



CITY HALL,
SUNDERLAND.
12 January 2024

TO THE MEMBERS OF SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING of Sunderland City Council to be held in the **Council Chamber, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA** on **WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2024** at **4.00pm** at which it is proposed to consider and transact the following business:-

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. To read the Notice convening the meeting | - |
| 2. Apologies | - |
| 3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15 November 2023 (copy attached). | 1 |
| 4. Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any). | - |
| 5. Announcements (if any) under Rule 2(e). | - |
| 6. To consider the Outstanding Motions from the last ordinary meeting of the Council held 15 November 2023 (copy attached). | 23 |
| 7. Reception of Petitions. | - |
| 8. Written Questions by Members of the Public (if any) under Rule 10. | - |

9.	Written Questions by Members of the Council (if any) under Rule 11.	-
10.	Report of the Cabinet (copy attached).	27
11.	To consider a report on action taken on petitions (copy attached).	43
12.	To consider the following reports: -	
(i)	Report on Special Urgency Decisions – report of the Leader (copy attached).	50
(ii)	Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies – report of the Assistant Director of Law and Governance (copy attached).	52
13.	To consider the attached Motions (copy attached).	55



PATRICK MELIA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE.

Note it is intended that the meeting will be livestreamed for the public to view on the Council's YouTube channel at

<https://youtube.com/live/P9keKFabzBg>

Minutes

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2023 at 4.00pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor D Trueman) in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor A Chisnall)

Councillors	Blackburn	Graham-King	Miller, F	Snowdon, D
	Bond	Guy	Miller, G	Snowdon, D E
	Burnicle	Haque	Mordey	Speding
	Burrell	Hartnack	Morrissey	Stewart
	Butler	Haswell	Mullen	Thornton
	Chequer	Heron	Nicholson	Trueman, H
	Crosby	Herron	Peacock	Tye
	Curtis	Hodson	Potts	Usher
	Dixon	Hunter	Price	Vera
	Dodds	Johnston, K	Reed	Walker, M
	Donaghy	Johnston, S	Rowntree	Walker, P
	Dunn	Jones	Samuels	Walton
	Edgeworth	Laverick	Scanlan	Warne
	Fagan	Laws	Scott	Watson
	Fletcher	Leonard	Smith, A	Williams
	Foster	Mason-Gage	Smith, G	Wood
	Gibson	McDonough	Smith, P	

Also Present: -

Honorary Alderman Greenfield.

The notice convening the meeting was read.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Ayre, Chapman, O'Brien and Wilson together with Honorary Aldermen Forbes and Tate.

Minutes

26. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 September 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared interests as follows: -

Councillor Guy wished to voluntarily recuse himself from the meeting for this item as he was currently going through the complaints process and did not feel it was appropriate to discuss and vote upon the procedure whilst doing so.

Announcements

i) Notice to Speak

The Mayor thanked those Members who had given notice of their wish to speak. She advised that where notice had been given, the Member would be invited to speak at the appropriate time. If any Member who hadn't given prior notice wished to speak at any point during the meeting, they should raise their hand to indicate, state their name and speak when invited to do so.

ii) Smart Places Award

Councillor Stewart informed the meeting that the Council had been awarded the Smart Places Award from Connected Britain, a highly acclaimed industry forum with over 7,500 attendees focusing on connectivity enabled economic and social good. This year saw the highest number of entries in the competition's history with organisations of all shapes and sizes vying for the coveted trophies.

Sunderland City Council were one of 5 organisations shortlisted for the prestigious 'Smart Places Award' and were delighted to win the category. The judges praised the Council and commented: 'with a focus on infrastructure, skills, digital inclusion and applications – Sunderland showed it had everything needed for a Smart City to really develop'

Cllr Stewart was proud to present the award confirming the fantastic achievement.

iii) White Ribbon Day

Councillor Chequer informed the meeting of White Ribbon Day (25th November 2023) advising that domestic violence and abusive relationships created problems around the world. White Ribbon UK were encouraging individuals and organisations to make consistent choices and actions so that we #ChangeTheStory for women and girls to live their lives free from the fear of violence. Ending men's violence against women starts when we #ChangeTheStory.

Wearing the White Ribbon was a symbol of remembrance for those who have been lost to domestic abuse, it showed our support and solidarity to ending men's violence towards women and girls and helps remind people who were perhaps reluctant to come forward that help and support was there if they need it.

Any violence was a concern and the White Ribbon Campaign's focus was on men's violence against women. Tackling, combatting and preventing violence against women was everybody's business.

Councillor Chequer informed that on White Ribbon Day (25th November 2023) and throughout the 16 Days of Activism (16 DoA) against Gender-Based Violence, Sunderland City Council, its partners and other organisations across the city would support the message to #ChangeTheStory Sunderland.

This White Ribbon Day, 25th November and beyond, Sunderland City Council would show allyship to women and girls by:

- Encouraging staff/councillors to wear a white ribbon.
- Ensuring the public and staff know where they can find help, if they need it.
- Hosting lunch & learn drop-in, with specialist domestic abuse services Thursday 23rd November 12.15 – 1.15pm – City Hall, Hydration Station
- Promoting a number of city-wide WRD activities & 16 DoA
- Highlighting the Council's refreshed Domestic Abuse Policy for staff (live on the hub)
- Promoting Domestic Abuse Champions & how to contact
- Bystander training course available to book - recognising and calling out attitudes and behaviours that are harmful
- 'Make a Pledge' board to be available in City Hall from Thursday 23rd November
- Lighting up of landmarks and buildings across the city (orange)
- Posting key messages throughout WRD and 16 DoA via Council's communications platforms
- Promotion of safeguarding week activities via SSCP

The City Council is a key member of the Sunderland Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Executive Board, a partnership board to prevent and tackle domestic abuse and violence.

Outstanding Motions from the last ordinary meeting of the Council

(i) Notice of Motion – Starting to Solve the Sunderland Sewage Problem for Good

Councillor Bond, duly seconded by Councillor Gibson moved the following motion: -

“This Council remains concerned about the impact of dumping of raw sewage and other faecal matter into the River Wear and the North Sea off Roker, Seaburn and Hendon beaches can have on the health and wellbeing of bathers and on the reputation of Sunderland as a visitor destination.

Council therefore agrees to:

Ask the Cabinet to produce a report outlining what steps the Council could take to better protect the health and safety of anyone taking part in activities in the River Wear and/or the water off beaches in Sunderland; and report back to full Council. Ask the Cabinet to consider commissioning a full independent investigation and survey of the sewage system and outflows into the North Sea and River Wear in Sunderland; and report back to full Council”.

Councillor Hartnack, duly seconded by Councillor Peacock, moved the following amendment:-

To add to the end of the motion a bullet point which reads "Council also acknowledges as a matter of fact that Cllr Michael Hartnack has already agreed a meeting at Seaburn with Northumbrian Water Limited and residents - and that the Lib Dem Councillors for the ward have arranged no such meeting"

So that the amended motion would read: -

"This Council remains concerned about the impact of dumping of raw sewage and other faecal matter into the River Wear and the North Sea off Roker, Seaburn and Hendon beaches can have on the health and wellbeing of bathers and on the reputation of Sunderland as a visitor destination.

Council therefore agrees to:

Ask the Cabinet to produce a report outlining what steps the Council could take to better protect the health and safety of anyone taking part in activities in the River Wear and/or the water off beaches in Sunderland; and report back to full Council.

Ask the Cabinet to consider commissioning a full independent investigation and survey of the sewage system and outflows into the North Sea and River Wear in Sunderland; and report back to full Council.

- Council also acknowledges as a matter of fact that Cllr Michael Hartnack has already agreed a meeting at Seaburn with Northumbrian Water Limited and residents - and that the Lib Dem Councillors for the ward have arranged no such meeting"

Upon being put to the vote the Amended motion was defeated with 11 Members voting in favour:-

Councillors	Burnicle	Graham-King	McDonough	Reed
	Dixon	Hartnack	Mullen	Vera
	Dunn	Johnston, S	Peacock	

58 Members voting against: -

Councillors	Blackburn	Guy	Mordey	Stewart
	Bond	Haque	Morrissey	Thornton
	Burrell	Haswell	Nicholson	Trueman, D
	Butler	Heron	Potts	Trueman, H
	Chequer	Herron	Price	Tye
	Chisnall	Hodson	Rowntree	Usher
	Crosby	Hunter	Samuels	Walker, M
	Curtis	Johnston, K	Scanlan	Walker, P
	Dodds	Jones	Scott	Walton
	Donaghy	Laverick	Smith, A	Warne
	Edgeworth	Laws	Smith, G	Watson
	Fagan	Leonard	Smith, P	Williams

Fletcher
Foster
Gibson

Mason-Gage
Miller, F
Miller, G

Snowdon, D
Snowdon, D E
Speding

Wood

The Mayor then put the original motion to the meeting and accordingly it was: -

27. RESOLVED that:-

This Council remains concerned about the impact of dumping of raw sewage and other faecal matter into the River Wear and the North Sea off Roker, Seaburn and Hendon beaches can have on the health and wellbeing of bathers and on the reputation of Sunderland as a visitor destination.

Council therefore agrees to:

Ask the Cabinet to produce a report outlining what steps the Council could take to better protect the health and safety of anyone taking part in activities in the River Wear and/or the water off beaches in Sunderland; and report back to full Council. Ask the Cabinet to consider commissioning a full independent investigation and survey of the sewage system and outflows into the North Sea and River Wear in Sunderland; and report back to full Council.

(ii) Notice of Motion – In Recognition of Our Key Workers

Councillor Laws, duly seconded by Councillor Jones moved the following motion: -

“This council notes that:

- On the 23rd March 2020 the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced the first national lockdown during a televised address to the nation. It was the day the seriousness of the Covid Pandemic finally registered with the nation.
- The Prime Minister’s comments that “we will turn the tide of coronavirus in 12 weeks” proved wildly inaccurate with the number of deaths caused by the virus now approaching 200,000 people, more than 1270 sadly from Sunderland.
- The 3 lockdowns instigated by the Government in their attempts to limit the number of deaths during the pandemic were only possible through the courageous actions, and sadly in some cases sacrifice, of Key Workers in areas such as health and social care, education, food retail sector, key public services, local government and many more.

This council will take a proactive approach to ensure that these Key Workers within our communities are not forgotten, through:

- Promoting within Sunderland the notion of an annual “Key Worker Day” in recognition of the many residents of this City who risked themselves to ensure we could all remain safe during the pandemic.

- Discuss with our trade union colleagues on an appropriate date for the first annual Key Worker Day to be held no later than 31st March 2024 and actively promote this with our partners.
- Consulting via the Budget-setting process, on the introduction of an additional day of annual leave for Council staff from 2024/25 financial year in recognition of the service they have provided to our residents during the pandemic."

Councillor Mullen, duly seconded by Councillor Reed, moved the following amendment:-

Delete "It was the day the seriousness of the Covid Pandemic finally registered with the nation" and replace with "It confirmed the seriousness of COVID-19 already widely acknowledged within the nation."

To delete the final bullet point and replace it with "Consulting via the Budget-setting process on the introduction of an additional day of annual leave for Council staff whose salaries do not exceed £50,000 per annum in recognition of the service they have provided to our residents during the pandemic."

To add a final bullet point which reads: "To take seriously the higher than national average absence rate of Council staff and to be prepared to act upon the (forthcoming) recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's investigation into this matter."

So that the amended motion would read: -

"This council notes that:

- On the 23rd March 2020 the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced the first national lockdown during a televised address to the nation. It confirmed the seriousness of Covid-19 already widely acknowledged within the nation.
- The Prime Minister's comments that "we will turn the tide of coronavirus in 12 weeks" proved wildly inaccurate with the number of deaths caused by the virus now approaching 200,000 people, more than 1270 sadly from Sunderland.
- The 3 lockdowns instigated by the Government in their attempts to limit the number of deaths during the pandemic were only possible through the courageous actions, and sadly in some cases sacrifice, of Key Workers in areas such as health and social care, education, food retail sector, key public services, local government and many more.
- This council will take a proactive approach to ensure that these Key Workers within our communities are not forgotten, through:
- Promoting within Sunderland the notion of an annual "Key Worker Day" in recognition of the many residents of this City who risked themselves to ensure we could all remain safe during the pandemic

- Discuss with our trade union colleagues on an appropriate date for the first annual Key Worker Day to be held no later than 31st March 2024 and actively promote this with our partners.
- Consulting via the Budget-setting process, on the introduction of an additional day of annual leave for Council staff whose salaries do not exceed £50,000 per annum in recognition of the service they have provided to our residents during the pandemic.
- To take seriously the higher than average absence rate of Council staff and to be prepared to act upon the (forthcoming) recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's investigation into this matter."

Upon being put to the vote the Amended motion was defeated with 11 Members voting in favour:-

Councillors	Burnicle Dixon Dunn	Graham-King Hartnack Johnston, S	McDonough Mullen Peacock	Reed Vera
-------------	---------------------------	--	--------------------------------	--------------

47 Members voting against: -

Councillors	Blackburn Burrell Butler Chequer Chisnall Curtis Dodds Donaghy Fletcher Foster Guy Haque	Heron Herron Hunter Johnston, K Jones Laverick Laws Leonard Mason-Gage Miller, F Miller, G Mordey	Nicholson Price Rowntree Samuels Scanlan Scott Smith, A Smith, G Smith, P Snowdon, D Snowdon, D E Speding	Stewart Thornton Trueman, D Trueman, H Tye Usher Walker, M Walker, P Warne Watson Williams
-------------	---	--	--	--

And 11 Members abstaining: -

Councillors	Bond Crosby Edgeworth	Fagan Gibson Haswell	Hodson Morrissey Potts	Walton Wood
-------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------	----------------

The Mayor then put the original motion to the meeting and accordingly it was: -

28. **RESOLVED that:-**

This council notes that:

- On the 23rd March 2020 the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced the first national lockdown during a televised address to the nation. It was the day the seriousness of the Covid Pandemic finally registered with the nation.
- The Prime Minister's comments that "we will turn the tide of coronavirus in 12 weeks" proved wildly inaccurate with the number of deaths caused by the virus now approaching 200,000 people, more than 1270 sadly from Sunderland.
- The 3 lockdowns instigated by the Government in their attempts to limit the number of deaths during the pandemic were only possible through the courageous actions, and sadly in some cases sacrifice, of Key Workers in areas such as health and social care, education, food retail sector, key public services, local government and many more.

This council will take a proactive approach to ensure that these Key Workers within our communities are not forgotten, through:

- Promoting within Sunderland the notion of an annual "Key Worker Day" in recognition of the many residents of this City who risked themselves to ensure we could all remain safe during the pandemic.
- Discuss with our trade union colleagues on an appropriate date for the first annual Key Worker Day to be held no later than 31st March 2024 and actively promote this with our partners.
- Consulting via the Budget-setting process, on the introduction of an additional day of annual leave for Council staff from 2024/25 financial year in recognition of the service they have provided to our residents during the pandemic.

Reception of Petitions

- 29. RESOLVED** that the petitions listed below submitted by the Councillors named be received and referred to the appropriate Chief Officer for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme: -

Councillor Burnicle – Petition calling on Stagecoach North East to reinstate the number 3 bus service which has recently been cancelled in the Lakeside Village Area.

Councillor Hartnack – Petition requesting the Council urgently review the safety at the junction Cairns Road/Penrith Road/Newcastle Road with a view to undertaking urgent work to make the junction safe and reduce traffic flows to and from Newcastle Road.

Councillor Hartnack – Petition from residents requesting the Council to review the traffic light sequences at the Blue Bell junction, especially for traffic turning right from Dene Lane onto Station Road, due to numerous near misses, and dangerous rat runs being created in the area. They believe the current signal sequence is causing danger, frustration and unnecessary additional pollution.

Councillor Hartnack – Petition from residents objecting to the granting of a late licence at the premises of 139 Newcastle Road on the grounds of unsocial behaviour, excessive noise and litter

Councillor Edgeworth – Petition from residents strongly opposed to the proposed Demolition and Redevelopment of the Former Thorney Close Inn.

Councillor Edgeworth – Petition calling on the Council to install double yellow lines on the carriageway of Sevenoaks Drive between the junction with Chester Road (A183) and the entrance to the Hastings Hill pub car park.

Councillor Chequer – Petition from residents objecting to the granting of a late licence at the premises of 139 Newcastle Road on the grounds of unsocial behaviour, excessive noise and litter.

Written Questions by Members of the Public under Rule 10

Pursuant to Rule 10 of the Council Rules of Procedure, the Leader and Members of the Cabinet were asked questions which had been submitted by members of the public.

Written Questions by Members of the Council under Rule 11

Pursuant to Rule 11 of the Council Rules of Procedure, the Leader and Members of the Cabinet were asked questions which had been submitted by Members of the Council.

Report of the Cabinet

The Cabinet reported and recommended as follows: -

1. Feed and Food Law Service Plan 2023-2026

That at its meeting held on 7 September 2023, Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director of City Development (copy attached) on the Feed and Food Law Service Plan 2023-2026 to be used by the Authority to undertake all relevant Feed and Food Safety Enforcement across the city and had been formulated to comply with the current recommendations of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement.

They also referred the matter to the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration. The Committee commended the hard work of the staff during the year and supported the Cabinet's recommendation to submit the Feed and Food Law Service Plan for 2023/2026 to Council for final approval.

Cabinet also authorised the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Clean, Green City Portfolio Holder, to make any amendments to the plan which were considered appropriate in the light of comments from the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee, and prior to the plan being referred to the Council for approval.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended that Council: -

- (i) approve the Feed and Food Law Service Plan 2023-2026; and
- (ii) delegate authority to the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Clean, Green City Portfolio Holder, to update the Plan during its three year term, on the basis referred to in paragraph 4.6 of the Cabinet report.

2. Budget Planning Framework and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/2025 – 2027/2028

That at its meeting held on 12 October 2023, Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Director of Finance which:

- Identified the key factors influencing the development of the Council's financial plans into the medium term and set out the budget planning framework for the Council for 2024/2025;
- Set out the headlines and context for the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/2025 to 2027/2028; and
- Set out the consultation / communication strategy for the budget 2024/2025.
- Sought a recommendation to Council for the approval of the updated Capital Strategy.

In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Council, approval is required for changes to the Council Capital Strategy and an extract from the report on the Capital Strategy Update – 2023/2024 was attached.

The report was also considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 12 October 2023. The comments of the Committee were considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 9 November 2023.

The comments of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee and the Cabinet's recommendations to Council were set out in a supplementary report and read as follows:-

The Cabinet noted the following comments of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee: -

The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee acknowledged the information contained in the report including the Medium Term Financial Plan and budget planning framework.

The Committee recommended that serious consideration was once again given to limiting any rises in council tax given the current financial climate and the impact this would have on residents of the city.

The Committee also acknowledged the work undertaken around budget consultation and updating the Capital Strategy. The Committee remained committed to budget monitoring through further updates to the Committee.

The Committee had no further comment at this time.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended to Council to approve the Council's Capital Strategy.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Miller, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Rowntree, moved the report and supplementary report of the Cabinet.

Accordingly, it was: -

30. RESOLVED that the report and supplementary report of the Cabinet be approved and adopted.

Report of the Standards Committee

The Standards Committee reported and recommended as follows: -

1. Review of Members' Code of Conduct

That at its meeting on 12 September 2023, the Committee gave consideration to a report of the Assistant Director of Law and Governance (Appendix 1), which invited Members to review the current Code of Conduct and to determine whether they wished to propose any amendments. (NB copies of the appendices referred to in the report can viewed via the following link [Meetings and Events \(sunderland.gov.uk\)](https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/Meetings-and-Events))

The Committee resolved that: -

- i.) it be recommended that Council amend the Code of Conduct as shown in Appendix 3 to the report subject to additional amendments to provide for: -
 - A footnote in relation to the second introductory paragraph indicating examples of when the code may apply,
 - a specific requirement in paragraph 2 that 'You must comply with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010'
- ii.) the current descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life be retained, and the Code be amended accordingly;
- iii.) no changes be made to the Code in relation to the provisions for registration and declaration of interests.

A copy of the tracked version of the updated Code showing the amendments recommended to Council by the Standards Committee was attached at Appendix 2 and for ease of reference, a clean copy of the proposed Code was attached at Appendix 3.

Accordingly, the Standards Committee recommended to Council that the amended Code of Conduct be approved.

Councillor Dodds, duly seconded by Councillor Stewart moved the report of the Standards Committee.

Councillor Hodson, duly seconded by Councillor Edgeworth moved that the report be referred back to the Standards Committee for review.

Upon being put to vote the Motion was defeated with 10 members voting in favour: -

Councillors	Bond	Fagan	Hodson	Wood
	Crosby	Gibson	Morrissey	
	Edgeworth	Haswell	Walton	

And 57 members voting against: -

Councillors	Blackburn	Hartnack	Mullen	Stewart
	Burnicle	Heron	Nicholson	Thornton
	Burrell	Herron	Peacock	Trueman, D
	Butler	Hunter	Price	Trueman, H
	Chequer	Johnston, K	Reed	Tye
	Chisnall	Johnston, S	Rowntree	Usher
	Curtis	Jones	Samuels	Vera
	Dixon	Laverick	Scanlan	Walker, M
	Dodds	Laws	Scott	Walker, P
	Donaghy	Leonard	Smith, A	Warne
	Dunn	Mason-Gage	Smith, G	Watson
	Fletcher	McDonough	Smith, P	Williams
	Foster	Miller, F	Snowdon, D	
	Graham-King	Miller, G	Snowdon, D E	
	Haque	Morley	Speding	

The original motion to accept the report of the Standards Committee was then put to the vote, with:-

55 members voting for: -

Councillors	Blackburn	Hartnack	Morley	Speding
	Burnicle	Heron	Reed	Stewart
	Burrell	Herron	Mullen	Thornton
	Butler	Hunter	Nicholson	Trueman, D
	Chequer	Johnston, K	Peacock	Trueman, H
	Chisnall	Johnston, S	Price	Tye
	Curtis	Jones	Rowntree	Usher
	Dixon	Laverick	Samuels	Vera
	Dodds	Laws	Scanlan	Walker, M
	Donaghy	Leonard	Scott	Walker, P
	Fletcher	Mason-Gage	Smith, A	Warne
	Foster	McDonough	Smith, P	Watson
	Graham-King	Miller, F	Snowdon, D	Williams
	Haque	Miller, G	Snowdon, D E	

And 10 members voting against: -

Councillors	Bond	Fagan	Hodson	Wood
	Crosby	Gibson	Morrissey	

Accordingly, it was: -

31. RESOLVED that the report of the Standards Committee be approved and adopted.

Proposal for Variation of Order of Business

It was moved by Councillor Mullen and duly seconded by Councillor Reed, that the order of business of the meeting be varied pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 13 to allow agenda item 14.2 Notice of Motion – Amendment to Sunderland City Council Constitution (Part 2 Article 10 Area Committees) to be heard at this juncture: -

Upon being put to vote the Motion was defeated with 21 Members voting for: -

Councillors	Bond	Gibson	Morrissey	Vera
	Burnicle	Graham-King	Mullen	Walton
	Crosby	Hartnack	O'Brien	Wood
	Dixon	Haswell	Peacock	
	Dunn	Hodson	Potts	
	Edgeworth	Johnston, S	Reed	

And 48 members voting against: -

Councillors	Blackburn	Heron	Nicholson	Stewart
	Burrell	Herron	Price	Thornton
	Butler	Hunter	Rowntree	Trueman, D
	Chequer	Johnston, K	Samuels	Trueman, H
	Chisnall	Jones	Scanlan	Tye
	Curtis	Laverick	Scott	Usher
	Dodds	Laws	Smith, A	Walker, M
	Donaghy	Leonard	Smith, G	Walker, P
	Fletcher	Mason-Gage	Smith, P	Warne
	Foster	Miller, F	Snowdon, D	Watson
	Guy	Miller, G	Snowdon, D E	Williams
	Haque	Morley	Speding	Wood

Action Taken on Petitions

The Council received and noted the report below which detailed the action taken in relation to the following petitions which had been presented to the Council.

1. Petition – Request that the Developer of the Chestergate Housing Scheme use an alternative access for construction traffic rather than Pickering Road

A petition signed by nine residents, was presented to Council on 22 March 2023 by former Councillor Pam Mann and referred to the Executive Director of City Development.

The residents claim to have suffered from noise, mud and dust whilst the development has been ongoing. The petition requested that the Council intervene with the developers and instruct them to use an alternative entrance.

Following receipt of the petition, the issues were investigated by officers and with respect to the mud and dust concerns raised in the petition, the developer states that a road sweeper was in operation when earth moving operations were ongoing. Furthermore, the road sweeper visits once a week and will also be requested when site activities and the weather deem it necessary. Repairs to the carriageway were completed during February 2023 and at a follow up highway inspection in May 2023 Council officers considered the road to be safe and serviceable. The amount of noise generated by construction traffic should have greatly reduced now that the carriageway has been repaired and the number/type of construction vehicles has reduced.

The Council have no legal powers to insist that Gentoo change the current route of construction traffic but it will request that Gentoo submit a request to alter the planning conditions and Construction Management Plan now that the access road is complete. The Council will also consider making an alternative access route a planning condition for any future phases of development.

2. Petition to Reduce or Remove Charges for Memorial Benches in Sunderland

A petition signed by 267 residents was presented to Council on 13 September 2023 by Councillor Sam Johnston requesting that charges for memorial benches be reduced or removed.

Council officers have considered the petition and advised as follows.

The Council understands that these benches hold significant sentimental value for many and have carefully considered the quality of the product offered to ensure a consistently high quality for the lifetime of the sponsorship term. The goal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of the memorial bench programme, allowing the Council to continue to provide a meaningful and lasting tribute to loved ones. Purchase costs of the premium bench, installation costs and maintenance expenses have contributed to the overall cost of each bench as the aims are to ensure the continued delivery of quality memorialisation products and improvement of public areas.

Taking into account all the associated costs in the purchase, installation and maintenance of these benches, any overage is minimal and can contribute to the administration of the scheme.

Therefore, any reduction to these charges could result in the Council subsidising the provision of this service. To remove the charges altogether would mean that this would become a fully subsidised service and would inevitably create an unprecedented demand that the Council may not be able to accommodate in terms of cost, locations, time to install and maintain in a safe usable state.

It should be noted that these benches are not benches that the Council would provide anyway, in these locations, as part of normal highway assets.

The Council understands that bench fees may be challenging to some, and is actively exploring ways to mitigate the impact of such by introducing a range of alternative memorial options to enable bereaved families to memorialise loved ones in a range of products and prices.

The Council is committed to finding solutions to residents' concerns in providing the best service at the best costs that cater for every budget.

Councillor Johnston has been advised of the response.

32. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report on Special Urgency Decisions

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report on executive decisions which had been taken as a matter of special urgency. There had been no such instances since the last report.

33. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance submitted a report together with a supplementary report (copy tabled) which informed Council of changes required to the allocation of Committee seats between political groups as a result of the changes to the political balance of the Council together with additional requested changes as set out in the table below.

Committee	Member(s) to be Removed	Member(s) to be Appointed
Human Resources Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Health and Wellbeing Board	Cllr Bond	Cllr Vera
Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee	Cllr Curtis	Ungrouped Nomination to be notified
Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee	Vacancy Cllr Guy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified. Cllr Curtis
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Donaghy Cllr Reed	Labour Group Nomination to be notified. Cllr S Johnston
Standards Committee	Cllr O'Brien	Ungrouped Nomination to be notified.
Planning and Highways Committee	Cllr Ali	Labour Group Nomination
Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Cllr Curtis	Ungrouped Nomination to be notified.

Education (Appointment of Governors) Panel	Cllr G Smith	Cllr Gibson
Homelessness Appeals Panel	Cllr Curtis	Cllr Fagan
Appeals Committee	Cllr Curtis	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Port Board	Cllr G Smith	Cllr Edgeworth
East Sunderland LMAPS	Cllr A Wood	Cllr Scanlan
Outside Bodies		
Health Scrutiny Joint Committee between South Tyneside and Sunderland Local Authorities	Cllr Walton	Cllr Burnicle
North East and North Cumbria ICS and North of Tyne and Gateshead and Durham, South Tyneside and Sunderland Area Integrated Care Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Bond	Cllr Ayre
Sunderland Care and Support Limited	Cllr Thornton	Cllr A Smith
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	Cllr G Smith	Cllr Mullen

The Leader of the Council confirmed that details of the Labour Group Nominations appointing to their vacancies, would be brought to the January 2024 meeting.

Councillor Donaghy informed the meeting that he had agreed to fill the vacancy on the Standards Committee, referred to as Ungrouped Nomination.

The report and supplementary report were moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor G. Miller and duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Rowntree.

Councillor Edgeworth , duly seconded by Councillor Fagan proposed an alternative to recommendation (xxii) of the supplementary report, and requested Councillor Gibson remain as Vice-Chair of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee rather than be replaced by Councillor McDonough.

Recommendation (xxii) as set out in the supplementary report was put to the vote with:-

56 members voting for: -

Councillors	Blackburn	Graham-King	Miller, G	Snowdon, D
	Burnicle	Haque	Mordey	Snowdon, D E
	Burrell	Hartnack	Mullen	Speding
	Butler	Heron	Nicholson	Stewart
	Chequer	Herron	Peacock	Trueman, D
	Chisnall	Hunter	Price	Trueman, H
	Curtis	Johnston, K	Reed	Tye

Dixon	Johnston, S	Rowntree	Usher
Dodds	Jones	Samuels	Vera
Donaghy	Laverick	Scanlan	Walker, M
Dunn	Laws	Scott	Walker, P
Fletcher	Leonard	Smith, A	Warne
Foster	McDonough	Smith, G	Watson
Guy	Miller, F	Smith, P	Williams

10 members voting against: -

Councillors	Bond	Fagan	Hodson	Wood
	Crosby	Gibson	Morrissey	
	Edgeworth	Haswell	Walton	

And 2 Members abstaining:-

Councillors	Mason-Gage	Thornton
-------------	------------	----------

- 34. RESOLVED** that recommendation (xxii) of the supplementary report be agreed for the appointment of Councillor McDonough as Vice-Chair of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Gibson.

Having been moved, the remaining recommendations on the report and supplementary report were unanimously agreed and it was : -

- 35. RESOLVED that approval be given to: -**

- (i) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Human Resources Committee;
- (ii) the appointment of Councillor Vera to the Health and Wellbeing Board in place of Councillor Bond;
- (iii) the appointment of an ungrouped Member to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in place of Councillor Curtis;
- (iv) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee;
- (v) the appointment of Councillor Curtis to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Guy and the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the vacant position on the Committee;
- (vi) the appointment of Councillor S Johnston in place of Councillor Reed and the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Donaghy;
- (vii) the appointment of Councillor Donaghy to the Standards Committee in place of Councillor O'Brien;

- (viii) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Planning and Highways Committee in place of Councillor Ali;
- (ix) the appointment of an ungrouped Member to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place of Councillor Curtis;
- (x) the appointment of Councillor Gibson to the Education (Appointment of Governors) Panel in place of Councillor G Smith;
- (xi) the appointment of Councillor Fagan to the Homelessness Appeals Panel in place of Councillor Curtis;
- (xii) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Appeals Committee in place of Councillor Curtis;
- (xiii) the appointment of Councillor Edgeworth to the Port Board in place of Councillor G Smith;
- (xiv) the appointment of Councillor Scanlan to the East Sunderland LMAPS in place of Councillor Wood;
- (xv) the appointment of Councillor Burnicle to the Health Scrutiny Joint Committee between South Tyneside and Sunderland Local Authorities in place of Councillor Walton;
- (xvi) the appointment of Councillor Ayre to the North East and North Cumbria ICS and North of Tyne and Gateshead and Durham, South Tyneside and Sunderland Area Integrated Care Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Bond;
- (xvii) the appointment of Councillor A Smith to Sunderland Care and Support Limited in place of Councillor Thornton;
- (xviii) the appointment of Councillor Mullen to the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority in place of Councillor G Smith;
- (xix) the appointment of Councillor Samuels as Chair of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Guy;
- (xx) the appointment of Councillor Foster as Vice-Chair of Planning and Highways Committee in place of Councillor Ali; and
- (xxi) the appointment of Councillor Dixon as Vice-Chair of East Area Committee in place of Councillor Hodson; and

Motions on Notice

(i) Notice of Motion – Credit Their Service

Councillor Hunter, duly seconded by Councillor M Herron, moved the following motion: -

“This Council notes the Royal British Legion "Credit their Service" campaign, demanding an end to the treatment of military compensation as income by welfare benefit means tests, which results in many veterans and their families missing out on thousands of pounds a year.

Sunderland council therefore agrees:

- To use what discretionary powers it has available to ensure that military compensation is never treated as income in means tests for all locally administered benefits.
- Where such discretion is not available, formally request the government:
 - (a) amend benefit regulations to ensure that military compensation is not considered income by means tests; and,
 - (b) Compensate financially those councils that use their discretion to support veterans when applying for benefits.”

Upon being moved the motion was declared to be carried unanimously and accordingly it was: -

36. RESOLVED that: -

This Council notes the Royal British Legion "Credit their Service" campaign, demanding an end to the treatment of military compensation as income by welfare benefit means tests, which results in many veterans and their families missing out on thousands of pounds a year.

Sunderland council therefore agrees:

- To use what discretionary powers it has available to ensure that military compensation is never treated as income in means tests for all locally administered benefits.
- Where such discretion is not available, formally request the government:
 - (c) amend benefit regulations to ensure that military compensation is not considered income by means tests; and,
 - Compensate financially those councils that use their discretion to support veterans when applying for benefits

The meeting adjourned at this point, having reached three hours' duration.

(Signed) **D TRUEMAN**
 Mayor

***Motions on Notice
Outstanding from the Last
Ordinary Meeting of the
Council***

MOTIONS ON NOTICE OUTSTANDING FROM THE LAST ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Council Members are asked to consider the under-mentioned Motions:-

1. Notice of Motion – Amendment to Sunderland City Council Constitution (Part 2 Article 10 Area Committees)

To amend Part 2, Article 10 of the Constitution as follows.

To insert under 'Terms of Reference' - contained within the table located at 10.02 (a) (Form, Composition and Function) – an additional bullet point beneath "To support delivery of these objectives the Area Committee may..." which reads:

- Decide how funding allocated to the Area Committee in the annual Council budget should be structured and disseminated, including allocating ward-based budgets.

Proposed by Councillor Antony Mullen

Seconded by Councillor Paul Edgeworth

Additional Signatories

Councillor Sam Johnston
Councillor Lyall Reed
Councillor Richard Dunn
Councillor Greg Peacock
Councillor Michael Hartnack
Councillor Simon Ayre
Councillor Andrew Wood
Councillor Dominic McDonough

Councillor Michael Dixon
Councillor Adele Graham-King
Councillor Margaret Crosby
Councillor Joshua McKeith
Councillor Heather Fagan
Councillor Chris Burnicle
Councillor Julia Potts
Councillor Lynn Vera

2. Notice of Motion – Bringing the Metro to Hendon, Grangetown, Ryhope and beyond

This Council:

- supports efforts to re-open the Leamside Line, and to extend Tyne and Wear Metro services to Washington.
- regrets the Government's U-turn on committing to re-opening the Leamside Line less than 24 hours after the announcement was made.
- Supports extending the Tyne and Wear Metro to reach more of Sunderland. To ensure a route through Hendon, and Grangetown to Ryhope. To ensure a route so Doxford Park has a station.
- Believes that extending the Metro across Sunderland is of equal importance as re-opening the Leamside Line in developing our vibrant city.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to relevant regional transport authorities, and to the Secretary of State for Transport to ask them to prioritise preparing a business case for extending the Metro to Hendon, Grangetown, Ryhope and other parts of Sunderland as a matter of priority, alongside preparing the business case to re-open the Leamside Line.

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Wood

Seconded by Councillor Ciaran Morrissey

Report of the Cabinet

The CABINET reports and recommends as follows:-

1. Council Tax Base 2024-2025

That at its meeting to be held on 18 January 2024, Cabinet will give consideration to a report of the Director of Finance (copy attached) regarding the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 and to seek approval to recommend to Council the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Cabinet is to consider recommending to Council that:-

- (a) The report for the calculation of the Tax Bases for the City Council and Hetton Town Council for 2024/2025 be approved; and
- (b) That pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated by Sunderland City Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2024/2025, shall be 74,484 and for the area of Hetton Town Council shall be 4,267.

Cabinet's recommendations to Council will be set out in a supplementary report.

2. Local Council Tax Support Scheme

That at its meeting to be held on 18 January 2024, Cabinet will give consideration to a report of the Director of Finance (copy attached) requesting that Cabinet consider, for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992, whether the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) – which is the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme under section 13A(2) LGFA 1992 – should be revised or replaced with another scheme for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The Cabinet is to consider recommending to Council that:-

- (i) No changes are made to the current LCTSS, the main features of which are set out at Appendix A, for the City of Sunderland, except as required to incorporate any regulations laid down by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; and
- (ii) The approved LCTSS for the financial year 2024/2025 be published on the Council's website and in any additional manner determined by the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary.

Cabinet's recommendations to Council will be set out in a supplementary report.

CABINET MEETING – 18 JANUARY 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Council Tax Base 2024/2025

Author(s):

Director of Finance

Purpose of Report:

- To detail the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 and to seek approval to recommend to Council the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council:

- The report for the calculation of the Tax Bases for the City Council and Hetton Town Council for 2024/2025 be approved; and
- That pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated by Sunderland City Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2024/2025, shall be 74,484 and for the area of Hetton Town Council shall be 4,267.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To comply with statutory requirements.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are no alternative options recommended for approval.

Impacts analysed:

Equality Privacy Sustainability Crime and Disorder

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's Co-operative values? Yes

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?	Yes
Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?	Yes

Cabinet – 18 January 2024

Council Tax Base 2024/2025

Director of Finance

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To detail the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 and to seek approval to recommend to Council the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council:
 - The report for the calculation of the Tax Bases for the City Council and Hetton Town Council for 2024/2025 be approved; and
 - That pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Sunderland City Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2024/2025, shall be 74,484 and for the area of Hetton Town Council shall be 4,267.

3. Background to the Calculation of the Council Tax Base

- 3.1 The Council Tax Base is the estimated number of properties in each valuation band adjusted to take account of the estimated number of discounts, disregards and exemptions. The Council levies council tax on the basis of properties in band D and thus the numbers for each valuation band are adjusted to the proportion which their number is to band D. The Council must then estimate its level of collection for the year and apply this figure to arrive at the Council Tax Base figure.
- 3.2 The Council Tax Base must be calculated for both the Billing Authority (Sunderland) and Hetton Town Council (a local parish precept). The Billing Authority's Tax Base will be used to calculate the Council Tax for the City Council (including any social care precept) and as the basis for the major precepting authorities (Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority) to determine their precept requirements.
- 3.3 Since its introduction from 1st April 2013 the Council must annually approve its proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme. The impact of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme is recognised within the calculations as a Council Tax discount which is referred to as Item Z. The proposed 2024/2025 Local Council Tax Support Scheme is set out elsewhere on today's agenda. The Tax Base of the Council for 2024/2025 includes the full impact of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme as required by the regulations.

- 3.4 The Council Tax Base has increased from last year by 865 with an increase in respect of Hetton Town Council of 82. The increase is primarily due to an anticipated reduced uptake of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme during 2024/2025 compared with that assumed within the estimate of the Council Tax Base for the current year and also increases in the numbers houses across the City.

4. Calculations of the Billing Authority's Council Tax Base

- 4.1 This calculation is in two parts – 'A' - the calculation of the estimated adjusted band D properties and 'B' - the estimated level of collection.
- 4.2 The calculation of 'A' - the relevant amounts for each band is complex and includes a number of calculations which are shown at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Calculation of Item 'B' - Estimate of Collection Rate

This element of the formula is to reflect the level of collection anticipated. Following consideration of historic and current collection levels of both in year and previous years' arrears collection, and the general economic climate, it is proposed to apply 98.0% for 2024/2025.

- 4.4 Calculation of Council Tax Base

The Council's Tax Base is: 'A' 76,004.08 x 'B' 98.0% = 74,484
(For comparison the previous year's Tax Base was 73,619)

5. Calculation of Council Tax Base for Hetton Town Council - Local Precept

- 5.1 The rules for calculating the Council Tax Base for the area covered by Hetton Town Council are similar to those used in calculating the Billing Authority's Tax Base except that chargeable dwellings and discounts are to be taken for only those dwellings and discounts relating to the area for which the Council Tax Base is to be calculated. These detailed calculations are shown in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The same collection rate is required to be used for Parish precepts as for the Billing Authority.
- 5.3 Calculation of Council Tax Base

The Tax Base for Hetton Town Council is: 'A' 4,354.08 x 'B' 98.0% = 4,267
(For comparison the previous year's Tax base was 4,185).

6. Reasons for Decision

- 6.1 To comply with statutory requirements.

7. Alternative Options

- 7.1 There are no alternative options recommended for approval.

8. Impact Analysis

8.1 There are no implications.

9. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

9.1 None

10. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Calculation of the Council Tax Base

11. Background Papers

None

											Appendix 1
Council Tax Base - Sunderland City Council											
		Disabled Band (A)	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Total
Chargeable Dwellings	Item H	215.00	77,269.00	19,459.00	17,487.00	9,663.00	3,609.00	1,189.00	684.00	25.00	129,600.00
Total Discount	Item Q	(15.25)	(9,822.60)	(1,844.75)	(1,237.75)	(505.50)	(166.25)	(57.75)	(53.25)	(5.50)	(13,708.60)
Premium Factor	Item E	0	685	84	40	17	5	12	7	4	854
Adjustment in number of dwellings or discounts	Item J	0	42	142	177	221	40	1	1	0	624
Council Tax Support Estimate	Item Z	(49.52)	(18,283.83)	(1,797.68)	(686.32)	(180.11)	(48.49)	(10.35)	(6.97)	0.00	(21,063.27)
Adjusted number of dwellings		150.23	49,889.57	16,042.57	15,779.93	9,215.39	3,439.26	1,133.90	631.78	23.50	96,306.13
Prescribed Proportions for each Band	Item F	5	6	7	8	9	11	13	15	18	
Prescribed Proportion for Band D	Item G	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
Adjusted number of dwellings*(F/G)	Item A	83.46	33,259.71	12,477.55	14,026.60	9,215.39	4,203.54	1,637.86	1,052.97	47.00	76,004.08
Estimated Collection Rate	Item B	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Tax Base A*B		81.79	32,594.52	12,228.00	13,746.07	9,031.08	4,119.47	1,605.10	1,031.91	46.06	74,484.00
Council Tax Base - Hetton Town Council											
		Disabled Band (A)	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Total
Chargeable Dwellings	Item H	9.00	4,670.00	1,499.00	733.00	442.00	131.00	56.00	24.00	1.00	7,565.00
Total Discount	Item Q	(1.25)	(574.15)	(127.50)	(44.50)	(22.75)	(7.50)	(5.50)	(2.00)	0.00	(785.15)
Premium Factor	Item E	0	59	6	1	3	0	0	0	2	71
Adjustment in number of dwellings or discounts	Item J	0	9	20	6	9	9	0	0	0	53
Council Tax Support Estimate	Item Z	(3.43)	(1,103.99)	(83.32)	(25.09)	(10.61)	(2.89)	0.00	(0.57)	0.00	(1,229.90)
Adjusted number of dwellings		4.32	3,059.86	1,314.18	670.41	420.64	129.61	50.50	21.43	3.00	5,673.95
Prescribed Proportions for each Band	Item F	5	6	7	8	9	11	13	15	18	
Prescribed Proportion for Band D	Item G	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
Adjusted number of dwellings*(F/G)	Item A	2.40	2,039.91	1,022.14	595.92	420.64	158.41	72.94	35.72	6.00	4,354.08
Estimated Collection Rate	Item B	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Tax Base A*B		2.35	1,999.11	1,001.70	584.00	412.23	155.24	71.48	35.01	5.88	4,267.00

CABINET MEETING – 18 JANUARY 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Author(s):

Director of Finance

Purpose of Report:

To request Cabinet to consider, for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992, whether the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) – which is the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme under section 13A(2) LGFA 1992 – should be revised or replaced with another scheme for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council that:

- (i) No changes are made to the current LCTSS, the main features of which are set out at Appendix A, for the City of Sunderland, except as required to incorporate any regulations laid down by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; and
- (ii) The approved LCTSS for the financial year 2024/2025 be published on the Council's website and in any additional manner determined by the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? ***Yes**

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

- (i) The proposed scheme, the main features which are as set out at Appendix A, reflects the experience of the impact of the scheme to date and is seen to be a fair and affordable scheme for residents on a low income; and
- (ii) The Council must have its LCTSS approved by 11 March 2024, and the design of the scheme impacts upon the calculation of the council tax base which is considered elsewhere on today's agenda.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are no alternative options proposed. There is a statutory requirement for the Council to consider, for each financial year, whether to revise its LCTSS or replace it with another scheme, with any revision or replacement scheme being determined by 11th March in the preceding financial year.

Impacts analysed;

Equality ☒ Privacy ☐ N/A Sustainability ☐ N/A Crime and Disorder ☐ N/A

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? **Yes**

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?	Yes
Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?	Yes

CABINET MEETING –18 JANUARY 2024

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To request Cabinet to consider, for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992, whether the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) – which is the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme under section 13A(2) LGFA 1992 – should be revised or replaced with another scheme for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council that:
 - (i) No changes are made to the current LCTSS, the main features of which are set out at Appendix A, for the City of Sunderland, except as required to incorporate any regulations laid down by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; and
 - (ii) The approved LCTSS for the financial year 2024/2025 be published on the Council's website and in any additional manner determined by the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary.

3. Background

- 3.1 The former council tax benefit system was abolished by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and was replaced (by virtue of the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 2012) by a requirement for locally adopted Council Tax reduction schemes (in Sunderland referred to as the "Local Council Tax Support Scheme") from 1st April 2013, thereby transferring responsibility for Council Tax support from central to local government.
- 3.2 In accordance with that requirement, the Council adopted a LCTSS which was based on the government's default scheme, for implementation as from April 2013. The scheme incorporated protection for pensioners as required by the Local Government Finance Act provisions, namely the requirement that they must receive the same levels of entitlement under the new Council Tax Support Scheme as they had received under the old Council Tax Benefit Scheme. Evaluation of previous consultation resulted in some minor modifications to the scheme in 2015/16 such as utilising assumed consent that applicants of Housing Benefit also wished to be considered for Local Council Tax Support. Following consultation, further technical and administrative changes were implemented from 1st April 2018 in order to align the scheme to Housing Benefit.
- 3.3 There were no changes to the council tax support entitlement which will continue to be calculated and reduced by 8.5% for all working aged claimants.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The existing scheme is operating effectively and pensioners continue to be afforded protection. It is proposed to continue to monitor any impacts to the scheme over the coming year as a result of any Welfare Reform changes and review as necessary going forward.
- 4.2 Cabinet previously agreed to review the LCTSS during 2022/2023 with a view to consulting upon and potentially implementing a banded scheme in the future. Given the current and ongoing cost of living crisis this review has been deferred. It is proposed that potential models are developed and considered during 2024/2025 for implementation in 2025/2026. As part of this, work will be undertaken with Scrutiny Committee ahead of any consultation being carried out.

5. Proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/2025

- 5.1 Following the application of the current scheme it is proposed that no changes are made except for introducing any regulations laid down by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 5.5 The main features of the proposed scheme for the 2024/2025 financial year are set out in Appendix A.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The cost of the scheme has been factored into the Council's budget planning for 2024/25.

7. Reasons for the Decision

- 7.1 The proposed scheme, the main features which are as set out at Appendix A, reflects the experience of the impact of the scheme to date and is seen to be a fair and affordable scheme for residents on a low income; and
The Council must have its LCTSS approved by 11 March 2024, and the design of the scheme impacts upon the calculation of the council tax base which is considered elsewhere on today's agenda.

8. Alternative Options

- 8.1 There are no alternative options proposed. There is a statutory requirement for the Council to consider, for each financial year, whether to revise its LCTSS or replace it with another scheme, with any revision or replacement scheme being determined by 11th March in the preceding financial year.

9. Impact Analysis

(a) Equalities –

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is set out in Appendix B to this report.

Work will continue to assess the impact of this scheme alongside the related impacts of any welfare and benefit reforms either already introduced, planned to be introduced or still being considered by Government.

10. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- (i) Legal Implications** –The comments of the Assistant Director of Law and Governance have been taken into account in preparing this report.
- (ii) Other Consultations** –The comments of the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities have been taken into account in preparing this report. Consultation has not been carried out with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority nor the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Council's major precepting authorities) or any other persons as the requirement for such wider consultation applies only in cases where the Council exercises discretion to revise or replace the scheme.

11. List of Appendices

Appendix A – Local Council Tax Support Scheme Main Features
Appendix B – Equality Analysis

12. Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

Local Council Tax Support Scheme Main Features

1. Council tax support entitlement will be calculated and reduced by 8.5% for all working aged claimants.
2. Pensioners will continue to receive protection in line with the prescribed regulations.
3. Those non-dependants serving in the forces on operations will continue to be disregarded from the calculation.
4. Information held in respect of Housing Benefit can be used to calculate Council Tax support where appropriate.
5. LCTSS claims may be backdated to a maximum of one month providing good cause is shown.
6. No family premium will be used in the calculation for new applicants.
7. There will be no personal allowance for any third or subsequent child for new applicants (unless an exception applies).
8. A claimant will not be entitled to Council Tax Support if they are temporarily absent from Great Britain for longer than 4 weeks (unless an exception applies).
9. A notification of Universal Credit will be treated as an indication of a claim for Council Tax Support.

Action Taken on Petitions

ACTION TAKEN ON PETITIONS

Council Members are asked to note the action taken in relation to the under-mentioned petitions which were presented to Council: -

1. Petition to introduce waiting restrictions, signage and remove the bus link at Barmston Village Centre

A petition signed by 319 residents, was presented to Council on 23 March 2022 by Councillor Fiona Miller and referred to the Executive Director of City Development. The Petition read as follows:

“Requests that the council places a traffic regulation order, at the village centre shops (double yellow lines). The shop has large delivery vehicles delivering to the mini mart and chippy at all times of the day. The HGVs have obscured lines of vision for safe crossings to the shops and inconsiderate parking stopping the vehicles being able to park safely, to deliver. The residents request that there is signage to highlight for visitors to the shops, that there is a parking area just directly across the road, to enable safe parking for the shops and community pub. The residents would like bus link removed, over the years there have been several near misses and one child injured, with drivers trying to speed through, regardless.”

Council Officers have considered the petition and advised as follows.

The location suggested has a shop, chip shop, pub and primary school within a close proximity. There are car parks clearly available for vehicles to utilise when visiting the shops, or the school. The petition was declined on the basis that the implementation of waiting restrictions at this location would not prevent the parking and loading at this location (due to observation periods for parking and loading); the car parks are clearly visible from the highway (The Department for Transport have issued a directive to reduce street clutter, such as unnecessary signage); the removal of the bus link cannot be facilitated as this was installed to remove the volume of traffic from Barmston Village Centre.

Councillor F. Miller has been advised of the response.

2. Petition to install a traffic signal pedestrian crossing on Silksworth Lane

A petition signed by more than 200 residents was presented to Council on 23 March 2022 by Councillor Phil Tye requesting the installation of a traffic signal pedestrian crossing on Silksworth Lane between St Christopher's and Nursery Road. The Petition read as follows:

“Request the installation of a traffic signal pedestrian crossing on Silksworth Lane between St Christopher's and Nursery Road, to allow the safe passage of pedestrians across the road.”

Council Officers have considered the petition and advised as follows.

The location suggested has three pedestrian refuges within close proximity that residents can utilise to cross the highway.

A Road Safety Assessment was conducted using the cabinet approved criteria. The petition was declined as this location did not meet the threshold using the Road Safety Assessment criteria for interventions and inclusion within the programme of traffic works.

Councillor Tye has been advised of the response.

3. Petition calling for the closure of Sterling Care Solutions, West Lodge

A petition signed by 71 residents, was presented to Council on 13 September 2023 by Cllr Adele Graham-King. The petition read as follows:

“Petition for the Closure of Sterling Care Solutions West Lodge. This Petition is being presented to halt the ongoing issues at this establishment that houses people with alcohol and substance abuse and there was no community consultation.”

Council Officers have considered the petition and advised as follows:

The provider confirmed that all appropriate staff training had taken place and supervision processes were in place to support staff. Adult Social Care have confirmed that any customers requiring additional support, do have this in place as part of their formal care and support plan. All customers have regular unplanned visits from their allocated Social Worker. Any new referrals are considered alongside the mix of current customers to ensure they are compatible. Adult Social Care ensure there is a balance of customers with complex and low-level needs.

The provider confirmed they will make a retrospective planning application as this was an oversight on their behalf. However, Sterling Care had gained approval from the planning department to change the use from student accommodation into Housing of Multiple Occupation (HMO). The provider confirmed that there are ongoing issues with one resident for whom they are seeking an alternative placement alongside Adult Social Care colleagues. Confirmation was given that there is no drug dealing or injecting taking place in the property and there has been no record of any of the current residents at West Lodge being involved in any form of violence against local residents. The provider has reported that they have had threats made to staff and residents with people coming to the establishment which have been reported to the police. A good working relationship is in place with the local area police officers who visit regularly and not just to respond to incidents. The provider had confirmed that contact had been made with local Ward Councillors and that a meeting is to be arranged.

Councillor Graham-King has been advised of the response.

4. Petition – Request that the Council urgently review the short break respite provision delivered at Grace House

A petition signed by 6,694 residents, was presented to Council on 13 September 2023 by Councillor Anthony Mullen. The petition read as follows:

“We the undersigned residents of the City of Sunderland, petition Sunderland City Council and Together for Children, to urgently review the Short Break Respite provision which has been delivered at Grace House since 2016/17. Following a breakdown of communication between Together for Children and Grace House, families with disabled children, many with severe and complex needs, will be left bereft of assessed respite care following an announcement to parents that provision will cease in November. We fully support the Give us a Break! Campaign, and ask that negotiations are recommenced to provide this essential care with continuation of service, whilst an alternative building is sourced.”

Council Officers have considered the petition and advised as follows.

There have been two presentations to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee (7 September and 2 November) to update Members and residents on progress in securing alternative care packages of support for children, and on identifying an alternative building through which the Council would now commission Together for Children to run the service, as the provision from Sunderland Care and Support comes to an end. It has been made clear in those presentations and in communication with parents and carers, that the decision to remain in the building is a matter for the Grace House charity and not solely a Council decision. The charity confirmed to the Chief Executive of the Council in September that they were not in a position to agree an extension and that the service would need to exit the building as planned.

At the Cabinet meeting on 12 October 2023 the Council agreed to purchase a building in Sunderland that has been identified for the provision of overnight short breaks and as soon as the relevant legal processes have been cleared, further details will be shared with parent/carers. Parents/carers and children will be invited to contribute to the look and feel of the new home as soon as possible.

The priority has been to ensure that all children have alternative support packages and at the time of preparation of this report, these were available for all families. A further progress update will be provided to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.

Councillor Mullen has been advised of the response.

Reports

COUNCIL

24 JANUARY 2024

Update on Special Urgency Decisions

Report of the Leader

The Council's Constitution requires that a quarterly report be submitted to Council on executive decisions which have been taken as a matter of special urgency. The relevant provisions are now contained in Regulations 11 and 19 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

These are the special urgency provisions under which key decisions may be taken by the executive, although not contained in the 28 day Notice of Key decisions (whether proposed to be taken in public or private), where compliance with Regulation 10 (the general exception) was also impracticable.

There have been no such instances since the last report.

Recommendation

That the Council notes the content of this report.

COUNCIL

24 JANUARY 2024

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE****1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Council of outstanding changes and appointments required to the allocation of Committee seats between political groups as a result of the changes to political balance as recently reported to Council.
- 1.2 In addition, in accordance with usual practice it is proposed that Councillor Samuels be appointed to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee in place of Council Guy, having been appointed as Chair of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee. It is also proposed that an appointment be made in place of Cllr Ali on the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

2. Changes to Appointments on Committees

- 2.1 So far as reasonably practicable, the proportion of the total number of committee seats allocated to each group should reflect each group's proportion of the membership of the authority. The outstanding changes / appointments to Committees which are required are set out in the table below:

Committee	Vacancy / Member to be Replaced	Member(s) to be Appointed
Human Resources Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee	Cllr Guy Vacancy	Cllr Samuels Ungrouped Nomination to be notified.
Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Ali Vacancy	2X Labour Group Nominations to be notified.
Planning and Highways Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified
Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Vacancy	Ungrouped Nomination to be notified.

Appeals Committee	Vacancy	Labour Group Nomination to be notified.
-------------------	---------	---

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Council is accordingly invited to consider approving the following: -

- (i) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Human Resources Committee;
- (ii) the appointment of Councillor Samuels to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee in place of Councillor Guy;
- (iii) the appointment of an Ungrouped Member to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee;
- (iv) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee;
- (v) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee;
- (vi) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Ali and the appointment of a further Labour Group Member in respect of the existing vacancy;
- (vii) the appointment of an Labour Group Member to the Planning and Highways Committee;
- (viii) the appointment of an Ungrouped Member to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee;
- (ix) the appointment of a Labour Group Member to the Appeals Committee

Motions on Notice

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council Members are asked to consider the under-mentioned Motions: -

1. Notice of Motion – Debate Not Hate

The intimidation and abuse of councillors, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy; preventing elected members from representing the communities they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public life in democratic processes.

This council notes that increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse is having a detrimental impact of local democracy and that prevention, support and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians must improve to ensure councillors feel safe and able to continue representing their residents.

This council therefore commits to challenge the normalisation of abuse against councillors and officers and uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does.

The council further reaffirms its commitment to the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign which aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.

In addition, this council resolves to:

- Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians.
- Ensure the council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors can use to monitor and record incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors and officers.
- Regularly review the support available to councillors in relation to abuse and intimidation and councillor safety.
- Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals, like MPs.
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers.

Proposed by Councillor Claire Rowntree
Seconded by Councillor Joanne Chapman

Additional Signatories

Cllr Graeme Miller	Cllr Alison Smith	Cllr Melanie Thornton
Cllr Iain Scott	Cllr John Usher	Cllr Allen Curtis
Cllr Juliana Heron	Cllr Fiona Miller	Cllr George Smith
Cllr John Price	Cllr Catherine Hunter	Cllr Ehthesham Haque
Cllr Beth Jones	Cllr Linda Williams	Cllr Joanne Laverick
Cllr Michael Mordey	Cllr James Blackburn	Cllr Phil Tye
Cllr Kelly Chequer	Cllr Alison Chisnall	Cllr Sean Laws

Cllr Kevin Johnston	Cllr Peter Walker	Cllr Jill Fletcher
Cllr Michael Butler	Cllr Logan Guy	
Cllr Paul Stewart	Cllr Martyn Herron	

2. Notice of Motion – A Smart City That Doesn’t Leave Anyone Behind

Council agrees to ask the Cabinet to review how council services are offered in Sunderland and to take appropriate steps to make sure that:

- (i) everyone in our city can access services even if they cannot or do not want to do so digitally
- (ii) the Council’s goal is that the cost of services does not differ depending on whether you pay using cash or whether you use electronic payment methods
- (iii) nobody is put under undue pressure to access a service digitally if they are not able to do so independently and that analogue access is provided efficiently, effectively and without barriers. This should include a review of policies governing telephone calls by residents to the Council’s Customer Service Network.

Proposed by Councillor Heather Fagan
Seconded by Councillor Malcolm Bond

3. Notice of Motion – Minimum Quality Guarantee for Road Repairs

Councillors of all parties are frustrated when roads are resurfaced to a poor standard and have to be resurfaced again within a short timeframe. Council recognises this as a false economy - and one which is resulting in a waste of taxpayers' money.

Council therefore asks the Chief Executive to instigate a review of contract terms for road and pavement repairs, to ensure that the Council receives a good quality service from subcontractors, and to explore options for instituting a regular inspection regime, so that officers are assured that a minimum quality standard has been met or otherwise take action when it has not.

Proposed by Councillor Gregg Peacock
Seconded by Councillor Michael Dixon

4. Notice of Motion – Short Term Respite Care in Sunderland

The transition from Grace House to the newly acquired Red Gables site, set to open in summer 2024, will see parents of disabled and vulnerable children go without overnight support for a number of months.

Members agree that, in future, the Council must better prepare for its provision of short-term respite care, including overnight care, as some families are now being moved from one site of provision to another for the third time in seven years.

Council therefore agrees to a package of measures designed to improve the care and support available to disabled young people, whose disabilities are not catered for by existing services, including:

- Ensuring future decisions regarding short-break respite care arrangements are discussed with members, service users and as part of the scrutiny process rather than being decided at executive level.
- That families and children displaced from Grace House are made priority for placements at Red Gables and that these should be offered on a like for like basis.
- That a wider review of respite care is undertaken to ensure that a range of support (including overnight breaks, after school, weekend and holiday, and inclusive play and support groups) is available for different types of disability and special educational need. A report, following this review, should be presented to Children, Learning and Skills Scrutiny.

Council also agrees to request the Director of Children's Services to present a report to Scrutiny on how staffing, recruitment and retention needs for the new Red Gables facility will be met, in advance of it opening.

Proposed by Councillor Antony Mullen
Seconded by Councillor Lyall Reed

5. Notice of Motion – Rescind Ed Davey's Knighthood

The Post Office Horizon IT scandal led to the biggest miscarriage of justice in British legal history.

Subpostmasters across the country - including in Sunderland - were wrongly convicted of a crime they did not commit.

The ITV drama on this subject has ignited public anger about this case - and exposed the wrongdoing of those who declined to help.

When the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA) asked to meet Lib Dem Leader Ed Davey - the then Minister for Postal Affairs, who served in a government department headed by Lib Dem Vince Cable - he declined, saying that it would serve no purpose.

As Conservative MP David Davis and Labour MP Kevan Jones jointly led a campaign to help the victims of this injustice, Davey took the side of the Post Office Ltd and showed a lack of leadership in not even questioning the organisational account which he now describes as a lie.

He is undeserving of the knighthood awarded to him for public service.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Deputy Prime Minister, departmental head of the Cabinet Office, to inform him that this Council requests that the honours committee review the knighthood awarded to Ed Davey for public service.

- Support all subpostermasters, but particularly those who operated from Sunderland, in their case for a quicker compensation process to be introduced.

Proposed by Councillor Michael Hartnack
Seconded by Councillor Antony Mullen

6. Notice of Motion – CPMS Charges

Community Parking Management Scheme (CPMS) zones are a necessary tool of last resort to deal with parking problems in residential areas.

These parking issues are not caused by the residents who live there, but by people from out the area. Yet it is residents who have to pay to park outside of their own home - and this is unfair.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Eliminate the cost of a second parking permit entirely for all households in CPMS zones
- Remove administrative costs relating to the registration of new vehicles when a resident changes car

Proposed by Councillor Richard Dunn
Seconded by Councillor Adele Graham-King

Additional Signatories

Cllr Antony Mullen		
--------------------	--	--

