



South Tyneside Council

Cabinet Minutes 5 November 2025

Present: Councillors: Carter (*in the Chair*), Berkley, P. Dean, Foreman, Gibson, McHugh, Meling and J Taylor.

Jonathan Tew (Chief Executive), Stuart Reid (Director of Business and Resources), Stuart Easingwood (Director of Children's Services), Stuart Wright (Director of Strategy and Place), Gary Kirsop (Director of Operations), Stuart Easingwood (Director of Children's Services), Paula Philips (Head of Public Health Improvement, Commissioning and Delivery), Lucy Keating (Director of Legal and Governance – Monitoring Officer), Vicki Pattinson (Director of Adult Social Services and Commissioning), John Rumney (Corporate Lead Legal and Governance), Natalie Johnson (Senior Press Officer) and Karen Connolly (Democracy Officer).

There was also one member of the press in attendance, approximately 16 members of the public and 6 elected members.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of 24 September 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 24 September 2025 be confirmed as a true record.

3. Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy Public Consultation

Submitted: Report of the Director of Place Strategy

The report, which was presented by Councillor Gibson, Lead Member Neighbourhoods and Climate Change sought approval to support and facilitate the statutory public consultation of the Draft South of Tyne and Wear Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The strategy contains the draft conservation priorities along with the potential measures that could be undertaken to recover nature and to map where they could be implemented.

The Environment Act 2021 introduced Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) to promote coordinated and effective action for nature recovery. DEFRA appointed Gateshead Council as the Responsible Authority for the South of Tyne and Wear LNRS. Gateshead have a legal duty to produce an LNRS covering the area of Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland. South Tyneside Council, along with Sunderland City Council, Natural England and the North East Combined Authority (NECA) have been designated as Supporting Authorities and therefore, are legally required to be involved in the LNRS preparation process.

Options considered

Option 1

Support the proposal to proceed to public consultation of the Draft LNRS and facilitate the consultation.

Option 2

Submit a statutory objection to the consultation draft LNRS 16.

Option 3

Do nothing.

Resolved: That (a) the progress made in preparing the South of Tyne and Wear LNRS as be noted; (b) the proposal to proceed to public consultation of the Draft LNRS and facilitate the consultation as per option one be supported; (c) that the Director of Place Strategy, in conjunction with the Lead Member of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, be given delegated authority to sign off amendments resulting from the 28-day statutory notice period, prior to public consultation.

Reason for Decision: To ensure statutory compliance with the Environment Act 2021, enable meaningful public input into the Draft LNRS, and maintain momentum toward adoption of the strategy.

4. Leasehold Management Policy

Submitted: Report of the Director of Place Strategy

The report, which was presented by Councillor Carter, Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety sought approval of the Leasehold Management Policy.

Options considered

Option 1

Approval of the Policy, which will ensure that the Council delivers an improved and compliant service to 837 leasehold households. The Policy will inform new internal and external processes and will be monitored for effectiveness.

Option 2

Do nothing and continue without a Leasehold Management Policy.

Resolved: That approval be given to the Leasehold Management Policy.

Reason for Decision: The new policy aligns workstreams across service areas and will ensure that service delivery is improved for leaseholders across the Council.

5. Consideration of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the Changes of Use of dwellings to small Houses in Multiple Occupation

Submitted: Report of the Director of Place Strategy

The report, which was presented by Councillor Meling, Lead Member for Economic Growth and Transport set out options to consider making an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights under planning legislation for changes of use from dwelling houses (Class C3) to small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (Class C4) for the whole of the Borough, excluding the area around the Lawe Top in South Shields where there is an existing Article 4 Direction in place.

Whilst all development requires planning permission, some forms of development already benefit from a generic planning permission granted by central government through secondary legislation (known as permitted development). One such example is in respect of Dwelling Houses (Class C3) which can be converted to small HMOs with between three and six residents (Class C4) without the need for planning permission.

In recent years the Borough has seen a significant increase in the number of new small HMO as these changes of use do not require planning permission, the Council is not always made aware of them by a property owner and they are sometimes brought to the Council's attention through complaints about alleged unauthorised development being undertaken. There are cases where property owners do seek advice about whether a change of use requires planning permission. In combination, for the period of January 2024 to September 2025, there have been at least 30 cases involving proposals for change of use of a dwelling to a C4 use.

In addition, and through the HMO Licensing regime, there have been 22 new HMO Licenses granted since January 2023 (56 licensed HMOs in total across the Borough) and where that involved a dwelling being converted to use as HMO by at least 5 occupiers. There is the potential for the number of properties actually in a C4 use to not be fully known, for those cases where the property is occupied by between 3 and 4 residents and where both planning permission and an HMO License was not required.

Cases involving the conversion of dwellings to small HMOs using permitted development rights had given rise to significant concerns being raised by neighbouring residents as well as Elected Members on behalf of residents across the Borough. The absence of planning control in these situations is a

significant cause of frustration for residents both in terms of individual cases but also where a number of permitted development conversions had been carried out within the same street/area and where there were cumulative concerns about the impact of HMO uses on the character of the area and issues around mixed and balanced communities.

Where local authorities consider that there is a local need to control the spread of HMOs in specific areas, they can use Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights. The Secretary of State must be notified and has the power to amend or remove an Article 4 Direction proposed by a local planning authority.

There is an Article 4 Direction in place in the Lawe Top Area of South Shields which took effect in early 2015 as it was considered necessary to address community concerns in relation to a significant concentration of HMOs in that area. The existing Article 4 Direction has been effective in managing further changes of use from dwellings to small HMOs in the Lawe Top Area.

An Article 4 Direction is made under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Such a direction would have no impact upon Sui Generis HMOs because they are not covered by these permitted development rights. The position is that changes of use from C3 dwelling houses to Sui Generis HMOs require planning permission and that would continue to be the case whether or not an Article 4 direction is made.

If an Article 4 Direction is considered appropriate, they can be implemented as an 'immediate' Direction or a 'non-immediate' Direction. Cabinet was asked to consider the options as fully detailed in the report.

Options considered

Option 1

Do Nothing

Option 2

Immediate Article 4 Direction

Option 3

Non-immediate

It was noted that Option 1 was not recommended for the reasons set out in the report. The report set out the implications of Options 2 and 3.

If Option 2 (*Immediate Direction*) was to be pursued, the Council would risk having to pay small HMO applicants / developers' compensation, as set out at Paras 20 and 21 of the report, within the first 12-month period. This may include not just cases where permission is refused, but also where permission is granted (i.e. application and appeal costs). A Member added that immediate direction was necessary to prevent a surge in applications during the 12 months' notice period which would be given if the Council introduced the Article under non-immediate direction and noted that this could

undermine the policy's intent. Considering the risk in relation to compensation claims it was felt that the cost of inaction on residents and the community was greater.

If Option 3 (Non-immediate Direction) was pursued, compensation is not payable if 12 months prior notice of the withdrawal of permitted development rights is given. A Member added that immediate direction was necessary to prevent a surge in applications during the 12 months' notice period which would be given if the Council introduced the Article under non-immediate direction and noted that this could undermine the policy's intent.

Resolved: That the Director of Place Strategy be authorised to:

- (a) Make an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights across the Borough (excluding the Lawe Top area of South Shields) for the change of use from dwelling houses (Class C3) to small HMOs (Class C4) on an immediate basis.
 - (b) Publish 21-day statutory notices of making in connection with the Direction which specify a date of coming into force immediately upon the publication and display of the notices.
 - (c) Once the period for making representations referred to in b. above has expired:
 - i. If no objections to the Direction are received. To confirm the Direction within 6 months of it coming into force and undertake the required publicity in connection with its confirmation.
 - ii. If objections to the Direction are received, and the Director of Place Strategy in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Growth and Transport considers that those objections, together with any other representations received, do not materially affect the reasons for making the Direction as set out in this report, to confirm the Direction within the 6 months and undertake the required publicity in connection with confirmation.
 - iii. If objections to the Direction are received, but the Director of Place Strategy in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Growth and Transport considers that those objections together with any other representations, materially affect the reasons for making the Direction as set out in this report, to prepare a further report to be brought to a future meeting of Cabinet, with a recommendation whether to confirm the Direction within the six month period.
 - (d) Do any other act or thing as may be reasonably required in connection with making and/or confirming the direction pursuant to a. to c. above including submission of copies to the Secretary of State.
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- (e) To settle and pay all claims for compensation arising out of or in connection with the making of an immediate Direction, and to pursue all action including as necessary proceedings before the Upper Tribunal and any other court in connection with resolving such claims where disputed.

Reason for Decision: There is a need to exercise greater planning control over the number of properties using current permitted development rights for change of use from dwelling houses (Class C3) to small HMOs (Class C4).

6. Review of Public Protection Enforcement Policies

Submitted: Report of the Director of Place Strategy

The report, which was presented by Councillor Carter, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety sought approval of several new and updated Enforcement Policies, that sit beneath the existing General Enforcement Policy for the Council's Public Protection Services, agreed by Council in September 2024.

The new and updated policies include an overarching Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy together with three supplementary policies to support specific areas of private sector housing work:

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Works in Default
- Housing Civil Penalties

Approval was also sought for a further two policies that related to specific areas of wider Public Protection work, namely an Animal Licensing Policy and an Enforcement Policy relating to single use vapes.

Options considered:

Option 1

Agree all Policies presented as the Council's approach to enforcement within its Public Protection teams, with a review cycle of 3 years.

Option 2

Agree a number of the presented Policies.

Option 3

Not agree the new/updated policies.

Resolved: That (a) approval be given to the policies listed below and attached to this report, and that a 3-year review cycle for these policies be agreed:

- Public Health and Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, incorporating:
 - Houses in Multiple Occupation Policy
 - Works in Default Policy
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- Housing Civil Penalties Policy
- Animal Licensing Policy
- Enforcement Policy – Single-use Vapes

and (b) the Director of Place Strategy be given delegated authority, in conjunction with the Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety, to approve any amendments to the policies required during their operational periods, in view of the legislative changes expected prior to the 3- year review. Any amendments would be limited to those considered minor or inconsequential, meaning that they did not significantly impact on the meaning, intent or application of the policies.

Reasons for Decisions: *To ensure the Council's Public Protection teams can continue to work to up-to- date policies that align with current legislation and good operational practice and that comply with the Council's Human Rights, Equality and Safeguarding responsibilities.*

To ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach to enforcement across Public Protection and robust justification for enforcement decisions.

To support the principle of openness in providing clear information about how the Council's Public Protection teams carry out their work.

7. Equality Information Report 2025

Submitted: Report of the Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs

The report, which was presented by Councillor Dean, Lead Member for Voluntary Sector Partnerships and Equalities provided an update on the Council's delivery to date against the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy and sought endorsement for the publication of the draft *Equality Information Report 2025* (shown in Appendix 1).

Resolved: That (a) the activities undertaken over the last year in line with the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy, be noted as well as the latest available information about the profile of the local population and Council workforce and (b) the Equality Information Report 2025 be endorsed.

Reasons for Decisions: To ensure that the Council shows due regard to its statutory duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination, by monitoring its delivery against its Equality Diversity Inclusion & Belonging Strategy.

8. Jarrow Neighbourhood Board (Jarrow Forward) Update

Submitted: Report of the Corporate Lead – Corporate Lead for Policy & Insight

This report, which was presented by Councillor Margaret Meling, Lead Member for Economic Growth and Transport sought to endorse the ten-year Regeneration Plan for Jarrow produced by the independent Jarrow Neighbourhood Board, Jarrow Forward, and to support its governance arrangements and future plans.

Jarrow was identified in October 2023 as one of fifty-five, which subsequently became seventy-five, towns across the country to benefit from £20m of funding over ten years. The Plan will be funded through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Plan for Neighbourhoods programme beginning in April 2026. Approval is expected by March 2026. The programme would focus on three priorities; anti-social behaviour, town centres and connectivity.

The Regeneration Plan has been produced by Jarrow Forward following extensive engagement with residents, young people, businesses, community groups and local, regional and national agencies over the past year. Jarrow Forward is comprised of partners across Jarrow, defined as the NE32 postcode areas, and South Tyneside Council is its accountable body.

Resolved: That (a) the Regeneration Plan produced by Jarrow Forward and its submission to Government be endorsed and (b) the governance of Jarrow Forward and its future work be supported.

Reasons for Decisions: The plans and priorities of Jarrow Forward's Regeneration Plan align closely with the South Tyneside Vision.

9. Procurement Pipeline - Forward Plan November 2025

Submitted: Report of the Director of Business and Resources

The report, which was presented by Councillor Foreman, Lead Member for Finance, Governance and Corporate Services, provided details of the procurement activity to be undertaken from November 2025 to May 2026, which carried a contract value of £350,000 or over, in line with the 'Procurement Procedure Rules' set out in the Constitution.

Resolved: That (a) the list of procurement activity as detailed in Appendix 1 be noted; (b) Cabinet receive an updated report twice a year; (c) the contracts as detailed in Table 2 which had been awarded in the previous 6-month period be noted and (d) In line with new reporting requirements as part of the

Procurement Act 2023, the Council's Procurement Pipeline be published on the internet.

Reasons for Decisions: To enable the procurement of goods, works and services required for the efficient and effective delivery of services.

*To allow for Cabinet to be updated with progress and changes to the procurement forward plan.
To comply with the Procurement Act 2023*

10. Westoe Educational Charity Annual Accounts 2024/25

Submitted: Report of the Director of Children's Services

The report, which was presented by Councillor McHugh, Lead Member for Children and Families Social Care & Education and Skills sought approval of the Westoe Education Charity Annual Accounts for 2024/25 as the trustee of the Westoe Educational Charity.

It was noted that only three awards were made by the Trust in 2024/25 totalling £900. It was suggested that given the low number of awards over recent years consideration be given to advertising/promoting this available money in schools.

The detailed accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 were appended to the report.

Resolved: That the Westoe Educational Charity Accounts for 2024/25 be approved.

Reason for Decisions: The Council are the Trustees of the Westoe Educational Charity and as such are required to consider an annual report and financial statement for the last financial year.

11. Voluntary Sector Local Infrastructure Organisation (LIO) / Recommissioning Report

Submitted: Report of the Director of Adult Social Services & Commissioning

The report, which was presented by Councillor Berkley, Lead Member for Adults, Health, and Independence provided an update on the professional support the Council provides, via a contract, to Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations in the borough and outlined a proposed recommissioning plan to be implemented by 1 April 2026.

The Council currently supports the development of the sector via a contract with Inspire South Tyneside (Inspire). As part of the contract, they provide information, advice, and support to new and existing community

organisations, including support with funding and volunteering, they also advocate on behalf of the sector and support the South Tyneside Pledge. Inspire is therefore the Local Infrastructure Organisation (LIO) for the VCFSE sector in the Borough.

In addition, the Council funds "Healthnet South Tyneside" (HST) which is a local network, they provide a unique voice in the borough to debate, influence and shape local health and wellbeing policies and services. The membership is open to any voluntary and community organisation or resident of South Tyneside with a health or social care interest. Inspire oversee the contract.

The most recent contracts for the work of Inspire and HST had expired, and the activity across both services was currently being provided without formal contractual arrangements in place. As part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council is examining savings, including savings from VCFSE contracts. Details as to the reason for such a reduction is outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Plan. It was proposed that the grant to Inspire would be £114,137, a reduction of £8,400. The grant to HST would remain unchanged at £21,386. The total 2025-2026 allocation across both areas of work would therefore be £135,523.

Options considered

Option1

Issuing a short-term contract of six months to Inspire. This would allow work to be undertaken with Inspire to clearly define parameters and expectations. This would run in parallel with a tender exercise to award a new contract for up to three years with a commencement date of 1 April 2026.

Option 2

To decommission the service from Inspire, serving notice with immediate effect. However, the sector has not been fully and properly consulted, and it is likely that Inspire would collapse leading to job losses, an empty building, and a lack of alternative provision. Though this would save money for the Council it would not enable a suitable alternative to be put in place.

Option 3

To bring the service "in house" within the Council. This would give greater control over the delivery of sector support and assist the implementation of the Voluntary Sector strategy. However, this could lead to loss of impartiality and does not align with strategic ambitions. This model may also potentially limit opportunities to access third party grant funding streams in the future.

Resolved: That (a) option 1 as detailed in the report be approved and a short-term contract be issued to Inspire for the remainder of the 2025/26 fiscal year to allow further work to be done with Inspire to examine ways to improve the future performance of the service. This would run in parallel with a tender exercise to award a new contract for three years with a commencement date of 1 April 2026, the details of proposed KPI's /

performance measures were included in Appendix 1; (b) approval be given to the total funding of £135,523 (£114,137 to Inspire and £21,384 to Healthnet South Tyneside) for the period up to the 31 March 2026, including the five-month period outlined in the report via a short-term contract; (c) approval be given to the commencement of a tender exercise for the Voluntary Sector LIO contract and Healthnet South Tyneside element in the timescale set out in paragraph 24. Awarding a three-year contract from 1 April 2026 to the selected organisation with a value of £135,523 per annum. This contract would have a total value of £406,569 over the full proposed three-year contract term and (d) following this process a report be presented to Cabinet to consider approval of the proposed future provider of the Voluntary Sector LIO contract and Healthnet South Tyneside contract.

Reasons for Decisions: To allow Officers to develop a new set of KPI's to measure performance whilst the service is subject to a tender exercise for a longer-term contract from 1 April 2026 to be awarded to the selected organisation.

The proposed approach provides some continuity for the VCFSE sector during the current fiscal year, whilst allowing the Council to consider other models and the interest from other organisations from 1 April 2026.

The approach could also include the ability to offer payments on a phased basis to better ensure value for money, such as quarterly payments in arrears rather than the historical approach of a single annual payment.

12. Procurement - 8 Chatsworth Court, South Shields

Submitted: Report of the Director of Community Operations

The report, which was presented by Councillor Carter, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety set out the position following a fire at 8 Chatsworth Court, South Shields which caused extensive damage. The property is a domestic social housing asset property owned by the Council. The report outlined the process required to be undertaken to satisfy the insurers loss adjusters and the Councils Legal and Governance requirements to enable reinstatement/rebuild works to commence.

The property is covered by the Councils insurance policy, and due to the structural instability estimates indicate that the costs for repair and refurbishment would be approximately £250k and the costs of full demolition and reinstatement of the property would be approximately £350k, demolition of the property would be the preferred option. The Councils insurance policy has

a £100k deductible (excess), meaning that the Council would pay the first £100k with the remaining expenditure covered by the insurance policy.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the Council insurance loss adjusters, approval is sought to direct award Gateley Smithers Purslow (GSP), Chartered Structural Engineers as Project Manager and approve insurance backed demolition and reinstatement of the property. In addition, approval of the initial estimated contract value of £350k was sought for the rebuild of 8 Chatsworth Court, South Shields, understanding that costs were recoverable above the policy £100k excess after insurer reimbursement.

Recommendations: That (a) the direct award to Gateley Smithers Purslow (GSP), Chartered Structural Engineers as Project Manager be approved and (b) the initial estimated contract value of £350k, for the rebuild of 8 Chatsworth Court, South Shields be approved, understanding that costs are recoverable above the policy £100k excess after insurer reimbursement.

Reasons for decisions: The Council benefits from insurance of 8 Chatsworth Court, South Shields and the cost of disposal and replacement of the asset would exceed the policy excess in place.

The Council would retain a valuable asset and associated long term rental income.

The Council must work within the requirements of the Insurers loss adjusters to comply with the policy requirements

13. Chair's Urgent Items

There were no Chair's Urgent Items.

14. Resolution to Exclude the Public

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the agenda items as they involve exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

Minute no.	Item	Exempt category nos.	"public interest" test Reason for exempting
15- 17	14-16	3	The report contains information which if published could affect the business affairs of

			persons named in the report.
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15. Heating Installations and Associated Works

Submitted: Report of the Director of Operations

The report, which was presented by Councillor Carter, Deputy Leader and Lead Member Housing and Community Safety sought approval for the tender process conducted to establish a framework agreement for the installation of heating systems, boilers and associated works across the Council's social housing and property assets. The report also sought the necessary approval to award the framework.

The report sets out the legal obligations imposed on the Council to ensure compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements.

Options considered:

Option 1

Approve the appointment of the number 1 ranked contractor to complete the identified works and the number 2 ranked tenderer will be held in reserve should they be required to deliver installation works.

Option 2

Undertake a further tender process, acknowledging that this would likely result in delays, increased costs, and potential exposure to legislative risk.

Option 3

Decline to award the framework, understanding that this option could expose the Council to significant legislative risks.

Resolved: That approval be given to award the framework to the number 1 ranked contractor, Buston & Maughan Ltd with the number 2 ranked contractor, Rothwell Plumbing Services Ltd as reserve. The framework will commence in December 2025 with the initial term being for 24 months, with an option to extend for an additional 24 months (2 x 12-month periods), subject to ongoing performance and monitoring.

Reasons for Decisions:

The approval of the framework award will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations as outlined in the report. It will also support ongoing compliance with the Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018, Right to Repair Regulations and the Decent Homes Standard by facilitating the continued delivery of essential housing services.

The contract will secure the appointment of a suitably qualified contractor to complete the installation of heating systems, boiler replacements and associated works. This will help ensure residents' homes remain, comfortable, and maintained to a high standard of quality, reinforcing the Council's commitment to resident well-being.

16. Contract award for the 0-19 service

Submitted: Report of the Director of Public Health

The report, which was presented by Councillor Berkley, Lead Member for Adults, Health and Independence sought approval of the award of contract for the 0-19 service for children and families.

Resolved: That approval be given to the award of contract to deliver the 0-19 service for children and families to Harrogate District Foundation Trust for a period of 5 years with the option to extend for up to a further 24 months commencing from 1 April 2026

Reasons for Decisions: The proposed award of contract will ensure the continuity of an effective service by selecting the highest scoring provider in the tender process.

17. Fees and Charges Review 2025

Submitted: Report of the Director of Business and Resources

The report, which was presented by Councillor Foreman, Lead Member Governance, Finance and Corporate Services sought approval of the proposals to increase the levels of fees and charges from 1 December 2025 as detailed in the report and appendices together with approval of the introduction of new fees and charges and the removal of obsolete charges.

Resolved: That (a) approval be given to the proposed changes to existing fees and charges as detailed in the report in Appendix 1 from 1 December 2025 unless specifically stipulated and (b) approval be given to the introduction of the new fees and charges and removal of obsolete charges as outlined in the report in Appendix 1 from 1 December 2025 unless specifically stipulated.

Reasons for Decisions: To comply with the statutory duty to ensure the Council recovers the costs of providing services to residents, businesses and visitors of the Borough.
