

A meeting of the: **Cabinet**
will be held on: **Tuesday 23 September 2025**
at: **2.00pm**
in: **Great Hall, Discovery Museum, Newcastle**

The meeting will be livestreamed and available to view on the Authority's YouTube channel via (www.youtube.com/@NorthEast_CA/streams).

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

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9. Portfolio Advisory Boards Update and Appointment of Cabinet Observer To inform Cabinet of the agreed terms of reference and membership of the North East CA Portfolio Advisory Boards and seek agreement to the appointment of a trade unions' representative as an observer	61 - 74

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Title: Portfolio Advisory Boards Update and Appointment of Cabinet Observer
Portfolio: All
Responsible Director: Alan Reiss, Director of Operations
Report Author: Elizabeth Kerr, Head of Governance

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is:

1. to inform Cabinet of the agreed terms of reference and membership of the North East CA Portfolio Advisory Boards; and
2. seek Cabinet's agreement to the appointment of Clare Williams as an observer at Cabinet on behalf of trade unions in the region.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. note the arrangements as to the Portfolio Advisory Boards set out in this report; and
2. agree to invite Clare Williams as an observer at Cabinet on behalf of trade unions in the region.

Executive Summary

Cabinet agreed seven portfolio areas at the annual meeting in June 2025 and the establishment of a Portfolio Advisory Board for each one, to be chaired by the portfolio holder.

Cabinet delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Mayor, to finalise the terms of reference and membership of each Portfolio Advisory Board. This work has been completed and the terms of reference and membership of each board is attached in the appendices to this report.

A. Context

1. Background

- 1.1. At the Cabinet meeting on 10 June 2025, the North East CA Cabinet portfolios were realigned with the five missions of the North East Combined Authority. The revised portfolio arrangements reflected the need for the Finance and Investment Board to continue to play its key role as part of the Single Assurance Framework, and the need to ensure sufficient advisory capacity on transport, given the volume of CA transport business.
- 1.2. Seven new portfolios were agreed as follows:
 - Finance and Investment
 - Transport
 - Home of Real Opportunity
 - A North East we are Proud to Call Home
 - Home to a Growing and Vibrant Economy
 - Home to the Green Energy Revolution
 - A Welcoming Home to Global Trade

- 1.3. The Cabinet Portfolios were allocated to Cabinet Members and it was agreed that Portfolio Advisory Boards, chaired by the portfolio holder, were to be established. Cabinet delegated the decision on the final membership and terms of reference for the Boards to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Mayor.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1. A set of terms of reference for the Portfolio Advisory Boards has been agreed and is set out in appendix A.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The membership of each of the Portfolio Advisory Boards is set out in appendix B.
- 3.2. As set out in the terms of reference, the majority of the membership of a Portfolio Advisory Board will generally be people and organisations from outside the combined authority and represent key partners and organisations in each portfolio area.
- 3.3. Observers and guests can be invited to meetings for specific purposes. Each Portfolio Advisory Board will have available to them officers from the North East CA and the seven constituent authorities as appropriate to advise, support and facilitate their work.

4. Observer at Cabinet

- 4.1 Following the appointment in June 2025 of the Police and Crime Commissioners for Durham and Northumbria as observers at Cabinet, it is proposed that Clare Williams (Regional Secretary, Northern Unison) be invited to Cabinet meetings as an observer on behalf of trade unions in the region. Observers are not members of Cabinet but may speak at Cabinet at the Chair's invitation.

B. Impact on North East Combined Authority Objectives

The establishment of portfolio advisory boards contributes to ensuring the combined authority works with partners and key regional organisations to deliver its missions to increase opportunity, create more well-paid employment, improve transport connections, build a greener North East and reduce child poverty.

C. Key risks

None

D. Financial and other resource implications

There are no additional financial or resource implications in these proposals.

E. Legal implications

The Monitoring Officer's comments have been included in the report.

F. Equalities Implications

The North East CA follows the Public Sector Equality duty and due regard has been taken of the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. In June 2025, the North East CA adopted equality objectives to reflect the different roles of the Combined Authority as an employer, a commissioner and a convener and the work of the portfolio advisory boards supports the delivery of those.

G. Consultation and Engagement

The Mayor and each Portfolio Holder has been consulted on the terms of reference and agreed their membership individually as well as seeing the membership across all of the Portfolio Advisory Boards. The Business and the CVS Members of Cabinet have also been consulted as have Universities North East.

The Mayor and Cabinet have been consulted on the proposed appointment of an observer at Cabinet.

H. Appendices

Appendix A Portfolio Advisory Boards Terms of Reference

Appendix B Portfolio Advisory Boards Membership

I. Background papers

None

J. Glossary

None

K. Sign-off

1) Cabinet Member: Yes	2) Director/Head of Service: Yes	3) Director of Finance and Investment: Yes	4) Monitoring Officer: Yes
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Contact officer(s)

Elizabeth Kerr, Head of Governance elizabeth.kerr@northeast-ca.gov.uk

Portfolio Advisory Boards Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of each Portfolio Advisory Board is to provide advice to the Mayor and Cabinet on the exercise of their functions. This includes:

- a) supporting members of the Authority in overseeing the delivery of the vision, ambitions and programmes of activity set out in the Authority's Corporate Plan and associated plans and strategies;
- b) bringing together key stakeholders to support the development and delivery of these ambitions and programmes; and
- c) providing advice and information to the Authority to ensure there is a robust evidence base for decision-making.

Role and responsibilities

Portfolio Advisory Boards have no decision-making powers. Portfolio Advisory Boards will:

- a) consider and provide advice on policy proposals;
- b) work with a range of agencies and delivery partners to contribute to the development of delivery programmes to ensure they match the ambitions in the Authority's Corporate Plan.
- c) seek assurance that the Authority's strategies, policies and programmes are integrated with, or aligned to, other complementary strategies, communicating regularly with other relevant advisory boards, partnerships and forums;
- d) identify apparent strategic level barriers to delivery and broker agreement to resolve them; and
- e) secure the attendance of external persons with the relevant experience and expertise if they consider this necessary.

The Chair

Each Portfolio Advisory Board will be chaired by the Portfolio Holder. This designation will be agreed by Cabinet, usually at its annual meeting. The Chair will nominate a member of the Portfolio Advisory Board to act as Chair of meetings in their absence.

Membership

Membership of the Portfolio Advisory Boards will normally be determined annually by the Cabinet. The majority of the membership of a Portfolio Advisory Board will generally be people and organisations from outside the combined authority and represent key partners and organisations, and act as a voice from their sector, in each portfolio area. In-year appointments can be agreed by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the appropriate Advisory Board Chair.

The Finance and Investment Board, the Transport Advisory Board and the Proud to Call Home Advisory Board will include elected members from each constituent authority. With regard to the other Portfolio Advisory Boards, agendas and papers for each meeting will be shared with the relevant Cabinet members at each constituent authority for information. The Combined Authority portfolio holder will hold update meetings for these members from time to time regarding the work relating to the portfolio, and on occasion it may be appropriate for these members to be invited by the Chair to attend meetings of the Portfolio Advisory Board.

Any person appointed as a member of a Portfolio Advisory Board will be expected to adhere to the [Nolan Principles of Public Life](#) and will also be expected to declare any interests in matters to be considered.

Observers and guests can be invited to meetings for specific purposes. Each Portfolio Advisory Board will have available to them officers from the North East CA and its seven constituent authorities to advise, support and facilitate their work.

Attendance

Consistent attendance by the same people will create a knowledgeable, effective and trusted working environment and each member is expected to commit to attend the Portfolio Advisory Board meetings. If a member is unable to attend a Portfolio Advisory Board meeting, then with the agreement of the Chair an alternative appropriate person could attend to represent them at that meeting.

Meetings

Portfolio Advisory Boards are not decision making or formal committee meetings and as such will:

- meet in private to facilitate open and honest discussion
- meet online to support regular attendance
- ensure their work programme complements key decisions to be taken throughout the year
- not have a quorum
- circulate, via email, an agenda 5 working days in advance of the meeting

Portfolio Advisory Boards will agree a schedule of meetings at the beginning of the year and the frequency of the meetings will be at the discretion of the Chair with once a quarter the usual cycle, except for the Finance and Investment Board. Additional meetings can be called if required within the year and workshops or briefings can be arranged involving others who are not members of a board to facilitate wider, cross board working.

Reporting mechanism

The Chair of each Portfolio Advisory Boards will be responsible for reporting to Cabinet the views, recommendations and considerations of the board. This can be done through a variety of methods, including but not limited to a report to Cabinet, specific sections of a report to Cabinet, contributing to a task and finish group or attendance at other meetings.

The Finance and Investment Portfolio Advisory Board has a specific function set out in the Single Assurance Framework and will ensure its reporting is in line with these requirements.

The Chair will be supported by a 'link officer(s)' – a named senior officer(s) within the appropriate area of work to assist in work planning, information gathering and briefings. The meetings will be supported by the North East CA Governance Team.

Review

It is proposed that the organisation and terms of reference of Portfolio Advisory Boards will be reviewed and re-appointed by Cabinet on an annual basis. This will ensure that the boards reflect any changes in portfolios and that their methods of operation can be adapted to respond to lessons learned from experience.

North East Combined Authority Portfolio Advisory Boards

- Finance and Investment
- Transport
- A North East we are Proud to Call Home
- A Welcoming Home to Global Trade
- Home of Real Opportunity
- Home to a Growing and Vibrant Economy
- Home to the Green Energy Revolution

(NB: The North East CA also has a Business and Economy Board which is an advisory board but not a Portfolio Advisory Board.)

More information on the specific work areas of each Portfolio Advisory Board is below. Each Portfolio Advisory Board has a responsibility to consider how their work will interact with the other boards.

❖ Finance and Investment Portfolio Advisory Board

Portfolio holder & Chair **Councillor Michael Mordey, Leader Sunderland City Council**

Areas of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure there is strategic alignment between the Combined Authority's vision and commitments, and its financial programmes, to ensure greatest positive impact for the North East.• To make recommendations to Cabinet, or the designated officer in line with agreed delegations, in respect to investment decisions on funding programmes operated by the North East CA.• In accordance with the Single Assurance Framework, consider new funding applications and project variations and make recommendations to the Mayor and/or Cabinet, or designated officer, on investment decisions.• Play a key part in the overall assurance arrangements of the Combined Authority through delivery of its functions.• Assess investment proposals against strategic fit with North East CA's Investment Framework ensuring golden thread.• Scrutinise the technical review of applications and project appraisals to provide assurance around value for money, due diligence, transparency and equity.• Oversight of performance and management of strategic risk at a programme level• As appropriate, act as a sounding board to provide strategic advice and guidance to North East CA on the development of external bids for additional funding, where North East CA will be the accountable body
Written Procedure	By exception, Members of the Board can consider reports by written procedure with 5 working days to respond unless an urgent decision is required. Nil response is taken as approval of the report and its recommendations.

❖ **Transport Portfolio Advisory Board**

**Portfolio
Holder &
Chair**

Councillor Martin Gannon, Leader Gateshead Council

Areas of work Development of the transport investment programme, including:

- Local Transport Plan (LTP) –Delivery
 - Input into the ongoing review, development and delivery of the LTP and its associated strategies, policies, and delivery plan.
 - Integration between transport and other NECA Portfolio areas
Alignment of the policies and plans of partner delivery agencies to NECA Plans
 - Supporting NECA's Mayor and Transport Portfolio Holder in interactions and memberships of wider bodies, e.g. Transport for the North
 - Monitoring changes in government policy, regulation or funding approach, considering the impact on NECA's own activities, and supporting NECA's Mayor and Transport Portfolio Holder in developing an appropriate response
- Development of the Transport Programme
 - Considering prioritisation of transport investments and application of the Transport elements of the Single Assurance Framework
 - Monitoring project delivery and programme management, including upholding design standards where appropriate
 - Assisting in the development of transport funding bids to government and external bodies
 - Considering opportunities for partnership and private sector investment
 - Working with partner organisations to consider how NECA's delivery can be best achieved through effective joint working arrangements

❖ **A North East we are Proud to Call Home Portfolio Advisory Board**

**Portfolio holder &
Chair**

Councillor Andrew Husband, Leader Durham County Council

Areas of work This board supports our work on housing policy and delivery, including building more social housing, as well as rural issues and the Rural Growth Fund.

- Housing Policy and Delivery
- Social Housing
- Rural issues and Rural Growth Fund

❖ A Welcoming Home to Global Trade Portfolio Advisory Board

Portfolio holder & Chair **Councillor Glen Sanderson, Leader, Northumberland County Council**

Areas of work This board supports our drive to grow inward investment and build the North East's place on the world stage to increase exports and trade, as well as giving local firms access to new finance and investment funds.

- Inward investment and international relations/ export/trade
- Access to finance / investment funds

❖ Home of Real Opportunity Portfolio Advisory Board

Portfolio holder & Chair **Councillor Tracey Dixon, Leader, South Tyneside Council**

Areas of work This board supports our work to reduce child poverty, grow skills and increase local people's access to opportunity, including public service reform.

- Child Poverty Reduction
- Skills
- Public Service Reform
- Inclusion, Health, Prevention
- Access to cultural and creative experiences
- Employment, employability, and New Deal
- Deliver on High Streets Commission

❖ Home of a Growing and Vibrant Economy Portfolio Advisory Board

Portfolio holder & Chair **Councillor Karen Kilgour, Leader, Newcastle Council**

Areas of work This board supports our delivery of the North East's Local Growth Plan, our investment in the foundational economy, our support to develop culture and the creative industries, and our work to boost research, development and innovation across our businesses.

- Deliver the Local Growth Plan
- Invest in the foundational economy
- Support culture and creative industries
- Innovation / R&D

❖ Home to the Green Energy Revolution Portfolio Advisory Board

Portfolio holder & Chair Mayor Karen Clark, North Tyneside Council

Areas of work This board supports our work to grow the green energy sector in the region, including growing a skilled workforce to take advantage of the opportunities this brings, as well as our work to protect our environment and coastline, our investment in net zero measures to save on energy costs and our growing Carbon and Nature Marketplace.

- Energy industry (incl. skills)
- Net zero (incl. Retrofit and carbon marketplace)
- Environment and Coast

**Portfolio Advisory Boards
Membership**

Finance and Investment	Councillor Michael Mordey (Chair)	Leader, Sunderland City Council
	Councillor Darren Grimes	Deputy Leader, Durham County Council
	Councillor Gary Haley	Deputy Leader, Gateshead Council
	Councillor Alexander Hay	Deputy Leader, Newcastle City Council
	Councillor Carl Johnson	Deputy Mayor, North Tyneside Council
	Councillor Richard Wearmouth	Deputy Leader, Northumberland County Council
	Councillor Jim Foreman	Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Corporate Services, South Tyneside Council
		North East CA Business and Economy Board Member
		VCSE representative

Transport	Councillor Martin Gannon	Leader, Gateshead Council
	Cllr Tim McGuinness	Durham
	Cllr John McElroy	Gateshead
	Cllr Juna Sathian	Newcastle
	Cllr Carl Johnson	North Tyneside
	Cllr Richard Wearmouth	Northumberland
	Cllr Margaret Meling	South Tyneside
	Cllr Lindsey Leonard	Sunderland
	Kevin Bell	North East CA Business and Economy Board Member
	Victoria Armstrong	VCSE representative

A North East we are Proud to Call Home	Councillor Andrew Husband	Leader, Durham County Council
	Councillor Chris Buckley	Gateshead
	Councillor Paula Mains	Newcastle
	Councillor John Harrison	North Tyneside
	Councillor Colin Horncastle	Northumberland
	Councillor Jane Carter	South Tyneside
	Councillor Kevin Johnston	Sunderland
	Matthew Bell	Homes England
	Peter Gladwell	Legal & General
	Paul Fiddaman	Chair North East Housing Partnership
	Patrick Murray	Northern Housing Consortium
	Dominic Smith	Home Builders Federation
	Shaun Hope	Bishop Auckland College
	Graham Thrower	Sunderland University
	Taylor Sharp	Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
	Jacqueline Myers	North East and Cumbria NHS ICB
	Stephen Bell	Changing Lives
	Don, Baron Curry of Kirkhale	Community Action Northumberland & Rural Design Centre
	Tony Gates	CEO Northumberland National Park Authority
	Professor Sally Shortall	Newcastle University
	Sandra Manson	North East CA Business and Economy Board Member (Pegasus Group)
	Kate Burrows	VCSE Representative (Durham Community Action)

A Welcoming Home to Global Trade	Councillor Glen Sanderson	Leader, Northumberland County Council
	Susie Izumi	Office for Investment
	Alice Andreason	Newcastle International Airport
	Matthew Beeton	CEO Port of Tyne
	Matthew Hunt	Director Port of Sunderland
	Martin Lawlor	Chief Executive Port of Blyth
	Lee Hartley	Fairstone
	Geoff Westmorland	HSBC
	Peter Snaith	Womble Bond Dickinson
	Andrew Dowler	Blackstone
	Katy Evans	Cravens
	Matt Bratton	CBI
	Vicky Mears	British Business Bank
	Professor Milan Radosavljevic	Universities North East England (University of Sunderland)
	Kirsty Wells	North East CA Business and Economy Board Member (Merit)

Home of Real Opportunity	Councillor Tracey Dixon	Leader, South Tyneside Council
	Claire Riley	North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
	Chief Constable Vanessa Jardine	Northumbria Police
	Audrey Kingham	Director of Children's Services Representative for region
	David Inness	Department for Work and Pensions
	Chris Todd	Chair of NE Colleges Forum
	Paul Atkinson	Secondary Head (Jarrow School)
	Rebecca Jackson	Primary Head (Craggside Primary School)
	Dan Monnery	Universities North East England (Northumbria University)
	Graham Thrower	Sunderland University's Institute for Economic and Social Inclusion
	Rhiannon Bearne	North East Chamber of Commerce
	Jenny Allinson	Bernicia
	Paul Butler	Automotive Alliance
	Shirley Spoors	Azko Nobel
	Sam Blake	Newcastle Eagles
	Lesley Spuhler	CEO Foundation of Light
	Keith Merrin	Chair of North East Museums
	Nick Kimber	Cabinet Office
	Osian Jones	London Borough of Camden
	Reshma Begum	North East CA Business and Economy Board Representative
	Martin Brookes	VCSE Representative

Home of Growing and Vibrant Economy	Councillor Karen Kilgour	Leader, Newcastle City Council
	Jim Brewin	Hitachi, Durham
	Alison Gwynn	North East Screen
	Becky Jackson	Atomhawk
	Mads Howard	Sage
	Darren Davidson	Siemens
	Ben Shaw	Lockheed Martin
	Sophie Milliken	Moja
	Paul McEldon	NE BIC
	Andy Broadbent	New College Durham
	Keith Merrin	NE Museums
	Professor Jane Robinson	Universities North East England (Newcastle University)
	Emily Cox	Business and Economy Board Representative

Home to the Green Energy Revolution	Mayor Karen Clark	Elected Mayor, North Tyneside Council
	Jim Heslop	North East Area Director, Environment Agency
	David Hall	National Farmers Union
		Natural England
	Charles Thompson	Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult
	Dr Henna Bains	Chief Technology Officer, Kinewell Energy
	Martin Lawlor	CEO, Port of Blyth and Energy Central Learning Hub
	Jim Gillon	Gateshead District Energy Scheme
	Gary Chapman	Co-Head of North Region and Director, Lloyds Banking Group
	Heidi Mottram	CEO, Northumbrian Water Group
	Richard Dunkley	Chief Executive, OnPath Energy
	Tom Nightingale	Equinor
	Matt Forrest	Thirteen Group
	Jim Cokill	CEO, Durham Wildlife Trust
	Professor Janet Stewart	Universities North East England (Durham University)
	Andy Dean	Community Action Northumberland
	Matthew Beeton	Business and Economy Board Representative (CEO Port of Tyne)