



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House on Thursday 28th November 2013 at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

G T Knox (Chair) , J R Potts (Vice-Chair), A Cartie, B W Elliott, A Gibbs-Barton, K Nisbet and R Parker (Mayor).

Also Present:

S E Rickitt - Town Clerk (Democratic Services)

L Forsyth – Committee Clerk

070/13/01: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor G Thompson a Councillor A Turnbull, B W Elliott,

071/13/02: DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & THE GRANT OF ANY DISPENSATIONS

Councillor A Gibbs-Barton commented that he had been lobbied and contacted regarding the application :13/03341/OUT. The Councillor wished to note that he had declined the invitations.

072/13/03: MINUTES FROM THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2013

Councillor J R Potts commented that he had attended a meeting the day before at the Buffalo Community Centre regarding Northumberland County Council plans at which a draft update report of the Benchmarking Scheme was circulated. The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) commented that he was to investigate in order to acquire said report.

Action: SER

The Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 17th October 2013 were **AGREED** as a true record and signed by the Chair.

073/13/04: MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not to be covered in this Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee.

074/13/05: PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Prior to the consideration of the applications, the Committee Clerk outlined the issues which had been experienced using the Northumberland County Council planning services. It was **AGREED** that the Committee Clerk is to seek contact in order to rectify this issue.

5.1 From the Weekly Lists issued by Northumberland County Council (see attached document).

13/03544/ADE

Advertisement Consent: Retain existing fascia sign and projecting sign, install new aluminium fascia panel, repair shopfront and roller shutter, install new sunblind, re-tile pilasters and new internal window graphic – Greggs, 16 Regent Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1LP - **No comments.**

13/03483/FUL

Part change of use and sub-division of existing retail unit (11 Regent Street/ 2 to 10 Bowes Street) from Class A1 to Class A2 Professional Services and A3 Restaurant, including installation of new timber shopfronts, rear fire exits to ground floor level, removal of roller shutter to rear garage and increase in size of first floor windows generally – 11 Regent Street and

2-10 Bowes Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1LQ - **The Planning and Development Committee wished to comment that it positively welcomed this development.**

13/03488/FUL

Substitution of house types at plots numbered 1-3, 7-8, and 148-231 outlined in approval referenced 07/00434/REM, 29th April 2008 resulting in a net gain of 12 no. dwellings – Land At West Blyth Accessed From Chase Farm Drive, Blyth, Northumberland - **No comments.**

13/02990/FUL

Construction of a cycle compound to hold 48 bikes on the current grassed area next to the visitors car park. The compound will consist of four of "Alnwick" shelters with an interconnecting roof over the central walkway and be complete with four "high/low" cycle racks each to hold 12 cycles – Land East of Unit 5, Draeger Safety UK, Ullswater Close, Riverside Business Park, Blyth, Northumberland - **The Planning and Development Committee wished to comment that it positively welcomed this development.**

13/03464/FUL

Proposed removal of conservatory on rear elevation and replacement with single storey Dining, Kitchen and Lounge extension on rear/ north side elevations and extension to detached garage – 3 Hampstead Close, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 3XE – **No comments.**

13/03341/OUT

Outline permission for demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site for up to 40 residential units (Use Class C3) with access from A1061 South Newsham Road –

Land at Newsham North Farm, South Newsham Road, Blyth, Northumberland - **The Planning and Development Committee wished to FORMALLY OBJECT to this application citing concerns regarding the vehicular access and the massive intensification of traffic on South Newsham Road. Concerns were also expressed regarding flooding to the North of the proposed site as well as the bat and archaeological surveys.**

13/03545/FUL

Retain existing fascia sign and projecting sign, install new aluminium fascia panel, repaint shop front and roller shutter, install new sunblind, re-tile pilasters and new internal window graphic – 16 Regent Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1LP - **No comments.**

13/03383/HPA

Proposed rear conservatory – 20 Fifteenth Avenue, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 2QH - **No comments.**

13/03444/FUL

Proposed first floor Bed/Bathroom extension over existing garage – 411 Plessey Road, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 3LP – **No comments.**

5.2 Other applications which have to be considered before the next scheduled meeting of this Committee.

None.

075/13/06: CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The Committee generally welcomed the proposals and were especially keen to support the retention of the present Green Belt boundaries around the southern part of Blyth.

The Committee had the following points of concern:

Chapter 6 and Paragraphs 9.27-9.36 – Councillors were concerned at the omission of Blyth as a potential tourist destination. The Committee are aware of a number of proposals (for example a heritage trail passing through Blyth connected with the First World War) which should be supported by inclusion within the employment part of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 7 – Councillors felt that the Housing part of the Core Strategy should include reference to the need for Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Transit sites in both the South-East and the West of Northumberland.

Paras 7.33-7.35 and Table 7.4 (Affordable Housing Targets) – The Committee was concerned about the lower target for the South East Delivery Area but appreciated the reasons. Councillors wondered if there was any realistic method of increasing the target for Blyth.

Para 7.40 – The Committee suggest a rewording to make it clear that it is for the developer to demonstrate non-inclusion of affordable housing within a scheme.

Para 9.34 – Councillors are concerned that the present wording could be read as allowing coal extraction at Bebside. The Committee wish to see the criteria for extraction ahead of development to be strengthened by making it clear that extraction should only be permitted when it is demonstrated to be required for ground stabilisation.

The Committee commented that it **AGREED** to the recommendation subject to the aforementioned amendments and conditions.

(Please find the document attached to the Minutes)

076/13/07: BLYTH AS A PRIMARY DESTINATION

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) provided an outline for his report on Blyth becoming a primary destination commenting that key to the process would be linking the Town with developments at the Port of Blyth

Councillor G T Knox commented that this item needed to become a regular item on the Agenda in order to keep up pressure.

The recommendation was **AGREED.**

(Please find the report attached below).

077/13/08: COMBINED AUTHORITY FOR DURHAM, NORTHUMBERLAND AND TYNE AND WEAR

The Council's Planning & Development Committee have considered the Consultation and resolved to welcome the proposed Combined Authority for the following reasons:

- It will enable transport infrastructure to be considered in a regional forum,
- It will facilitate development of public transport links across administrative boundaries,
- It provides the opportunity for funding the dualling of the A1 into Scotland, thus developing a transport corridor to relieve the M6/M74 route with the enhanced opportunities for trade and tourism,
- It will provide a co-ordinated approach to economic development across what is a cohesive area of England,
- Democratic accountability is ensured through the links with the seven principal councils in the area.

(Please find the document attached to the Minutes)

078/13/09: GYPSY ROMA TRAVELLER TRANSIT SITE

At the time of the Meeting, no further information was available.

Councillor J R Potts further enquired as to whether it would be possible to check for the deadline for this item. The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) informed the Committee that he would investigate. **Action: SER.**

079/13/10: CENTRAL LINK ROAD

At the time of the Meeting, no further information had been received.

080/13/11: DEMONSTRATION OFF-SHORE WINDFARM

This item was discussed by the Committee. The Committee wished to comment that it welcomed the development.

081/13/12: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND URGENT MATTERS

Discussion was held regarding developments provided by the Committee Clerk regarding the Neighbourhood Plan and updates from the NALC conference.

082/13/12: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that a Special Meeting is to be held on Wednesday 11th December 2013 to receive a presentation from Mr Graham Garnham regarding Town Centre Planning. **Action: LF.**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting are currently scheduled for Thursday 19th December 2013 and 7th January 2014 are to be provisionally cancelled unless any urgent planning related issues arise. Therefore, the next scheduled Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee is to take place on the 30th January 2014 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House. (Please note that a presentation at this meeting is to be provided by Martin Lawlor from the Port of Blyth).

MEETING CLOSED AT 8.15 pm

Date:

Signed:

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Cllr G T Knox (Chair)
Cllr J R Potts (Vice-Chair)
Cllr A Cartie
Cllr B W Elliott
Cllr A Gibbs-Barton
Cllr K Nisbet
Cllr R Parker (Mayor)
Cllr G Thompson
Cllr A Turnbull

COPY TO ALL COUNCILLORS

DRAFT

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Development Committee
28 November 2013

Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt

RECOMMENDATION

1: The Committee is asked to agree its response to the consultation.

REPORT

Background

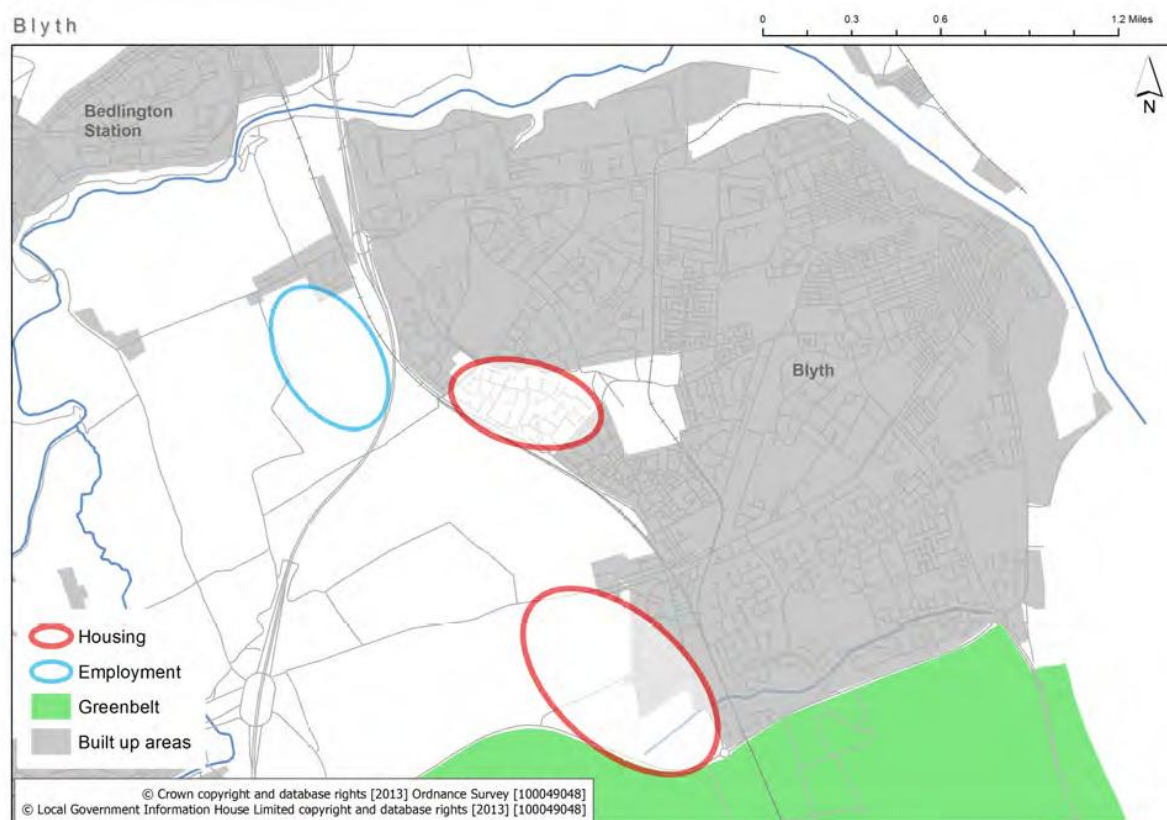
1: The County Council is consulting upon the remaining part of its Core Strategy, that for Housing, Employment and Green Belt. The consultation closes on 2 January 2014. This follows on from the consultation earlier this year.

2: Following the close of consultation, the County Council will consider the responses before consulting on a formal Core Strategy. That will be the subject of an examination by a Planning Inspector before eventual adoption which should be in 2015.

3: The Committee will appreciate the Core Strategy will set out the way Northumberland will develop until 2031.

4: References are to paragraphs in the consultation draft. In preparing this report, I have not specifically identified points of agreement, merely those points which Town Councillors **may** be concerned about.

5: The paper contains a map at Para 9.36 showing the areas in Blyth proposed for new Housing & Employment.



6: The introductory chapters set the scene. Blyth is within the *South East Northumberland Delivery Area* and is described at paragraph 2.19 as follows

2.19 Blyth: Has a strategically important employment function. There is significant economic growth potential particularly at Blyth Estuary, which includes sites with Enterprise Zone status. Opportunities exist that build on existing assets including the National Renewable Energy Centre (NaREC) and the Port of Blyth which is a sizeable commercial port with a deep-water harbour and warehousing facilities. Specific sectors being targeted include, offshore oil and gas, renewables and advanced manufacturing.

Do Councillors agree with that as both a succinct statement of the current position and perhaps more significantly showing the direction of travel?

7: The remaining parts of that chapter give more details including that there has been consistent under delivery of housing within the South East Northumberland Delivery Area.

8: Chapter 3 sets out the economic background, with chapter 4 giving details of the current and projected levels of population.

9: Economic Growth and Employment

Chapters 5 and 6 – Paragraphs 5.1 – 6.19

9.1: Paragraph 5.4 sets out how the employment objectives are to be achieved. I have highlighted the references to Blyth

5.4 This will be achieved by:

- Providing a portfolio of high quality sites in the right locations which are attractive to the market, this includes:
- **221 hectares of strategic employment land, of which 207 hectares forms part of the Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone;** and
- 28 hectares of new employment land;
- Protecting 113 hectares of land in established centres of B-class activity and available
- sites in the best locations to attract development, and promote a mix of employment generating activity (identifying 42 hectares of land) on other employment sites;
- **Supporting locations in the South East and Central Delivery Areas as cost effective alternatives to the Tyneside market for industrial development;**
- **Providing a diverse range of interconnected sites around the Blyth Estuary to provide for growth of the strategically important sectors – low carbon and environmental goods, energy generation, and offshore engineering;**
- The development of high quality office accommodation at Northumberland Business Park, and key locations in the other main towns;
- Supporting the creation and expansion of hubs for business services and creative industries in the County's historic market towns, rural business developments, and through more home run enterprises;
- Supporting spatially initiatives to improve skills levels in Northumberland's resident work force in accordance with the Northumberland Skills Strategy;
- Supporting the growth of tourism facilities and accommodation;
- **Supporting improvements to transport and telecommunications infrastructure, and the County's gateways to international growth – The Ports of Blyth and Berwick, and Newcastle International Airport;**
- Supporting the objectives of partners including the North Eastern Local Enterprise Partnership to support business investment.

9.2: Table 6.1 sets out a revised preferred approach to employment land portfolio changes. This seems to reduce the need for a new site to one of 5 hectares rather the 10 hectares in the *Employment land Review*.

Blyth	Intensification of existing employment sites or a new allocation to provide about 10 hectares	More intensive use of existing sites could provide some additional land above the circa 6 hectares available, but a new site of around 5ha is proposed for general employment use, particularly given the scale of housing development proposed for the town and potentially good road access. The nearby BEREZ sites are intended to serve a strategic, sector specific role.
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Members may agree that this change better reflects the current position.

10: Housing

Chapter 7 – Paragraphs 7.1 – 7.41

10.1 Blyth is allocated a delivery target of 3480 dwellings in 2011-2031. Chapter 7 sets the background to the overall figures for Northumberland and how they have been calculated.

10.2 Chapter 9 Paragraphs 9.27-9.32 set out the detail of how this would be split

- 2790 as identified deliverable & developable sites
- 700 on a site to the west of Chase Farm, and
- 1000 at South Newsham [both shown on the plan above].

11: Affordable Housing

Chapter 7 – Paragraphs 7.30 - 7.41

11.1 The Stage 1 Preferred Options suggested a 30% target for the county. The County Council has done further work in the light of the 2011 Census and other central government policy changes. Councillors may have seen news items indicating that developers are successfully seeking downward revisions to previously agreed targets.

11.2 The County Council is still retaining a 30% target across Northumberland but is now suggesting that each of the four delivery areas has a separate target percentage

Table 7.4 Affordable housing targets by Delivery Area

Delivery Area	Affordable housing target
North Northumberland	35%
Central Northumberland	30%
South East Northumberland	25%
West Northumberland	35%

11.3 In order to facilitate self and custom build there will be a two unit threshold before affordable housing contributions are required. Councillors may wish to consider whether or not this is appropriate for Blyth.

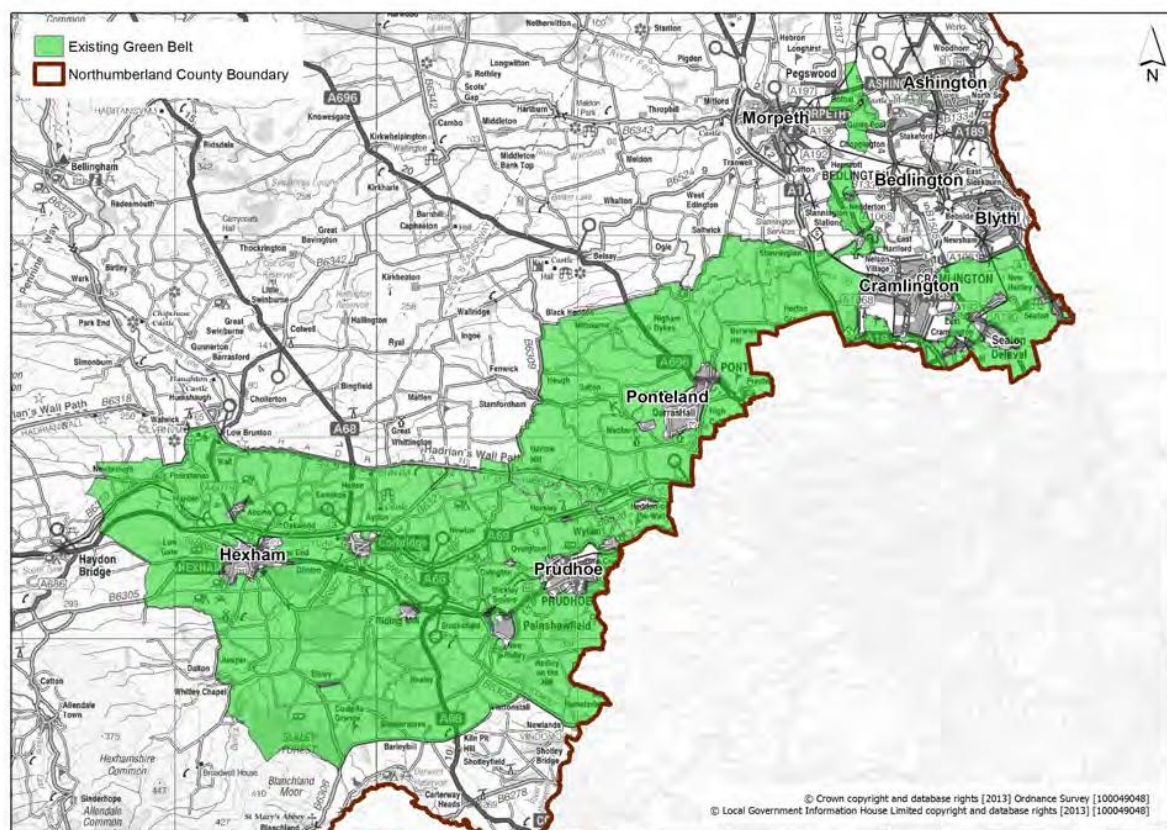
11.4 The paper proposes a presumption that affordable housing will be provided as part of the scheme (*Paragraph 7.40*) but there is the ability to provide a contribution for off-site provision or a financial contribution. Councillors may consider that the policy could be made explicit that it is for the developer to demonstrate justification for the non-inclusion of affordable housing within the scheme.

12: Green Belt

Chapter 8 – Paragraphs 8.1 – 8.33

12.1 From my reading of the proposals in Chapter 8 it appears there is no intention to review the Green Belt as it affects Blyth. The Committee may suggest a specific reference to that effect is required in the final version of the Core Strategy.

12.2 Set out below is the plan of the existing Green Belt.



13: Delivery

Chapter 9 especially Paragraphs 9.3-9.6 and the Blyth specific sections at Paragraphs 9.27 - 9.36 and Policy 5

13.1 These paragraphs set out how Blyth is expected to play its part in the delivery of the Core Strategy. What members may find interesting are the discounted options which for ease are below.

Discounted options for Blyth

9.35 *A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 2,940 new dwellings over the plan period.*

9.36 *While development at this level would result in a significant population increase, it is not considered sufficient to revitalise the town, support the employment aspirations of the area or re-balance the ageing population. Higher levels of development, which would be required by existing policies, may not be deliverable in Blyth. Additional land would be required and an over-supply of housing may result in market failure. The direction of growth is constrained by the sea and River Blyth and the Green Belt.*

Stephen Rickitt
Town Clerk (Democratic Services)
31 October 2013

DRAFT

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Planning and Development Committee
28 November 2013

Primary Destinations

RECOMMENDATION

- 1: That that Council be recommended to make strong representations to the Department for Transport that Blyth should be a *Primary Destination*.
- 2: That the local MP, The Port of Blyth, The Town Team and the County Council be asked to support these representations.

REPORT

- 1: It was been a source of considerable irritation for some years that Blyth does not feature as a destination on the “white on green” trunk and principal highway signs, despite it being the largest town in Northumberland and the busiest port.
- 2: Mention was made of this continuing sore at one of the final meetings before the elections in May 2013. I followed this up with the Department for Transport and received the attached reply. The paragraph 1.6 reads:

Primary Destinations

1.6

The criteria for defining a primary destination are purposefully flexible, in order to allow the PRN to serve the whole of the country. Strict criteria based on population size or traffic levels would prevent the PRN reaching more rural corners of the country. The inclusion or exclusion of individual locations is therefore a matter of DfT discretion, taking the following factors into account:

Population – the size of the settlement

example Cheltenham

Attraction – the amount of traffic that will come to this location

example Stansted Airport

Nodes – locations that motorists are very likely to pass through in order to get to a final destination

example Scotch Corner

Density – the number of primary destinations in the area.

example – as Stevenage is a primary destination, neither Letchworth Garden City nor Hitchin need to be.

The Primary Destinations in Northumberland, County Durham and Tyne & Wear are

Northumberland

Alnwick, Ashington, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Corbridge, Hexham & Morpeth

County Durham

Bishop Auckland, Consett, Darlington, Durham, Hartlepool, Stockton & Teesside

Tyne & Wear

Gateshead, Newcastle, South Shields, Sunderland, Tyne Tunnel & Tynemouth

4: The Committee may agree that Blyth meets all of the above criteria except perhaps not being a point through which travellers will pass heading to another destination and only then if the Spine Road is taking as NOT running through Blyth.

5: With the increasing diversity of goods coming through the Port of Blyth, it is no longer valid to argue that it is only a single type of goods (e.g. coal) and thus that drivers involved will be familiar with the route.

6: Members are asked to consider whether there are other aspects which can be used to try to persuade the DFT to include Blyth as a Primary Destination.

Appendix

1: Email letter dated 16 May 2013

Stephen Rickitt
Town Clerk (Democratic Services)
19 November 2013

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Development Committee
28 November 2013

A Combined Authority for Durham, Northumberland and Tyne & Wear

RECOMMENDATION

1: The Report is for information.

REPORT

1: The Department for Communities and Local Government have commenced a consultation on a proposal to establish a combined authority for Durham Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. The consultation runs until 2 January 2014. The report is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposal-to-establish-a-combined-authority-for-durham-northumberland-and-tyne-and-wear>

2: The proposals follow a decision by the seven principal councils in Durham Northumberland and Tyne & Wear to seek a combined authority. The consultation document sets out the history of the process.

3: The proposed primary focus of the combined authority is *to manage a significant programme of investment in transport and economic infrastructure, and to influence and align with Government investment, in order to drive economic growth.*

4: The new authority would have the powers and duties of the Tyne & Wear Integrated Transport Authority (which would be abolished) together with the local transport functions of Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council.

5: This would mean that the combined authority would deal with such transport issues as

- prioritisation and programme management of local major transport schemes;
- development of a joint local transport plan and associated strategies;
- working on bus related issues;
- developing cooperative arrangements across the area on traffic management; and
- leading collaborative working on concessionary travel stop

6: The authority would have economic development powers but these would coexist with the existing powers of the two county councils and the seven metropolitan councils in Tyne & Wear.

7: Funding is noted as an issue and the combined authority would be able to issue a levy on the seven local authorities. The paper suggests that because of the differing needs of Durham and Northumberland and that it would not be pro-appropriate for the historic debt of the Tyne & Wear integrated transport authority to fall on the county council, the current method of apportionment by population size would not be appropriate. It appears the government are not going to set how the levy will be a portion but that will leave it to the new combined authority although the levy will be subject to the provisions on council tax referendums if the Local Audit and Accountability Bill is given The Royal Assent.

Stephen Rickitt
Town Clerk (Democratic Services)
19 November 2013