and longevity to help meet skills shortages in the area.

2. Corporate Budget

- 2.1 The Corporate Budget is set at a net zero position covering the costs associated with the capacity required to deliver across all portfolios. Table 1 reflects the 2023/24 forecast position across the key income and expenditure heads within the Corporate Budget head.
- 2.2 Gross expenditure is anticipated to exceed budget by £3.797m at this point in the financial year. The main variation is a proposal to create a reserve at the year end from additional interest income earned from cash balances. Employee expenditure is forecast to exceed budget by £0.508m but this is matched by an increase in grant income and reflects the increase in delivery on both Investment Fund and UKSPF projects. There are now 96 staff directly employed by the Combined Authority.
- 2.3 The Other Costs budget includes £0.500m budget which is earmarked for Transition costs. Transition costs are forecast to exceed budget by £0.095m at this time. The remaining budget in relation to other costs include budgets for accommodation, external advisors, external audit costs, training and recruitment, marketing and communications, stationery and travel and subsistence costs. Although the accommodation budget is due to exceed budget by £0.020m (as the reduced lease costs received in the first two years comes to an end) and there is a call against the external advisory budgets in excess of budget £0.120m against a budget of £0.100m, the total budget for other costs is anticipated to underspend by £0.044m. This is due to underspends on a range of small budget lines budgets such as stationery, travel, training and recruitment.

Table 1: Q3 2023/24 Corporate Budget Monitor

	2023/24	2023/24 Q3 Spend	31 March 2024 Forecast	Variance	Forecast Balances 31 March 2024 - 06 May 2024
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Expenditure					
Staffing	4.786	3.552	5.290	0.504	0.460
Mayor's Office	0.288	0.216	0.292	0.004	0.028
Other Costs	2.078	0.766	2.034	(0.044)	0.200
Transition Budget	0.500	0.289	0.595	0.095	0.048
Contribution to Reserves	0.000	1.588	3.238	3.238	0.176
Transport Levy	30.561	22.921	30.561	-	2.939
SLAs	0.271	0.202	0.271	-	0.026
Total Expenditure	38.484	29.534	42.281	3.797	3.876
Income					
Grant Income	(6.937)	(4.314)	(7.401)	(0.464)	(0.750)
Constituent Authority Contributions	(0.111)	(0.111)	(0.111)	-	(0.011)
Interest on Investments	(0.275)	(1.588)	(3.608)	(3.333)	(0.177)
Contribution from Reserves	(0.600)	(0.600)	(0.600)	-	-
Transport Levy	(30.561)	(22.921)	(30.561)	-	(2.939)
Total Income	(38.484)	(29.534)	(42.281)	(3.797)	(3.876)
Net Position (Inc)/Exp	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

- 2.3 The NTCA Corporate Budget is funded from a contribution from its three constituent authorities (£0.037m each, £0.111m in total) and agreed 'top slice' percentage contributions from the Investment Fund (10% of the annual Investment Fund monies); Adult Education Budget (AEB) (3% of annual budget); Bootcamp funding (10%); UKSPF (4%) and Multiply (10%). In addition, staff salaries working on delivery of specific Investment Fund projects are recovered from their respective projects.
- 2.4 Incidental income from interest on the investment of cash balances was set at a prudent level in the 2023/24 budget (£0.275m), however, due to an increase in the level of cash held during 2023-24 and sustained higher interest rates the interest earned on cash investments is expected to be £3.608m in relation to NTCA balances, and a further £0.176m for the period from 31 March to 6 May 2024. It is proposed to create a Transition Reserve with the additional income to ensure continuity of provision for relevant North of Tyne projects whilst early funding decisions for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority are developed during 2024-25. This position will be finalised when the outturn report is presented to Cabinet.
- 2.4 Grant income at Quarter 3, shows an increase of £0.464m relating directly to the increase in the application of the Investment Fund and the UKSPF Workstream activity through increased delivery.
- 2.5 Table 1 includes an additional column to show the extended period from 31 March 2024 to 06 May 2024, a 5-week period leading from financial year end 2023/24 to inception of NEMCA. This column shows estimated income and expenditure for this period, with the actual interest on investment income for the period.

3. NTCA Funding

3.1 From a standing start in 2018, as a new organisation working across a new geographical remit, and with no legacy projects or pre-existing investment pipeline in place, the North of Tyne Combined Authority has collaborated with the constituent local authorities and other Stakeholders to design and deliver the North of Tyne Investment Fund (NTIF). This has included leveraging investment in major capital and infrastructure projects such as the Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF). Revenue funding has been used to invest in services to unlock inclusive economic growth, for example in workforce skills training. In addition to this the Combined Authority has been awarded regional capital monies (£15.350m) from the Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities for three specific schemes. Creative Growth Programme is another new area of delivery where the Combined Authority is acting as accountable body for the North East seven local authorities. UKSPF continues to gain momentum alongside Multiply and Rural England Prosperity Fund. Adult Education Devolved Budget alongside Bootcamp funding continues to deliver against the NTCA's Strategic Skills Plan targeting a number of priority sectors, i.e. tech and digital, green growth and energy, health and ageing and longevity to help meet skills shortages in the area.

3.2 Table 2 below sets out an overview of NTCA current funding streams illustrating the increased level of delivery of the Mayor and Cabinet's policy priorities. Section 4 –10 details delivery against each of the individual funds.

Table 2: Overview of NTCA Income Funding Streams

Name of Fund	Grant Funding Organisation	Funding Detail	Total Funding Award	Prior years Funding	Funding 2023-24
			£m	£m	£m
North of Tyne Investment Fund (NTIF)	DLUHC	30years £20m	600.000	100.000	20.000
Capital Funding	DLUHC	One-off funding received March 2023	15.350	15.350	-
Creative Growth Programme	DCMS	£0.425m pa for 3yrs	1.275	0.425	0.425
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	DLUHC	£47.084m Revenue/Capital 2022-2025	47.084	5.740	11.428
UKSPF Multiply	DLUHC	£4.128m Revenue 2022-2025	4.128	1.248	1.410
UKSPF Rural England Prosperity Fund	DLUHC	£3.044m Capital 2023-2025	3.044	-	0.761
Brownfield Housing Fund	DLUHC	£31.085m	31.085	12.853	-
Adult Education Budget (AEB) (Devolved)	DfE	£23m pa approx.	705.000	61.846	23.782
AEB Free Courses for Jobs	DfE	£1.5m pa approx.	-	3.255	0.753
Skills Bootcamps Wave 3	DfE	Annual Funding Waves	5.532	3.017	2.515
Skills Bootcamps Wave 4	DfE	Annual Funding Waves	9.230	-	9.230

4. North of Tyne Investment Fund

- 4.1 The North of Tyne Combined Authority is in year 6 of delivery after successfully passing the first five-year gateway review securing ongoing funding for continued and increased delivery against the North of Tyne Investment Fund, with £154.245m allocated spend and over 160 projects and programmes approved since the launch of the Combined Authority, providing direct support to residents, promoting business growth and investing in our communities. These projects are on track to create 5,235 jobs based on current commitments against a target of 10,000, with the first 2,348 new jobs created and 1,959 jobs safeguarded.
- 4.2 Table 3 reflects the Investment Fund by Portfolio in line with the Corporate Plan and then shows spend to date and forecast spend by the end of the financial year 2023/24 against the original Investment Fund allocation.

Table 3: Investment Fund by Portfolio

	Allocation	Q3 Cumulative all years spend to Date.	Forecast Spend at 31/03/2024	Estimate 1/4/2024 – 6/5/2024. (5wks)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Investment and Resources	12.000	11.500	12.000	0.192
Jobs, Innovation and Growth	53.178	20.577	26.192	0.647
Education, Inclusion and Skills	19.100	9.189	11.823	0.943
Clean Energy, and Connectivity	10.736	4.345	8.859	0.126
Culture, Creative and Rural	19.004	9.500	12.266	0.435
Housing, Land and Development	28.192	4.071	14.557	0.634
Social Economy and Communities	3.035	2.362	2.638	0.011
Green New Deal and Connectivity	9.000	0.590	8.808	0.847
Totals	154.245	62.134	97.143	3.835

- 4.3 Table 3 illustrates the significant progress made in decisions and actions to deliver the overall Investment Fund programme since the establishment of the Combined Authority with programmes and project allocations totalling £154.245m. This is an increase of £17.663m from what was reported in Q1 due to previously approved programmes including Access to Finance, 5G and the Northumberland Line now being reflected in the allocation total. Although financial performance in terms of spend to the end of December 2023 is £62.134m the forecast spend position by the end of the financial year reflects a substantial increase. This reflects many projects coming into their final year of delivery against the original set of allocations. The balance of committed spend into future years is £54.024m. Delivery of this will continue to be spent beyond 2023/24 into 2028/29 into the first five-year period of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority where there are approvals in place.
- 4.4 The North of Tyne Investment Fund gainshare of £20.000m received annually is all revenue. However, there are projects funded from the Investment Fund which are being used for capital purposes in addition to revenue. Table 4 overleaf shows the Investment Fund projects by Theme and Workstream split over revenue and capital funding. Capital spend represents £27.355m of current live projects within the Investment Fund.

The North of Tyne Investment Fund monies has also funded/contributed to two 'evergreen' funds as detailed below:

4.6 Green New Deal Fund (GNDF)

4.6.1 The Green New Deal Fund leverages private sector resources to deliver an £18m investment fund, enabling the North of Tyne to take a lead in an area that is fundamental to future growth, recovery, and the achievement of net zero. In April 2020, NTCA approved an Energy, Green Growth and Climate Change Blueprint and agreed a £24.2m investment fund allocation which included £10m for a Green New Deal Fund, £9m to be utilised to establish the actual Green New Deal Fund, and up to a maximum of £1m to be utilised to establish technical capacity for the development of a robust low carbon and energy project pipeline.

The Green New Deal Fund incorporates the following elements:

- Leveraging £9m additional private sector investment to NTCA investment of £9m resulting in an £18m programme with a 50% intervention rate. Total fund management costs will not exceed 10% of NTCA investment.
- A mixed grant/loan/equity model - financial instrument with an evergreen component based on a Limited Partnership model.
- A focus on infrastructure projects as well as business growth and innovation with financial models that could be employed to bring forward projects.
- Investment directly into SMEs based in North of Tyne. This funding will be for growth capital which will allow the SME to invest in its R&D, training, and workforce, enabling them to access larger contracts.
- Technical and investment support will be provided to project sponsors to ensure viable projects are brought forward for investment. This support will be aligned with the North East Energy for Growth Accelerator programme.
- The Fund will create high skilled jobs delivering innovative projects across growing sectors, supporting upskilling, creation of apprenticeships/work placements, e.g. the applicant would create a short-term work experience programme for young people interested in green finance.
- The Fund would [will?] work closely with existing initiatives including the Energy Catalyst and local universities to review high Technology Readiness Level projects for consideration and has confirmed there will be an initial period of engagement with the local business development support ecosystem.
- The Fund is expected to deliver significant returns over the medium term. Options for reinvestment for such returns will be considered when the cash is realised.

Table 5: Forecast Defrayal based on December 2023 pipeline.

Capital Cost Category	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Future Years	Capital Total
	Total	Total	Total		
Funding Committed	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Grant	0.450	0.350	-	-	0.800
Loan	3.300	4.000	-	-	7.300
Equity	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3.750	4.350	-	-	8.100

Capital Cost Category	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Future Years	Capital Total
	Total	Total	Total		
Funding Returned	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Returns	0.006	0.285	0.536	11.070	11.898
Funding Returned Balance					
Returns Total Balance	0.006	0.292	0.828	11.898	

4.7 Culture and Creative Investment Programme (CCIP)

4.7.1 The North of Tyne Culture and Creative Investment programme (CCIP) established in June 2021 was an innovative partnership between Creative UK and North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) supporting culture and creative businesses and freelancers across the region offering a combined package of financial and business support, including £0.500m of grants, £1.500m of loans and £0.625m of equity investment – alongside £1.540m of leveraged private investment into the region – with a focus on catalysing innovation across the sector. This was a first of its kind partnership fund pinpointing the creative industries as a key economic growth enabler for a region’s regeneration.

The CCIP was designed to assist businesses with activities such as:

- Developing new revenue-generating products and services.
- Diversification into new forms of practice.
- Developing new business models.
- General business growth.

4.7.2 The first phase of the CCIP programme detailed in 4.7.1 ended in June 2023,,A second programme following on from the first CCIP is funded from the North of Tyne Investment Fund and UKSPF will ensure the momentum and the impact of the investment and support models created through the CCIP are able to continue in supporting the North East’s thriving cultural and creative talent into the future – delivering on NTCA’s ambition of creating an evergreen fund which provides a sustainable and future-proof resource, cementing the creative industries as a key growth sector for the region’s continued growth and prosperity.

4.7.3 Resources required to continue this programme from 1st September 2023 to 31st March 2025 are £2.985m; £2.090m UKSPF and £0.894m North of Tyne Investment Fund. The North of Tyne Investment Funding will be carried forward from the CCIP project currently in delivery, the £0.894m will be used solely for the loan element of the project so no investment to business is lost. The project will attract £1.360m of private sector investment. 200 enterprises will receive business support resulting in 65 grants (£0.600m) and 23 loan and equity deals (£1.290m) being distributed. Table 6 shows the CCIP Expenditure against Funding Profile.

Table 6: Culture and Creative Investment Programme (CCIP) Funding Profile

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Salary, Marketing, Consultancy Expenditure	0.346	0.749				1.095
Revenue Grant Allocation	0.080	0.520				0.600
Revenue Loan Allocation	0.590	0.700				1.290
Total Expenditure	1.016	1.969				2.985
NTCA Investment Fund Revenue	0.894					0.894
UKSPF	0.122	1.969				2.091
Total NTCA Funding	1.016	1.969	0	0	0	2.985
Private Sector Match from Loans, Grants and Equity		1.360				1.360
Total Funding (Revenue)	1.016	3.329	0	0	0	4.345

4.7.4 The mix of funding package offered through the CCIP second Programme will be grants of £0.600m and loans £1.290m. Repayments including interest received on loan repayments recovered from applicants during the course of the Project are ringfenced within the Recipient’s accounts and redeployed against the original agreed programme objectives. A review point will take place at the end of Q3 FY 2024/25 and the steering group will work with the Recipient to develop a plan for the future use of those funds in collaboration with NTCA. Table 7 below shows the current loan repayment profile on loans given out across the CCIP programme, in addition to the below is an £0.100m equity investment however, the repayments for this are not fixed.

Table 7 Current Loan Principal Repayment Profile with Interest across financial years

Financial Year	Principal	Interest
	£	£
March 2022-23	108,264	28,466
March 2023-24	201,679	44,915
March 2024-25	233,636	35,612
March 2025-26	229,676	19,907
March 2026-27	134,202	6,145
March 2027-28	26,988	536
Total	934,445	135,581

- 4.8 Additional capital funding of £15.350m was awarded by DLUHC in March 2023 for spend within 2022/2023. However, slippage into 2023/2024 was allowed due to the late receipt of the notification of funding. Table 8 shows the three schemes identified for this additional capital spend.

Table 8: £15.350m Capital Funding

Capital Project	Allocation £m	Spend to Date £m	Forecast Spend to 2023/24 £m
Port of Tyne -Tyne Clean Energy Park	8.000	8.000	8.000
Sunderland City Council – Sunderland Studio Development	5.500	4.436	5.500
North Tyneside Council – North Shields Town Square	1.850	1.243	1.850
	15.350	13.679	15.350

5 Creative Growth Programme

- 5.1 Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) launched its Create Growth Programme in June 2022, reflecting the fact that ‘creative industries’ is one of the fastest growing sectors of the UK economy. Six successful local area partnerships were awarded approximately £1.275m in grant funding to deliver targeted business support to high growth potential creative businesses. The Northeast Create Growth Programme (CGP), convened by the NTCA, is one of the six successful partnerships.
- 5.2 North East Create Growth Programme is designed to support 100 creative businesses with high-growth potential, between the seed and scaling stages, from across County Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland with the support and the investment they need to grow their business and turn their innovative creative ideas into the leading creative businesses of the future. Four key target sectors of growth have been identified: IT/Software and computer services (with a focus on CreaTech; Gaming, AR/VR and E-sports), Design/Designer Fashion, Publishing, and Film and TV.
- 5.3 Funding was confirmed to North of Tyne Combined Authority acting as Accountable Body for the seven north east local authorities for financial year 2022/23 of £425,000, this was carried forward on the balance sheet to match spend in 2023/24. Further funding of £425,000 based on performance will be allocated for the financial year 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Table 9: DCMS Create Growth Programme

	2023/24 Financial Yr.			2024/25	Total £m
	2023/24 Budget £m	2023/24 Q3 Spend £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Budget £m	
DCMS Create Growth Programme					
Marketing and Events	0.029	-	0.029	0.019	0.048
Delivery Programme	0.465	0.390	0.465	0.419	0.883
Project Delivery and Staff Overheads	0.193	0.035	0.193	0.151	0.344
Total Budgeted Expenditure	0.687	0.425	0.687	0.588	1.275
Reserves B/F	(0.425)	(0.425)	(0.425)	(0.163)	
Funding Allocation	(0.425)		(0.425)	(0.425)	(1.275)
Total Funding	(0.850)		(0.850)	(0.588)	(1.275)
Net Reserve C/F	(0.163)		(0.163)	0	0

6. UK Social Prosperity Fund (UK SPF)

6.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion nationally of new funding for local investment by March 2025. The intention of the fund is to invest in domestic priorities and targeting funding where it is needed most: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment, and productivity growth, and increasing life chances. The table includes the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), a £110m top-up to the UKSPF allocated to eligible rural authorities (Section 6.4).

6.2 Table 10 below reflects the spend in 2022/23 and the committed spend to date for 2023/24, in advance of further projects included in the Investment Fund update to Cabinet in the agenda today.

Table 10: UK Social Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Profile

UKSPF Investment Priorities	Total Allocation		Prior Yr. Spend 2022/23		2023/24 Q3 Spend to Date		2023/24 Forecast Spend		2024/25	
	Rev. £m	Cap. £m	Rev. £m	Cap. £m	Rev. £m	Cap. £m	Rev. £m	Cap. £m	Rev. £m	Cap. £m
Community and Place	11.137	4.115	1.407	0.155	0.141	-	3.131	0.818	6.599	3.142
Supporting Businesses	13.814	4.528	-	-	0.232	-	4.125	0.507	9.689	4.021
People and Skills	11.609	-	-	-	0.246	-	1.939	-	9.670	-
Rural England Prosperity Fund	-	3.044	-	-	-	-	0	0.761	-	2.283
Administration Top-Slice (4%)	1.522	0.359	0.241	-	0.533	-	0.681	-	0.600	0.359
Total UKSPF and Rural England Prosperity Fund	38.082	12.046	1.648	0.155	1.152	0	9.876	2.086	26.558	9.805

6.3 Multiply (UKSPF)

6.3.1 Multiply Funding is a separate funding stream that forms part of UKSPF overall programme and is aimed at boosting funding for adult numeracy enabling local areas to deliver more innovative approaches to reach more people. The funding profile and committed 2023/24 spend to date is shown overleaf in Table 11.

Table 11: Multiply UKSPF Spend Profile

UKSPF Multiply	Total Allocation £m	2022/23 Spend £m	2023/24 Q3 Spend £m	2023/24 Forecast Spend £m	2024/25 Budget £m
Multiply Programme	3.715	1.089	0.707	1.296	1.334
Administration top slice (10%)	0.413	0.125	0.108	0.144	0.140
Total UKSPF Multiply	4.128	1.214	0.815	1.440	1.474
UKSPF Multiply Funding	(4.128)	(1.214)	(0.815)	(1.440)	(1.474)
Net UK SPF Multiply Position	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

6.4 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) (UKSPF)

6.4.1 The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a £110m top-up to the UKSPF allocated to eligible rural authorities to support activities that specifically address the challenges rural communities face. North of Tyne was allocated £3.044m capital funding specifically targeted at Northumberland, but recognising the important connection between our rural, coastal, and urban economies. The REPF is available from April 2023 to March 2025. The fund is aligned with interventions in the Supporting Local Business and Communities and Place investment priorities, and will provide capital funding to:

- support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy, including farm businesses looking to diversify income streams.
- support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.

6.4.2 Table 12 sets out the REPF spend profile for the Rural Business and Rural Communities Priorities, 65% of the funding has been allocated to the Rural Business Priority, and 35% to the Rural Communities Priority.

Table 12: Rural England Prosperity Fund Capital Spend profile.

	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£m	£m	£m
Rural Business	0.495	1.484	1.979
Rural Communities	0.266	0.799	1.065
Total	0.761	2.283	3.044

7. Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF)

- 7.1 The Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) was the first housing allocation for the North of Tyne Combined Authority. The funding is intended to support the development of at least 2000 new homes, by remediating and revitalising brownfield sites across the North of Tyne area. The Brownfield fund is part of a broader housing programme and pipeline of sites, shaping a strategic delivery approach to supporting housing and economic recovery.
- 7.2 An extension to BHF was announced in the Levelling Up White Paper. Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) were awarded £120 million nationally, to be allocated to each MCA based on population. NTCA was awarded £7.96 million, bringing the total amount of BHF funding to £31.820 million.
- 7.3 In terms of approvals to date, NTCA have approved 13 schemes with a total commitment of £25.969m, with a further project currently going through appraisal valued at £5.000m. These schemes are forecasting the creation of 2133 housing units with the extended pipeline accounting for 2422, this is set against the DLUHC target of 1500. Forecast private sector leverage for the contracted projects stands at £115.95m.
- 7.4 Table 13 below shows the projected programme with current allocation of funds.

Table 13: Projected programme with current allocation of Brownfield Housing Fund

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Initial Funding Profile	4.854	8.100	6.700	3.100	1.100	23.854
Extended Funding Profile	0.000	0.000	4.753	2.674	0.524	7.951
Combined Funding Profile	4.854	8.100	11.453	5.774	1.624	31.805
Forecast annual spend as at end of FY at Q3 position	0.636	3.228	1.046	9.979	16.388	31.277
Actual spend as at Q3 position	0.636	3.228	1.046	3.599		8.509

- 7.5 Overall good progress continues to be made with the NTCA's Brownfield Housing Programme. The programme is expected to over deliver in terms of outputs and deliver good value for money, with expenditure profiles expected to be completed by March 2025 in line with government's expectations.
- 7.6 Actual project expenditure was broadly in line with projected expenditure in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, however, fell below projection in 2022/2023. Schemes delivering early in the programme were selected due to their high level of shovel readiness. Extensive work has been undertaken to progress less well-developed schemes. This is time consuming and consequently there is a lag between schemes being added to the pipeline and developing to the point they begin to draw down Brownfield Housing Grant funding. Actual expenditure is expected to increase significantly during the final quarter of 2023/2024 and into the final year 2024-25 as a number of pipeline schemes begin on site works. Claims for eligible costs are expected to be submitted imminently and NTCA officers are liaising with claimants on schemes to ensure claims are project managed and facilitated through the claims process swiftly.
- 7.7 A further £17.409 million was awarded to NTCA, following the announcement of the North East Devolution Deal. This allocation will be focused on housing sites in the South of the Tyne area and will unlock between 1,134 and 1,451 new homes, with projects expected to defray their spending by March 2026, in line with Government expectations. The south of Tyne housing pipeline of £17.618 was approved to deliver 1159 units. A due diligence process is currently being finalised to assess

project suitability and the first scheme is undergoing appraisal and is expected, subject to a satisfactory appraisal, to go before NTCA Technical Officer Group in January 2024.

8. Adult Education Budget (AEB)

- 8.1 As part of the devolution deal the Adult Education Budget was devolved to the authority with an effective start date of August 2020. This provided the Authority with significant new powers and responsibilities in delivering both Mayoral and Cabinet priorities alongside the national skills agenda and priorities.
- 8.2 NTCA's devolved AEB Budget for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 is £23.782m. The AEB budget includes a 3% top slice allocation to fund corporate related activity allocation. A further £0.753m funding for the delegated Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) offer has been awarded for this financial year bringing the total AEB Budget for 2023/24 to £24.535m.
- 8.3 Providers' AEB delivery plans are monitored at quarterly performance management meetings throughout the year. AEB Devolution features as a strategic risk on the NTCA Strategic Risk Register. In addition, at a project level, appropriate risk management processes are in place to identify and mitigate risks, with escalation requirements embedded.
- 8.4 Reconciliation of under delivery from academic year (AY) 2020-21 & AY 2021-22 (which was mainly due to the impact of the Covid Pandemic) has meant that a proportion of funding from these two academic years was held in reserve at the end of 2022/23. A further full reconciliation of providers' actual earnings against their allocations for the academic year (Aug 22 to Jul 23) took place at the end of October 2023.
- 8.5 Providers have been working hard to increase participation and are reporting an increased confidence from learners and employers in AY 2023-24. A significant proportion of the remaining balance from the reconciliations noted in paragraph 8.4 will be re-distributed during the AY 2023-24 through an approved 'earnings boost' and planned 'growth windows' which enable providers to apply for growth to their current allocations in line with procurement regulations and NTCA's Scheme of Delegation. The growth windows are expected to commit a further £2.8m of the funding held in reserve, leaving a reserve balance of £3.167m to be carried forward.
- 8.6 NTCA's performance management processes enable current AEB providers to apply for in-year growth to their funding allocations at set performance management points throughout the academic year. All requests for growth are subject to funding being available, criteria set out in the NTCA Payment and Performance Management Framework, and appropriateness in terms of meeting NTCA's strategic priorities for AEB as set out in the Strategic Skills Plan.
- 8.7 A growth request window opened in November 2023 inviting all current AEB providers with a Grant Funding Agreement and/or a Contract for Service to submit a business case for 'in year' growth at the first performance management point in December 2023. Six providers submitted business cases requesting additional funding totalling £1,366,157. Cabinet is asked to approve issuing the in the year growth totalling £1,366,157 to use a proportion of the uncommitted AEB funding in AY 2023-24.
- 8.8 Table 14 shows the planned use of existing reserves balance in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Table 14: AEB and FCFJ planned drawdown from prior year reserves.

Reserves	Actual Balance £m	Committed FY 2023/24 £m	Committed FY 2024/25 £m
Balance on 1st April 2023	(8.760)		
Committed for FCFJ (prior year)		0.374	0.611
5% Earning Boost Payments		0.858	0.950
Period 4 (Nov 23) Growth Window payments		1.400	0.000
Period 6 (Feb 24) Growth Window payments		1.500	0.000
TOTAL	(8.760)	4.132	1.561
Uncommitted balance c/fwd	(3.067)		

- 8.9 Table 15 below shows the spend on AEB and FCFJ against the 2023/24 Allocation to March 2024. The funding allocation for April to July 2024 has already been allocated - £7.991m, of which approximately £2m is expected to be spent by May 2024.

Table 15: AEB and FCFJ 2023/24 Spend Profile including Growth Allocations

Free Courses for Jobs funding for 2023/24 financial	2023/24 AEB Financial Year		
	2023/24 Allocation	2023/24 Spend to Date	2023/24 FY Forecast
	£m	£m	£m
AEB	23.069	10.221	23.069
FCFJ	0.753	0.308	0.753
Corporate top slice	0.713	0.359	0.713
Total	24.535	10.888	24.535
2023/24 AEB and FSFJ Funding	(24.535)	(10.888)	(24.535)
Net Funding Position	0.000	0.000	0.000

9. Skills Bootcamps Wave 3

- 9.1 In 2022/23 NTCA were notified of Bootcamp Wave 3 grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for a total of £5.531m including £0.503m in relation to management costs, to support the delivery of Skills Bootcamps in the NTCA region. The DfE provided 50% of this grant funding upfront plus the full 10% management costs, £3.017m of this £1.884m was spent in 2022/23 with £1.133m remaining balance of funding put in reserves. The remaining 50% of the £5.531m balance to be received from DfE in relation to Wave 3 Bootcamps is to be paid in arrears based on delivery. The spend to Quarter 3 in 2023/24 on Bootcamp Wave 3 is £2.820m. Table 16 shows the delivery on Bootcamp Wave 3 in line with the funding allocation. Remaining funding will be allocated to wave 4 funding.

Table 16: Bootcamp Wave 3 Funding and Delivery Profile

	Total Funding Allocation	2022/23 Prior Yr. Spend	2023/24 Q3 Spend	2023/24 Forecast
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Bootcamp Wave 3 Delivery (50% up front)	2.514	1.681	0.624	0.833
Bootcamp Wave 3 10% top slice (up front)	0.503	0.203	0.225	0.300
Bootcamp Funding to be claimed in arrears in relation to spend incurred.	2.514		1.971	2.514
Total Expenditure	5.400	1.884	2.820	3.647
Bootcamp Wave 3 Funding available	(5.400)	(1.884)	(2.820)	(3.647)

10. Bootcamp Wave 4 Funding

- 10.1 NTCA secured £9.237m DfE funding in relation to Bootcamp Wave 4. This represents a significant investment in our region and has the potential to deliver new opportunities to generations of adults who may have been previously left behind. The funding for Bootcamps is allocated on an annual basis and not guaranteed on an ongoing basis, Table 17a below shows the position on Bootcamp Wave 4 funding which will be provided 50% upfront plus the top slice funding of 10% with the remaining amounts to be claimed in arrears as claims are paid out.
- 10.2 It is anticipated that £3.365m of Skills Bootcamp Funding will be spent by the end of financial year 2023-24. The remaining allocation will be claimed in arrears from DfE in FY 2024-25.

Table 17a: Skills Bootcamps 2023/24 Budget Monitor

	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Q3 Spend	2023/24 Forecast
	£m	£m	£m
Bootcamp Wave 4	8.397	1.549	3.400
Bootcamp Wave 4 top slice	0.840	0.000	0.840
Total Expenditure	9.237	1.303	4.240
Bootcamp Wave 4 Funding	(9.237)	(1.549)	(9.237)
Net position	0	0	(4.997)

- 10.3 Table 17b shows the breakdown of expenditure against Bootcamp Wave 4 funding. It is anticipated that £9.129m Bootcamp Funding will be spent in full by the end of January 2025, with £4.240m spent by March and approximately a further £0.500m in April 2024. This assumes that providers deliver to contract. There is a small balance to be allocated (£0.108m), which should be allocated and spent by January 2025.

Table 17b Bootcamp Wave 4 breakdown of expenditure

	Total £m	Forecast March 2024 £m	Estimate 1/4/2024 – 6/5/2024. (5wks) £m	By January 2025 £m
NTCA Grant Funding from DfE	9.237	4.240	0.888	9.237
NTCA Management Costs	0.840	0.840	0.081	0.840
Committed Allocations to providers in FY 2023-24 (Grant Funding Agreements & Procured Contract for Services)	8.239	3.400	0.792	8.239
Total Funding Allocated (Including Management Costs)	9.129	4.240	0.877	9.129
Total remaining to allocate	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.108

11. Early Priorities for the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority

- 11.1 Cabinet is aware that on 28 December 2022 HM Government announced a “minded to” devolution deal with NTCA and the seven councils across the North East (i.e., Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, and Sunderland). The “minded to” devolution deal would see a significant shift of powers, funding and responsibility which would enable the Councils to pursue their ambitions for inclusive growth. In total, it is expected to provide at least £4.2 billion of additional investment to the region over 30 years, including a £1.4bn investment fund alongside significant funding for transport, education and skills, housing, and regeneration. This would enable investment into projects which reflect local needs and opportunities, making a real difference for residents, communities, and the local economy.
- 11.2 As part of the negotiations on the deal there was early agreement to some upfront funding where this authority will act as accountable body. Brownfield Housing Fund grant funding of £17.4m has been secured for the South of Tyne Constituent authorities as set out in previous reports to cabinet, and with schemes now going through the North of Tyne CA Assurance process.
- 11.3 In addition to Brownfield Housing funding an award of £20m of Early Capital has been secured for investment across the LA7 geography. In the first instance until NEMCA is established on 7 May the North of Tyne CA will be the accountable body for the funding as previously reported to cabinet. Expenditure on both of these programmes will be reported to Cabinet as part of the outturn report later this year.
- 11.4 The North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) Devolution Deal includes a fully devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) of circa £68m which includes a ringfenced allocation for the delivery of a Level 3 Adult Skills offer ‘Free Courses for Jobs’ (FCFJ) for the North East from academic year (AY) 2024-25). Delivery of this devolved funding must commence from 1st August 2024. The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) have also secured £17.9m of Grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for the delivery of Skills Bootcamps across the NEMCA region from 1st April 2024.
- 11.5 Until NEMCA is formally established, DfE will allocate the devolved AEB and grant the Skills Bootcamp funding to NTCA, who will act as the accountable body and administer the funding in line with NTCA’s assurance framework. This funding will be transferred to NTCA once the Statutory Instrument to create NEMCA is laid, which Government expects to occur in early 2024.

- 11.6 Significant mobilisation activity has been required to ensure delivery of Skills Bootcamps commences from 1st April 2024 and the delivery of the devolved AEB commences from 1st August 2024 – as such, decisions are sought now to enable this to happen.
- 11.7 The planned approach to commission the devolved AEB and Skills Bootcamp funding is via two routes of both Grant Funding Agreements to ‘in scope’ adult education providers (devolved AEB only) and procured Contract for Services (a proportion of devolved AEB funding and Skills Bootcamp funds).
- 11.8 Discussions have been held with the Leaders and Chief Executive Officers of the Local Authorities to allocate up to £49.4m (circa 70%) of the Devolved AEB including FCFJ to 15 ‘in scope’ Grant Providers and procure the remaining devolved AEB alongside Skills Bootcamp Funding. Establishing the funding agreements with ‘in-scope’ Grant Providers will provide stability to the provider base and ensure that appropriate levels of statutory entitlement provision and community learning are available, thereby minimising the risk to continuity of provision for residents.
- 11.9 A Flexible Adult Skills Procurement Framework has been established to procure the remaining devolved AEB and Skills Bootcamp funds. A procurement exercise inviting a wide range of organisations and providers of skills to tender for a place on the Flexible Adult Skills Procurement Framework was launched in November 2023.
- 11.10 240 tenders were received from 127 organisations for a place on the Framework covering 3 Lots (Devolved AEB, FCFJ and Skills Bootcamps). Evaluation of the tenders is complete, and we are able to issue 176 Framework Agreements across the 3 Lots on the Framework. Once Framework Agreements are in place call off competitions will be held to secure AEB and Skills Bootcamp provision from the Framework.
- 11.11 In order to maintain the rapid progress needed to ensure delivery of the devolved AEB and Skills Bootcamps is underway by the timescales of 1st April 2024 for Skills Bootcamps and 1st August 2024 for devolved AEB, NTCA Cabinet is being asked to:
- Approve the issue of ‘letters of comfort’ to identified Grant Providers setting out their indicative funding allocations for delivery of the devolved AEB from 1st August 2024. The letters of comfort will precede the issue of Grant Agreements to these providers once NEMCA is established.
 - Approve the issue of Flexible Adult Skills Framework Agreements to the organisations who submitted a successful tender to the procurement of the Framework in November 2023.
 - Authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and portfolio holder for Education, Inclusion and Skills to approve any subsequent grant agreements and /or call-off contracts procured from the Flexible Adult Skills Framework for the delivery of skills programmes from 1st April 2024.

12. Reserves Position

- 12.1 The forecast position on reserves held on 31 March 2023/24 are detailed in Table 18.

Table 18: NTCA Reserves forecast position on 31 March 2023/24

NTCA Reserves					
	Opening Balance 2023/24	Movement to Reserves	Movement from Reserves	Balance on Reserves at 31/03/2024	Forecast Position as of 06 May 2024
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Strategic Reserve	(0.200)	-	-	(0.200)	(0.200)
Investment Fund Reserve	(50.046)	-	27.189	(22.857)	(19.022)
Election Fund Reserve	-	(1.100)	-	(1.100)	-
Transition Reserve	-	(3.238)	-	(3.238)	(3.238)
Adult Education Budget Grant	(8.760)	-	4.132	(4.628)	(4.478)
DLUHC Capital Grant	(12.302)	-	12.302	-	-
Create Growth Programme	(0.425)	(0.163)	0.425	(0.163)	(0.147)
United Kingdom Social Prosperity Fund	(3.950)	(12.189)	11.962	(4.177)	(3.776)
Strategic Capacity Reserve	(1.252)	-	-	(1.252)	(1.252)
Bootcamp Wave 3	(1.134)	-	1.134	-	-
Bootcamp Wave 4	-	(4.997)	-	(4.997)	(4.120)
Net Zero North East England	(0.151)	-	0.151	-	-
Brownfield Housing Fund	(12.763)	-	9.979	(2.784)	(2.517)
Capacity Funding	-	(0.125)	-	(0.125)	(0.125)
Reserves less than £0.100m	(0.333)	-	0.247	(0.087)	(0.078)
Total Reserves	(91.316)	(21.812)	67.521	(45.608)	(38.875)

- 12.2 Based on the forecast position at Q3 the position on the Investment Fund Reserves as of 31 March 2024 will decrease to £22.857m. This will be available to fund some of the ongoing commitments into the first five years of the North East Mayoral combined authority. The additional 5-week period from 31 March 2024 to 06 May 2024 prior to inception of NEMCA reflects a forecast additional £3.835m will be spent during that period reducing the balance on IF Reserve going into NEMCA to £19.022m.
- 12.3 A Transition Reserve has been created from the increased investment income with the additional income to ensure continuity of provision for relevant North of Tyne projects whilst early funding decision for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority are developed during 2024-25.
- 12.4 AEB and Free Courses for Jobs delivery reserve has reduced to £4.628m after a full reconciliation of providers' actual earnings against their allocations for the academic year (Aug 2022 to Jul 2023) took place at the end of October 2023 with the remaining balance from this reconciliation to be re-distributed for the academic year August 2023 – July 2024. The period from 31 March to 6 May 2024 assumes £0.150m will be spent against this reserve reducing the reserve level going into NEMCA to £4.478m.
- 12.5 Other reserve balances are assumed to reduce by a proportionate split reflecting delivery during the transition period from 31 March 2024 to 06 May 2024 when balances will move into NEMCA.
- 12.6 The Strategic Reserve continues to be maintained at £0.200m in line with the Reserves and Balances policy.

B. Impact on NTCA Objectives

The North of Tyne Combined Authority Vision document sets out the strategic objectives of the Authority. The 2023/24 budget position against which the budget is monitored demonstrates the Authority has properly discharged its functions and assisted in delivering the Authority's vision, policies, and priorities.

C. Key risks

There are no specific risks relating to this report.

D. Financial and other resources implications

This report sets out the financial and resource implications which have arisen during quarter 2 of 2023/24. The Mayor and Cabinet need to have due regard to the Director of Finance's advice in relation to the levels of reserves and balances in accordance with the Authority's Reserves and Balances Policy.

E. Legal implications

The Combined Authority has a legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice; the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Prudential Code: Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Department of Levelling up Communities and Housing Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments. The Combined Authority is required to agree a balanced budget annually and to monitor performance against that budget throughout the year. The Combined Authority must also make provision for an adequate level of un-earmarked reserves. It is also required to ensure that good financial governance arrangements are in place.

F. Equalities implications

There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the recommendations in this report.

G. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing implications

There are no direct inclusive economy implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

H. Climate Change implications

There are no direct climate change implications arising out of the recommendations in this report

I. Consultation and engagement

The creation of the North of Tyne Combined Authority has been subject to significant and regional consultation. The 2023/24 budget was subject to wide consultation across the North of Tyne Region. The constituent authorities have been consulted directly on the production of the 2023/24 Budget and 2022/23 Outturn statement.

J. Appendices

None

K. Background papers

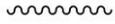
Cabinet 31 January 2023 NTCA Budget Report
Cabinet 26 September 2023 Investment Fund Update and Funding Approvals

L. Contact officer(s)

Janice Gillespie, Director of Finance Janice.gillespie@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

M. Glossary

AEB	Adult Education Budget
NTCA	North of Tyne Combined Authority
Core-UKSPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund
DCMS	Department of Culture Media and Sport



Subject: Annual Report and Decision Review
Report of: Michael Robson, Senior Governance Officer

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is twofold: to present the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24 for approval and submission to the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority's (NEMCA) Cabinet and to review the General Exception and Special Urgency Decisions taken by the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) over the past year.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2023/24, make any comments or suggestions on the report and agree that it be referred to the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority's Cabinet; and
2. Review and note details of the general exception and special urgency decisions taken by NTCA over the past year.

A. Context

1.1 Annual Report

- 1.1.1 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide and the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny Committees refer to an Annual Scrutiny Report. Whilst the context of the reference relates to local authorities and the importance of ensuring that Council and not just the Executive are aware of the work of Overview and Scrutiny, for Combined Authorities the Statutory Guidance states:

“In order to maintain awareness of scrutiny at the Combined Authority and provoke dialogue and discussion of its impact, the business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board...”. (paragraph 11 h, page 10)

- 1.1.2 It was agreed as part of the Committee's work programme for 2023/2024 that an annual report of the work of the Committee would be produced for the last meeting of the municipal year.
- 1.1.3 An annual report has been prepared in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee and this is attached as Appendix A. The report documents the role played by the Committee in ensuring there is accountability within NTCA by reviewing and scrutinising the decisions taken by the Mayor and the Cabinet, monitoring delivering of its programmes and contributing to the development of its policy and strategy.
- 1.1.4 This report also marks the end of the Committee's work as NTCA transitions to NEMCA. The report therefore seeks to highlight the Committee's achievements not only over the past 12 months but over the lifetime of NTCA, to capture some of the lessons learned from the experience and to provide commentary on how the overview and scrutiny function might be developed and strengthened in the new Authority.

1.1.5 The Committee is recommended to refer the annual report to the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority so that it may be considered when determining the overview and scrutiny arrangements within the new authority.

1.2 **Review of Decisions**

1.2.1 NTCA seeks to give 28 days public notice of all key decisions in its Forward Plan. Sometimes key decisions need to be taken quickly and may not appear on the Forward Plan. A general exception decision is where a key decision has not been included in the Forward Plan but more than five clear days' notice of the decision has still been given. A special urgency decision is where a key decision has not been included in the Forward Plan but less than five clear days' notice of the decision has been given. In these circumstances the Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Committee are notified and in the case of special urgency decisions their agreement is sought.

1.2.2 NTCA's Cabinet-Scrutiny Protocol states that details of any general exception and special urgency decisions will be reported to the Committee at the end of each municipal year.

1.2.3 On 21 June 2023 a special urgency decision was taken and published in relation to the transfer of North East Energy Accelerator from North East Local Enterprise Partnership to NTCA. The Chair of the Committee was consulted and agreed that the decision was urgent and could not be reasonably delayed.

1.2.4 On 8 September 2023 a general exception decision was taken and published in relation to the Devolved Brownfield Housing Funding and Capital Regeneration Funding associated with the North East Devolution Deal. The Chair of the Committee was notified.

1.2.5 Members of the Committee are notified of all Cabinet and key decisions and have the right to request that a decision is called-in for scrutiny by the Committee. In 2023/24 there have been no requests for decisions to be called-in.

B. Impact on NTCA Objectives

The importance of the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to assist in the effective, efficient and transparent delivery of NTCA's objectives is set out in the Order, the Constitution and the adoption of the Cabinet-Scrutiny Protocol in March 2020. The independence of the committee from Cabinet is demonstrated by Cabinet delegating the appointment of the Chair of the committee each year to the committee itself (subject to the requirements of the Order that the appointment is an 'appropriate person', i.e. an elected member of the committee who is not of the same political party as the Mayor).

C. Equalities Statement

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and fosters good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and also considers the implications for people from different socio-economic backgrounds/low pay as a protected characteristic.

D. Inclusive Economy and Wellbeing Statement

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful of the NTCA's inclusive economy ambitions and the five characteristics of an inclusive economy: participation; equity; growth; stability and sustainability and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken these fully into account.

E. Climate Change Statement

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mindful that the NTCA's and the three constituent Local Authorities have declared a Climate Emergency and when undertaking scrutiny of a particular topic looks to see that any policy/event/decision has taken climate change fully into account.

F. Consultation and Engagement

The Chair and Vice Chair have been consulted on the production of the annual report and are consulted on key decisions which are being taken without 28 days notice; 'general exception' and 'special urgency' decisions. This process is set out in the NTCA Constitution.

G. Appendices

Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023-24

H. Background Papers

Cabinet-Scrutiny Protocol

NTCA Constitution

[Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities](#)

Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) [Good Scrutiny Guide](#)

CfGS: [Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities – a plain English guide](#)

[Record of Special Urgency Decision - 21 June 2023](#)

[Record of General Exception Decision - 8 September 2023](#)

I. Contact Officers

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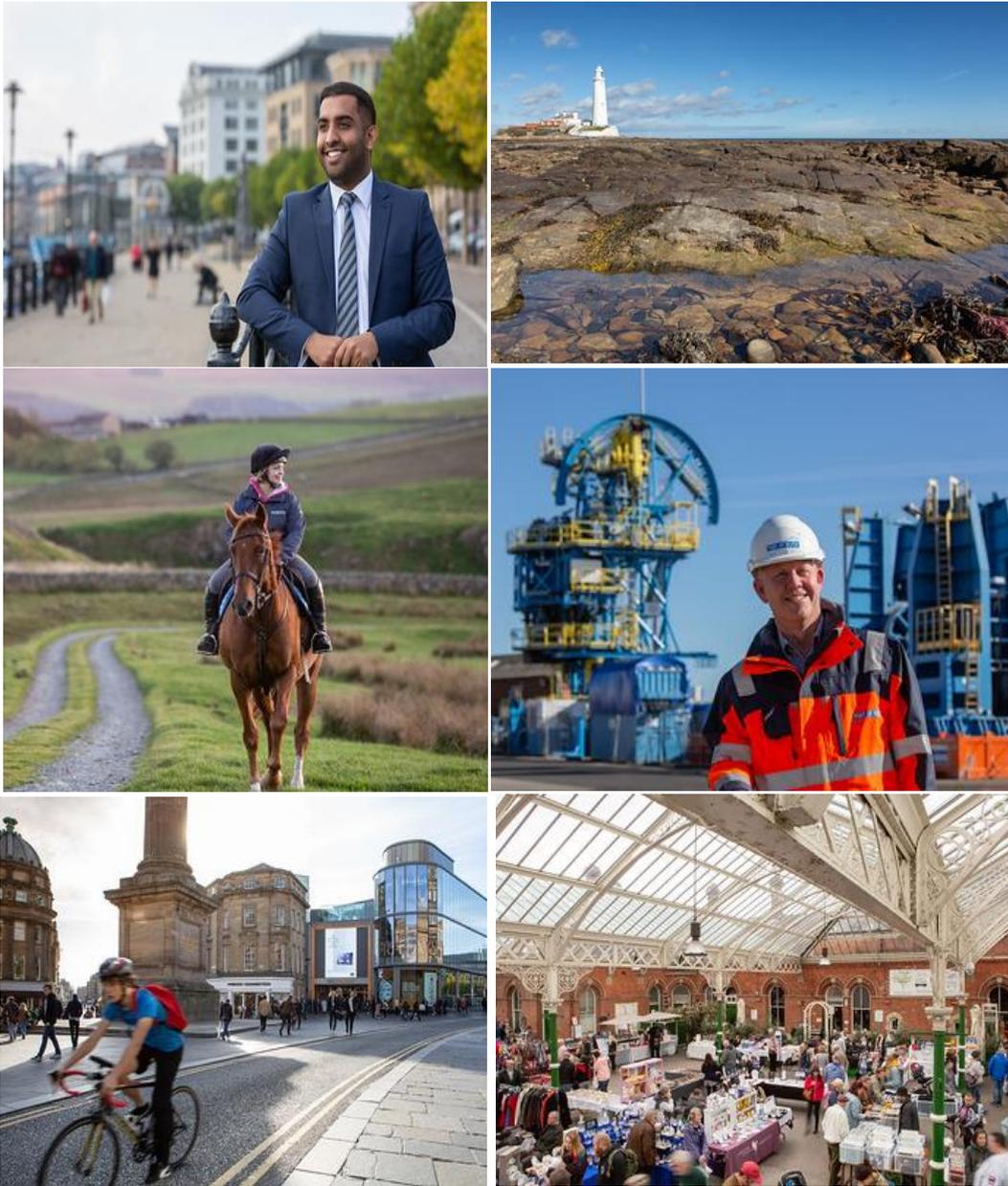
J. Glossary

NTCA North of Tyne Combined Authority

NEMCA North East Mayoral Combined Authority

CfGS Centre for Governance and Scrutiny

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Contact Officers	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Introduction from the Chair

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2023/24 Annual Report of the North of Tyne Combined Authority's (NTCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The purpose of this report is to document the critical role played by the Committee in ensuring there is accountability within the Authority. It does this by reviewing and scrutinising the decisions taken by the Mayor and the Cabinet, monitoring delivering of its programmes and contributing to the development of its policy and strategy.



This report marks the end of the Committee's work as NTCA transitions to the new North East Combined Authority (NEMCA). The report therefore seeks to highlight the Committee's achievements not only over the past 12 months but over the lifetime of NTCA, to capture some of the lessons learned from the experience and to provide commentary on how the overview and scrutiny function might be developed and strengthened in the new Authority.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all those councillors who have served on the Committee over the past 5 years. Attendance and engagement at meetings has been good, with substitute members ably filling in when required. Despite our political differences members have worked well together to make a positive contribution to the work of the Authority. I would particularly like to thank my predecessors, Councillors Gregah Roughead and Catherine Seymour, for their leadership and to Councillor Linda Wright for her support to us all as she has served as Vice Chair throughout the lifetime of the Committee.

Councillor Barry Flux
Chair of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Year 2023/24

The scrutiny year began when members of the Committee came together at an informal workshop to receive training on the role of overview and scrutiny within a combined authority and to begin to determine their work programme for the year ahead.

At its first meeting the Committee approved a work programme, noting that it could be changed to respond to matters that may arise during the course of the year. Members have been invited to suggest additional topics for inclusion in the work programme as the year has progressed.

The Committee has largely completed its work programme as planned.

Throughout the year the Committee has regularly examined preparations for delivery of the North East Devolution Deal and the transition of NTCA to NEMCA. As part of the transition, Members considered the Authority's proposals to undertake a wrap-up programme in line with its annual reporting cycle to celebrate its success, set out its learning and create a record of its existence. The Committee later examined the final annual report.

The Committee has continued to review delivery of the Authority's ambitions, programmes and projects.

Members have assessed the performance of the devolved Adult Education Budget in 2022-23 in terms of the opportunities created for residents. Members commented on the key priorities for 2023-24 and the preparations for the Adult Education Budget to be devolved to NEMCA from 2024-25 onwards.

The Child Poverty Prevention Programme seeks to build on the work of constituent authorities to address the causes and symptoms of child poverty. The Committee has examined delivery of Phase 2 of the programme, its scope and its impact.

The Committee has continued to monitor the progress made by the Poverty Truth Commission which has brought civic and business representatives together with people with lived experience of poverty to understand the features of poverty and work collaboratively to come up with practical solutions. This culminated with the final report of the Commission being presented to the Committee.

NTCA has been awarded funding to remediate and revitalise brownfield sites across the area for the provision of new homes. The Committee has evaluated the impact to date of the Brownfield Housing Fund Programme.

In terms of financial scrutiny, members have maintained oversight of the Authority's current financial position by reviewing the quarterly budget monitoring reports. The Committee has also contributed to the preparation of next years' budget and corporate plan. In the light of the North East Devolution Deal the process was different this year in that the Cabinet and the North East Combined Authority's (NECA) Leadership Board separately agreed initial budget proposals for NEMCA. These proposals also incorporated the draft transport budget proposals agreed by the Joint Transport Committee (JTC).

The Committee examined and commented on the initial budget proposals in

December 2023 when it agreed to convene a workshop to bring members of the NTCA, NECA and JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committees together to receive and examine the revised budget proposals following completion of a public consultation process. The workshop was held in January, when members from the three committees examined details of the revised budget proposals and draft Treasury Management Strategy but agreed not to refer any specific comments or recommendations to Cabinet as the proposals represented the very early stages in the development of the new Authority.

The final meeting of the NTCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee was held on 17 March 2024 as NEMCA will appoint its own Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the beginning of the new municipal year.

EDAF and the Scrutiny Protocol

The Government has clearly set out its expectations of overview and scrutiny in a combined authority in the English Devolution Accountability Framework (EDAF). The Framework sets out how mayoral combined authorities will be scrutinised and held to account by the UK Government, local politicians, business leaders and by the residents and voters of their area. To ensure that the overview and scrutiny arrangements in combined authorities are of the highest possible standards for holding local leaders to account for delivery as well as for playing a critical role in policy and strategy development, the Government has also published a Scrutiny Protocol. The Protocol sets out 18 key principles for good scrutiny. The Government considers the Scrutiny Protocol a key factor in implementing Level 4 and single department-style funding settlements.

Over the past year the Committee has considered the guidance issued by Government, reflected on its collective experiences of scrutiny in the Authority and commented on the areas for development as the function transitions to NEMCA.

Achievements

Many of the 18 key principles for good scrutiny have been evident in the work of the Committee over the past 5 years.

Since it first met in December 2018, NTCA has always operated a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During this period 23 councillors have served as members of the Committee, drawn from across the geography of the three constituent authorities, and proportionately representing the political groups within those authorities. Those Members have been supported by the appointment of substitute members. The Committee has been chaired by three different councillors, all of whom have not been a member of the same political party of which the mayor was a member.

Members and substitutes have been provided with induction training on appointment and training on specific aspects of their role such as treasury management. Members have been offered scrutiny training as part of the regional programmes delivered by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Members and substitutes also receive regular monthly briefings about the work of the Authority.

The Mayor and Cabinet Members have regularly attended meetings of the Committee to report on delivery of those projects and programmes falling within their portfolio and to answer questions. The Chairs and Vice Chair of the Committee have met regularly with the Mayor to discuss and help shape their respective forward plans. The Chair of the Committee has attended Cabinet meeting to present its reports and recommendations.

Previous scrutiny annual reports contain examples of pre-scrutiny work when members have helped shape the development of policy and strategies before a final decision has been made. In recent years the Committee have contributed to the formulation of the Authority's approach to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, its Poverty Truth Commission and the Gateway Review Process.

Whilst there is provision for members of the Committee to call-in Cabinet and key decisions for scrutiny before they are implemented, this has never been exercised.

The Committee has devised a process to develop robust and flexible work programmes. The process is based on bringing members and stakeholders together at a workshop to consider the Authority's position and formulate the Committee's priorities.

A task and finish working group was appointed to investigate how co-production could be applied to the work of NTCA. The Cabinet subsequently accepted the Committee's recommendations arising from the review.

The Committee has established positive working relationships with key stakeholders including the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, North East Combined Authority, Joint Transport Committee and representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The local democracy reporting service attends meetings and there has been coverage of the Committee's work in the local media.

Members have reflected on the outcomes and effectiveness of their work each year when preparing an annual report. These reports have been published and considered by Cabinet.

Areas for Development

The Protocol also describes some elements of good scrutiny which ought to be considered as NEMCA establishes and develops its scrutiny function.

The Protocol states that it is imperative that those who are appointed to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee are done so based on their experience, interests, and skill set and that a clear role description should be used to inform interested parties of the key skills required. Where possible, members should be appointed for more than one year to enable them to provide continuity to the work of the committee.

Greater use could be made of inviting technical expertise to meetings to provide a different perspective on the issues being discussed and enhance scrutiny of decisions.

Overview and scrutiny is expected to receive regular performance monitoring reports

focussed on delivery of the Authority's key strategies so that it can recommend where action is needed and where further scrutiny could support delivery against a target. The Committee should use data, research and analysis to improve its knowledge and understanding of performance not only from within the Authority but from other external sources such as the Office for Local Government.

Although the focus of the overview and scrutiny committee, is different from the audit committee, there are opportunities for greater collaboration in setting their respective work programmes, avoiding duplication and ensuring important issues are not missed.

Scrutiny Workshop

In January members of the NTCA, NECA and JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committees came together to:

- a) review and reflect on their own experiences as combined authority/joint committee scrutineers;
- b) highlight examples of good practice and any lessons learnt; and
- c) identify priorities for the development of the overview and scrutiny function in the new authority.

During the discussion the following points were raised.

Members stated their belief that scrutiny of all NEMCA's functions could not be undertaken by one single committee. Given the broad range of powers devolved to the new authority it was suggested that the Committee would need to appoint a series of sub-groups to reflect the range of portfolios and programmes. The new larger authority would require additional scrutiny capacity, not less. (The Scrutiny Protocol states that a single committee model should be considered and if another model is used it should be clear how it is able to meet the 18 key principles.)

Reference was made to the effectiveness of the existing arrangements whereby scrutiny of the transport functions was undertaken by a separate, dedicated committee. Transport would be a critical issue for NEMCA in driving economic growth in the region and delivering better housing and jobs. Members considered that a transport sub-committee would be required.

The existing law requiring at least two-thirds of the total number of members of an overview and scrutiny committee to be present at a meeting before business may be transacted had caused issues as meetings of NECA and JTC Committees had been inquorate on several occasions. Concerns were raised that the required processes around Call-In meant it was ineffective.

The turnover of elected members appointed to the NECA and JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committees had been a big problem. A longer term membership of elected members was required to develop the skills and knowledge needed. Whilst it was acknowledged that differences in cultures and approaches to scrutiny existed across the constituent authorities, it would be important for them to have consistent and specialist representation. The Committee should be made up of members who have a keen interest in its work, would make a valuable contribution and ask the right questions.

Reference was made to the need for parity of esteem between the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within NEMCA in terms of status and support. Members hoped that the Committee would involve co-optees and communities in its proceedings to amplify the voices and concerns of the public and to raise the profile of scrutiny.

Members expressed their support for the 18 key principles contained in the Scrutiny Protocol and hoped these would be adopted by NEMCA. Members also supported the principle contained in the protocol that additional scrutiny should be provided by the Mayor taking questions directly from members of the public at least every 3 months.

Conclusion

Stronger, more empowered, and more accountable local leadership is at the core of the Government's devolution agenda. The EDAF and Scrutiny Protocol describe an accountability system which places an emphasis on local councillors providing effective scrutiny and safeguarding against unethical behaviour, inadequate performance and poor value for money for the local taxpayer.

The NTCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee has fulfilled this role dutifully and responsibly but also with novelty and inexperience. The members who have served on the Committee have been trailblazers. This report indicates that a great deal of progress has been made in establishing the processes, relationships and culture required to deliver effective scrutiny but that further work will be required to build upon these successes and satisfy the high standards expected by Government.

The new North East Combined Authority's Cabinet will, at its inaugural meeting, be required to consider the Authority's overview and scrutiny arrangements. The Committee trusts that the Cabinet will give due consideration to the contents of this annual report in determining those arrangements. It is also envisaged that this report will provide the newly appointed Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an evidence base on which to plan its future development.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members 2023/24



Cllr Barry Flux
Chair
Northumberland County
Council



Cllr Caroline Ball
Northumberland County
Council



Cllr Stephen Fairlie
Newcastle City Council



Cllr John Harrison
North Tyneside Council



Cllr Louise Marshall
North Tyneside Council



Cllr Catherine Seymour
Northumberland County Council



Cllr Jim Montagu
North Tyneside Council



Cllr Greg Stone
Newcastle City Council



Cllr Linda Wright
Vice Chair
Newcastle City Council

Further Information

Further information regarding the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including the agenda papers for its meetings, can be found on the [NTCA Website](#).

The following documents are referenced in the report and available to view on the links below:

[English Devolution Accountability Framework](#)

[Scrutiny Protocol](#)

[North East Devolution Deal](#)

If, having read this report, you have any queries regarding the work of overview and scrutiny or if you wish to make a suggestion as to an issue or topic you think should be scrutinised in the future please contact:

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