



South Tyneside Council

item 2

Jarrow and Boldon CAF

11 June 2026

Jarrow and Boldon CAF

05 February 2026

Present: Councillors: Robertson (In the Chair), Cunningham, Foggon, Hamilton, Kennedy, Kilgour, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson and Strike.

David Heron (Northumbria Police), Jonathan Ramanayake (Tyne and Wear Fire Service), Jamie Robson (Nexus), Don Wade (ASB and Neighbourhood Crime Co-Ordinator), Andy Whittaker (Head Of Operations – Community and Place), Martin Gill (Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness), Andy McGill (The Welfare Support Team Manager) Anna Dixon (Head of Housing Strategy and Regulation) Dawn Rowland (Operations Manager - Private Sector Housing in Environmental Health) and Joanne Chastney (Service Lead - Environmental Health), Merrik Robertson (Community and Place Development Co-ordinator), Emma Purvis (Senior Democracy Officer), and Leah Stafford (Democracy Support Officer).

There were 13 members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

1. Appointment of Chair for this CAF meeting

An Officer advised that the Chair and Vice Chair of the CAF could not attend this meeting, subsequently as per the procedure set out in the constitution, the Officer asked for nominations from the floor.

Councillor Keith Roberts proposed that Councillor Robertson took the Chair. Councillor Kennedy proposed that Councillor Strike took the Chair, Councillor Strike expressed she did not want this nomination to proceed and there was not a seconder to the proposal.

Councillor Terry Foggon seconded the proposal for Councillor Robertson to Chair the CAF. This proceeded to a vote, there was a dissenting voice, and the votes were cast as follows:

5 For
2 Against

Councillor Robertson took the Chair.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Tony Roberts declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8, Houses in Multiple Occupation as he is a member of Planning Committee. He remained in the meeting whilst the item was discussed and determined.

Councillor David Kenedy declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8, Houses in Multiple Occupation as he is a member of Planning Committee. He remained in the meeting whilst the item was discussed and determined.

Councillor Joan Hamilton declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8, Houses in Multiple Occupation as she is a member of Planning Committee. She remained in the meeting whilst the item was discussed and determined.

Councillor Geraldine Kilgour declared an interest in item 6, Welfare Support, as she worked for DWP. She remained in the meeting whilst the item was discussed and determined.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2025

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Agreed: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2025 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

4. Community Partners Report

NEXUS

Nexus representatives were not available to attend this CAF meeting, an Officer provided an update on their behalf:

Ferry:

Following damage to the North Ferry landing during storm Chandra, Ferry services were to be suspended until at least the end of February 2026 following detailed underwater investigations. A stakeholder letter was shared with all Members yesterday. A bus replacement would be in operation.

Metro:

Upcoming Line closure: 16th to the 20th of February between St James and Shiremoor, a bus replacement would be in operation.

Mayors Fares on Metro: Following a funding announcement by North East Mayor Kim McGuinness, Mayors fares will be extended to Metro from 1 April 2026 for a year meaning customers who use Pop pay as you go will pay no more than £2.50 single fare or £5 for all day. Details on how to apply for Pop pay as you go cards can be found in the link along with more information Mayor's Fares confirmed for Metro – delivering savings for customers nexus.org.uk

There were no bus updates.

A Member expressed thanks to Rebecca Ditchburn for her work.

A Member raised concerns regarding the lighting on the bridge at Brockley Whins Metro Station and asked whether this could be investigated. Another Member commented that lighting had been installed, but that cameras, previously suggested for the station, had not yet been progressed. A member of the public added that the lighting was insufficient and that the station did not feel safe.

The Democratic Support Officer explained they would pass on the comments to Nexus.

Police

Inspector David Heron, Northumbria Police, presented the provided reports which contained updates on Police activities and future initiatives in the wards covered by the Jarrow and Boldon Community Area Forum since the last meeting.

Burglaries

- In Boldon, there had been 0 residential burglaries in this period (2 in the same period last year);
- There had been no commercial burglaries in Boldon (same as last year);
- In Boldon Colliery, there had been 5 residential burglaries (6 last year) and 3 commercial burglaries (0 last year);
- In Jarrow, there had been 5 residential burglaries and 4 commercial burglaries.

Vehicle Crime

- In Boldon, there had been 0 reports of vehicle crime (2 last year).
- In Boldon Colliery, there had been 3 reports of vehicle crime (7 last year):
 - Aggravated vehicle taking;
 - Theft of vehicle;

- Theft from vehicle (number plates).
- In Jarrow, there had been 14 vehicle crime reports:
 - 5 Theft from a motor vehicle;
 - 6 Taken Without Consent cases;
 - 3 Vehicle interference.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- In Boldon, there were 2 reports of anti-social behaviour (2 last year);
- In Boldon Colliery, there were 5 reports of anti-social behaviour (10 last year).
- In Jarrow, there were 41 reports of anti-social behaviour, 6 of which were youth ASB:
 - 18 Neighbourly disputes;
 - 3 Inappropriate uses of public spaces;
 - 16 Other ASB (Nuisance);
 - 1 Other ASB (Personal);
 - 3 Noise complaints;
 - 0 Street drinking;
 - 3 Vehicle-related ASB;
 - 0 Bonfire and Fireworks-related ASB.

Motorcycle Disorder

- There had been no reports of motorcycle disorder in Boldon (same as last year).
- In Boldon Colliery, there had been 2 reports of motorcycle disorder (2 last year).
- In Jarrow, there had been 12 motorcycle disorder incidents reported:
 - 5 in Primrose;
 - 2 in Bede;
 - 5 in Fellgate and Hedworth.

Hate Crime

- There had been no recorded hate crimes in Boldon or Boldon Colliery (5 last year).
- In Jarrow, there had been 2 hate crimes reported in this period.

Police Footbeats

Boldon: PC 1104 Smith

Boldon Colliery: PC 8250 Costello Brown

In Jarrow, the police footbeats were divided into 4 areas and the below officers had responsibility for each area:

- F1 footprint – 1175@northumbria.police.uk
- F2 footprint – Not listed

- F3 footbeat – 8197@northumbria.police.uk
- F4 footbeat – Not listed

The Officer also provided a shared email address accessed by all staff for this area:

JarrowandHebburn.NPT@northumbria.police.uk

A Member queried about burglaries and thefts occurring in Fellgate and asked whether they were linked. The Officer replied that there had been a cohort suggesting this.

Fire

Jonathan Ramanayake presented the following report to the CAF.

December 2025

Incidents

Type of Incident	December 2024	December 2025
Deliberate Primary Fires (excluding Road Vehicles)	1	0
Deliberate Primary Road Vehicle Fires	1	3
Deliberate Secondary Fires	7	2
Deliberate Fires	9	5

Incidents – Ward Breakdown of deliberate secondary fires

Ward	December 2025
Bede	0
Boldon Colliery	0
Fellgate and Hedworth Ward	2
Primrose	0

Incidents – Ward Breakdown of all deliberate fires

Ward	December 2025
Bede	1
Boldon Colliery	1
Fellgate and Hedworth Ward	3
Primrose	0

Anti-Social Behaviour

Donald Wade, ASB and Neighbourhood Crime Co-Ordinator gave a verbal update to the CAF highlighting recent ASB in the area:

- The team had attended court on Tuesday to secure an eviction order for an address on the Scoth Estate, this was in order to remove issues from the area;
- In Boldon, a working group had been developed to assess the streets and their needs, this involved many teams including the Housing Team and Home Group;
- There were issues raised in the Fellgate area, the Officer had linked in with complainant about these;
- There was a reduction in incidents with the figure being 193, this was 75% adults.
- The Officer stated that himself and the team had a strong commitment to helping the residents of South Tyneside feel safer and tackle ASB;
- The Officer urged the CAF for residents and Members to contact ASB@southtyneside.gov.uk if they had any concerns involving anti-social behaviour.

A Member expressed thanks to all involved for the work carried out to date. The Officer added that, alongside the Police and the Environmental Health Team, progress had been made, although further work was still required.

A Member commented that there had historically been concerns regarding anti-social behaviour but acknowledged that improvements had been seen and asked whether a meeting could be arranged with Bede residents. The Officer responded that residents would have already seen the positive impact achieved.

A Member offered compliments regarding the progress made.

Another Member also thanked the team, specifically noting the reduction in incidents in Fellgate and the improved contact and response received.

A Member stated they were happy to hear that a working group had been formed.

Agreed: That the updates be noted.

5. CAF Funding Report

Submitted: Report of the Director Business and Resources and the Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs

Merrik Robertson, Community and Place Development Co-ordinator, presented the following report to the CAF.

It was confirmed that Cabinet approved funding totalling £1,260,000 across all 5 of the Borough's CAFs, comprising Environmental Capital Funding, Housing Capital Funding and Local Neighbourhoods Scheme.

The funding available to this Community Area Forum for the 2025/2026 financial year was £376,964 which comprised the following:

- Environmental Capital Funding - 166,664
- Housing Capital Funding - 152,524
- Local Neighbourhoods Scheme - 57,776

Agreed: That the report be noted and the schemes be agreed as set out in the table.

Scheme (Ward)	Applicant and Purpose of Grant	Grant Sought (Project Cost if different)	Grant Awarded
Environmental Capital Scheme and Local Neighbourhoods Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Bede 1	Falmouth Drive 3x5m permeable block paved hardstands and access crossings to numbers 53 and 55 Falmouth drive = £11,386 Wall Removal £1502	£12,888 (£12,888 total cost) ECS - £4,581 LNS - £8,307	A grant of £12,888 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Foggon Seconded: Cllr K Roberts
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Bede	13 Melbourne Gardens Side fence to property.	£647 (£647 total cost)	A grant of £647 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile

2			contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr K Roberts Seconded: Cllr Foggon
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Boldon 3	Tennyson Avenue Install 1 bollard opposite 25 in tarmac	£470 (£470 total cost)	A grant of £470 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Oliver Seconded: Cllr Strike
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Fellgate and Hedworth 4	Rear of Fellgate Ave Shops - Fellgate Ave, Jarrow NE32 4LZ	£4,000 LNS £2,000 Other contribution (£6,000 total cost)	A grant of £4,000 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Kilgour Seconded: Cllr T Roberts
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Fellgate and Hedworth 5	Durham Drive Installation of pin kerb and new asphalt wearing course	£6,700 (£6,700 total cost)	A grant of £6,700 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr T Roberts Seconded: Cllr Kilgour

Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Fellgate and Hedworth 6	This street has had issues with parking for a long time. This will hopefully alleviate resident's issues around parking and will look at further works 2026/2027 funding.	£246 (£246 total cost)	A grant of £246 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr T Kilgour Seconded: Cllr Roberts
Environmental Capital Scheme and Housing Capital Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Primrose 7.	Tynemouth Road, 19,27,29 and 32 Installation of permeable block paved hardstands, access crossings and permeable block paving	HCS £25,564 ECS £3,785 (£29,349 total cost)	A grant of £29,349 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Robertson Seconded: Cllr Kennedy
Environmental Capital Scheme and Local Neighbourhoods Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Primrose 8	Install ecogrid to the verges outside 55, 57 and 59 and 61 Valley View	ECS £1,912 LNS £1,949 (£3,861 total cost)	A grant of £3,861 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Hamilton Seconded: Cllr Kennedy
Local Neighbourhoods Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Primrose	Hylton Road outside 18,19 and 23 Installation of verge hardening with concrete sub base and bitmac wearing course	£4,112 (£4,112 total cost)	A grant of £4,112 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a

9			worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Hamilton Seconded: Cllr Kennedy
Local Neighbourhoods Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Boldon Colliery 10	Station Road Allotments Fencing to areas.	£4,083 (£4,553 total cost)	A grant of £4,083 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Strike Seconded: Cllr Hamilton
Environment Capital Scheme and Local Neighbourhoods Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Boldon Colliery 11	Coal Trucks - Boldon Colliery Gateway •importing extra slate as required (not exceeding 10t) • Tidying of content of existing planter with removal of flags and installation of filler. • Import and place "filler material" to the insitu placed Coal truck • Paint/Stain to sleepers where required	ECS £1,332 LNS £1,111 (£2,443 total cost)	A grant of £2,443 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Proposed: Cllr Strike Seconded: Cllr Cunningham
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Boldon CA Ladies Football Club 12	Purchase of equipment.	£935.14 (£935.14 total cost)	A grant of £935.14 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Full amount to be paid for by

			the Boldon Colliery ward.
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Jarrow Kempo Jujitsu 13	Purchase of Equipment for Event arranged for 1 April 2026	£1,000 (£3,400 total cost)	A grant of £1,000 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Full amount to be paid for by the Primrose ward.
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Jarrow Model Railway Club Annual Model Railway Exhibition 14	Event Venue Hire at Primrose CA - £400.00 (CAF) Event Catering - £500.00 (CAF) Exhibitor Cost Insurance (Magnet Insurance Company) £1200.00 * (GROUP) Publicity (CVN Print) £350.00 * (GROUP) Accommodation for Visiting Exhibitors) £250.00 * (GROUP) (Campanile Hotel, Washington) £1000.00 * (GROUP) *Estimate Cost	£900 (£2,512 total cost)	A grant of £900 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile contribution to the community. Full amount to be paid for by the Primrose ward.
Local Neighbourhood Scheme (Part of Stronger Communities) Veterans for Veterans in Care	Purchase of Pin Badges to show carers and residents who is "Veteran Confident"	£1,000 (£3,528 total cost)	A grant of £1,000 be agreed. Reason: The scheme represents a worthwhile

15			contribution to the community. Full amount to be paid for by the Primrose ward.
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Under application 15, it was queried by a Member why this was just proposed for Primrose ward and asked if it could be applied across the Borough. The Officer explained that the organisation was based in Primrose, however they could look at another application for further contribution across wards.

Agreed: That the update be noted.

6. CAF Management Team Update

Merrik Robertson, Community and Place Development Co-ordinator, gave the following update regarding projects that had not been completed by the date of the last CAF meeting, which could be found in Appendix A.

With recent changes to staffing within the CAF Management Team, a review of how the service is delivered and managed is being undertaken by Martin Gill, head of operational housing and homelessness.

Merrik Robertson will continue his role as the CAF manager in the interim period whilst the review is being undertaken. He will be supported by Julie McKeown. A large part of Merrik's role will be to work with ward members on current and future CAF schemes assisting them through to the approval stage and supporting members through the CAF planning process in 25/26.

Ward Members will be contacted on an ongoing basis to ensure they can get schemes developed in a timely manner to fit with STC financial deadlines and appropriate consultation can take place where necessary. We are currently forecasting to spend all CAF funds because of this collaborative process.

Contact details as follows:

Julie McKeown:

07917265260 / Julie.mckeown@southtyneside.gov.uk

Merrik Robertson:

07776995448 / merrik.robertson@southtyneside.gov.uk

A number of internal projects were awarded funding from this CAF. This information report contains details of approved projects, with updates provided by officers shown as Appendix A. This information was correct at the time of writing May 2025.

Streetscene Teams continued to carry out general cleansing duties throughout all areas of work, including mechanical sweeping and manual removal of litter and detritus across the CAF area.

Due to changes in weather conditions, they had been diverting as much of the mechanical sweepers time to areas of heavy leaf fall which had been difficult due to the volume of leaves that had fallen in such a short space of time. The team would continue to remove by hand where possible.

Streetscene continued to support events where possible in all CAF areas. Due to the recent change in the temperature, they worked alongside the Highways team to carry out gritting as and when required.

A Member thanked those in the team on behalf of Fellgate and Hedworth, commenting that efforts had been made to address ongoing issues and that progress was being seen.

Several Members thanked Officers for their support and work.

The Community and Voluntary Representative advised that there was no charge for the warm space provision, which operated on Wednesdays through Jarrow Helping Hands. It was also noted that, on Fridays, the Salvation Army provided tea and cake for £1.

Agreed: That the update be noted.

7. South Tyneside Housing Services Spotlight Session – Welfare Support Team

Submitted: Report of Housing

Andy McGill, The Welfare Support Team Manager, gave a presentation outlining support available to residents.

It was noted that the Welfare Support Team consisted of 26 advisors and assistants providing specialist support. The team operated across South Shields, Jarrow, Hebburn and local social hubs as well as offering telephone appointments and home visits.

The services offered by the team were briefly outlined as support around benefits and casework, debt and local welfare provision including food and fuel vouchers and provision of household items. Social Navigators would work with vulnerable residents and had

achieved over £10.6M in financial gains since the scheme began, in addition to non-financial outcomes such as sustaining tenancies and accessing community support.

Recent service improvements included a new, streamlined referral form, additional service provision to reach more residents and reduce waiting times, and the introduction of Lightning Reach, an online portal connecting residents to over 2,500 support organisations.

Some case studies were included to highlight the breadth of support and positive outcomes for residents.

It was explained that the team could be contacted via an online referral form, the Lightning Reach portal, calling 0191 4246040 or emailing welfaresupport@southtyneside.gov.uk.

A Member commented positively on the work being carried out and asked how residents were becoming aware of the support available. It was explained that contact had been made through coaches, nurses, GPs and first-contact services.

The Community and Voluntary Representative thanked the team for their support, describing the assistance provided as very helpful and explaining that Age UK had directed them to the service to speak with someone.

A Member congratulated the team on successfully reaching residents and commented that the Council should continue to promote the positive work being undertaken. Another Member added that the results achieved had been outstanding.

Further discussion took place regarding DWP work and PIP allowance support, particularly in relation to residents who had previously been overwhelmed by the process. It was suggested that more success stories should be shared publicly and that support should be promoted in pubs, post offices and shops to reach less populated areas.

A member of the public raised a question regarding the impact on pension credit and was advised that this could be discussed further outside of the meeting, with contact details to be provided.

The Community and Voluntary Representative also noted that support sessions were available at Jarrow Central.

Agreed: That the update be noted.

8. Tenancy Agreement Review

Submitted: Housing Strategy

Anna Dixon, Head of Housing Strategy and Regulation, delivered a presentation to Members on the review of the Council's Tenancy Agreement, outlining the reasons for the review, proposed changes, tenant consultation arrangements and the next steps.

The Officer stated that a tenancy agreement was a legally binding contract between the landlord and tenant, setting out the rights and responsibilities of both parties throughout the tenancy period. It was emphasised the importance of keeping the agreement up to date to ensure clarity, legal compliance and effective management of Council housing stock.

The tenancy agreement required updating for several reasons, including the introduction of new consumer regulation, changes to building and fire safety legislation, the adoption of new Council policies, and the transfer of housing stock from South Tyneside Homes. The Officer also noted that the review reflected good practice and aimed to improve safety and clarity for both tenants and staff.

It was stated that tenant consultation formed a key part of the review process. The existing tenancy agreement had been reviewed and engagement had taken place with involved tenants. Officers advised that every tenant would receive a consultation booklet and that a series of drop-in sessions were being held, with staff available to answer questions and provide support. The consultation period was scheduled to run from the 26th of January to the 20th of April.

Members were advised that the proposed changes to the tenancy agreement included clarifying tenants' rights under the Right to Buy, improving provisions around access for essential repairs and maintenance, and setting clearer expectations regarding permission for major changes or adaptations to properties. Additional updates covered issues associated with communal block living, mutual exchanges, and clarification of provisions that were already included within the existing tenancy agreement.

The presentation concluded with an outline of the next steps. The Officer advised that all feedback and responses received during the consultation period would be analysed before finalising the new tenancy agreement. Cabinet approval would then be sought, and the updated agreement would be promoted to tenants. Members were reassured that tenants would not be required to sign a new agreement, and that the tenants' handbook would be updated to reflect the changes.

A Member thanked the Officer for their work, noting that there had not been any major issues and expressing confidence that the matter would progress positively.

A Member thanked the Officer for the updates provided but raised concerns that residents in flats had received multiple letters while others had received only one per household. The Officer stated they would look into the mailing arrangements.

9. Houses in Multiple Occupation

Submitted: Report of Private Sector Housing in Environmental Health

Dawn Rowland, Operations Manager - Private Sector Housing in Environmental Health, and Joanne Chastney, Service Lead - Environmental Health, delivered a presentation that provided an overview of mandatory HMO licensing, why it mattered for communities, and the important roles of the fit and proper person test and suitability for occupation in protecting tenants and ensuring responsible property management. It was explained that councillors' understanding of these duties helped shape local policy, supported enforcement teams and assisted in communicating expectations to landlords and residents.

It was explained that a House in Multiple Occupation was a property occupied by three or more people from two or more households who shared basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom. Members were advised that these properties presented higher regulatory risks due to intensity of use, landlord responsibility and resident vulnerability.

Members were informed that mandatory licensing did not apply to HMOs that were exempt from the HMO definition. Licensable HMOs were those occupied by five or more persons living in two or more households. It was explained that the number of residents determined whether a landlord was required to obtain a licence from the Council. Where a property met the criteria, the owner was required to apply for a licence to operate, which was subject to legal and health and safety requirements. Members were advised that it was an offence to operate a licensable HMO without a valid licence or submitted application and that tacit consent did not apply.

The purpose of mandatory HMO licensing was outlined as improving living standards, ensuring safe and well-managed accommodation, preventing overcrowding and poor conditions, ensuring appropriate landlord management structures, and providing Councils with an oversight tool to identify high-risk housing. Members were advised that licensing was both a protective and proactive regulatory tool.

A distinction was explained between supported accommodation and ordinary HMOs. Members were advised that supported accommodation was designed for individuals with complex needs, including mental health issues, substance misuse and chaotic lifestyles, with the aim of stabilisation, rehabilitation and progression

towards independent living. Ordinary HMOs were described as primarily a cost-effective housing option for unrelated individuals sharing facilities, with a focus on affordability rather than care or support. It was noted that stigma around HMOs often arose from residents' experiences of supported housing in town centre locations, which were not regulated by the Council and were not representative of ordinary HMOs. Members were advised that the Council did not operate any HMOs and that, once a licence was granted, compliance with licence conditions was monitored throughout the licence period.

Members were advised that the Housing Act stated a licence must be granted if the Council was satisfied that the HMO was reasonably suitable for occupation by the number of persons permitted, the licence holder was a fit and proper person, the proposed licence holder was the most appropriate person, the proposed manager was fit and proper where applicable, and the proposed management arrangements were satisfactory and properly funded. It was explained that the Council could not refuse to grant a licence for reasons such as lack of parking, desirability of tenants or anticipated antisocial behaviour based on other HMO properties.

Key licensing requirements were outlined, including suitability of the property through meeting design and condition standards, minimum room sizes, adequate sanitary, cooking and common facilities and compliance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Management arrangements were explained as requiring competent management, clear arrangements for repairs and maintenance, tenant liaison, and the handling of antisocial behaviour and complaints. Members were advised that councils also required notification procedures for changes to management, fire incidents and occupancy in line with licence conditions. The importance of the fit and proper person test was highlighted, with licence holders and managers required to demonstrate no relevant unspent criminal convictions, no history of unlawful discrimination or non-compliance and an acceptable licensing and enforcement history.

Members were advised that the fit and proper person test assessed whether a proposed licence holder or managing agent was suitable and trustworthy to operate an HMO. Consideration was given to housing-related offences, fraud, dishonesty or violence, breaches of landlord and tenant law or licensing conditions, involvement with properties subject to banning orders and association with persons who were not considered fit and proper. It was explained that the test was not automatic and required careful judgement based on evidence.

The importance of the fit and proper person test was emphasised in protecting residents, particularly students, low-income households

and vulnerable adults, reducing risks associated with unsafe living conditions, harassment and neglect. Members were advised that robust testing helped maintain community confidence and strengthened the credibility and effectiveness of enforcement.

Members were informed that assessment of the fit and proper person test included internal intelligence, external consultations with bodies such as the fire service and other local authorities, evidence of prior licences, membership of accredited landlord schemes, criminal history self-declarations, statutory declarations and Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Details were provided on checks and monitoring arrangements, including payment of the Part 2 fee, submission of mandatory certification and use of an inspection matrix. Members were advised how scoring factors were used to determine inspection frequency based on risk.

Members were informed of the current risk rating of HMOs in South Tyneside, including the number of properties within each risk category and their associated inspection cycles, ranging from six-monthly to thirty-monthly inspections.

Challenges and considerations were outlined, including difficulties in gathering evidence for the fit and proper person test, the need for robust documentation to support appeals to the First-tier Tribunal, rogue landlord evasion and the need to balance enforcement with legitimate housing supply. The relationship between planning and licensing regimes was explained, with Members advised that planning permission was not historically a valid reason to refuse a licence, although recent case law was influencing a move towards ensuring planning permission had been sought prior to granting a licence.

The role of councillors in licensing enforcement was outlined, including supporting residents with complaints, advocating for adequate resources to support inspection and enforcement activity, and promoting good practice by engaging with landlord forums and community groups.

A Member stated that supported housing differed from Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and raised concerns regarding how the needs of vulnerable residents were being supported and managed within some properties. The Officer explained that appropriate support could be provided where required and that systems were in place to help manage any concerns. The Member referred to a specific address and questioned whether there was sufficient monitoring of this and vulnerable residents within the community. The Officer clarified that HMOs that require a licence are subject to regulatory controls and oversight.

A Member questioned whether additional powers could be introduced. The Officer advised that landlords were required to hold licences where applicable and that resources had recently been strengthened. It was also explained that concerns raised by residents, including those relating to noise or anti-social behaviour, could be reported and would inform enforcement action where appropriate.

A Member raised concerns regarding planning permissions and whether residents were being fully informed about applications relating to HMOs and supported accommodation. Concerns were expressed about the concentration of HMOs in particular areas and the impact this was having on communities. It was noted that licensing could address anti-social behaviour issues but could not always control wider planning matters. The Member stressed the importance of distinguishing between planning procedures, licensing regulations and information shared more widely.

A Member referred to recent refusals in Jarrow and questioned the reasons behind these decisions. The Officer advised that further clarification could be provided on specific applications and that concerns raised by residents were being monitored.

A Member commented positively on an HMO in their area, stating that it appeared well managed and that residents had not caused concern. However, it was also acknowledged that other applications had raised issues within the community, particularly where residents felt there had been limited opportunity for engagement.

A Member asked how supported accommodation could be improved. The Officer explained that where issues arose, these would be addressed through the appropriate channels. Discussion also took place regarding Article 4 directions and whether residents fully understood the planning process. Another Member stated that residents often saw planning applications after decisions had already progressed and that clearer communication was needed regarding Article 4 measures.

A Member asked about the position in relation to an upcoming HMO, and the Officer confirmed that not all properties currently required licensing, although future changes could bring more properties into regulation. The Officer also explained that work was ongoing with Adult Social Care and benefits teams to review accommodation standards and ensure support was appropriate for residents' needs.

A Member referred to HMOs in their ward, commenting that some properties were occupied by working professionals and acknowledged that not all HMOs created issues.

A Member stated that there were 57 licensed HMOs known about locally and raised concerns regarding landlords who failed to comply with licensing requirements, including the potential for enforcement action. Concerns were also expressed regarding empty buildings, land ownership and the impact of anti-social behaviour on nearby residents. The Officer responded that where concerns were identified, investigations would be undertaken and evidence gathered appropriately.

A Member questioned whether planning processes gave sufficient weight to local concerns. Another Member responded that planning and licensing operated under separate legal frameworks and that obtaining planning approval could still be challenging even where licensing requirements were later met.

A Member raised concerns regarding an area in the Borough that had supported accommodation, particularly around the concentration of HMOs and the impact on neighbouring residents. Issues raised by residents were referenced, including police attendance and complaints from local residents. The Officer explained that investigations could only proceed where sufficient evidence and permissions were in place, and that processes had to follow legal requirements. A Member stated that residents wanted professionals to take stronger action where ongoing issues were occurring.

Further discussion took place regarding licensing and planning regulations. Members of the public questioned why some supported accommodation settings did not require licences and why certain buildings had additional security measures. The Officer clarified that licensing regulations focused on the use of the property and the needs of occupants, and that legal requirements determined what measures were necessary. A Member reiterated that licensing and planning were separate matters and explained that local authorities could not always prevent planning applications from progressing, although licensing conditions could still be enforced.

A Member thanked officers for their explanations, however noted that the regulations were complex and difficult for residents to fully understand.

A Member raised further concerns regarding the suitability of placements in some HMOs. Another Member commented that there was often confusion between supported housing and other accommodation types and stressed that not all residents posed risks to the community. The Officer explained that licensed HMOs were subject to inspections and risk-based monitoring.

A member of the public queried why housing associations did not require the same licences, and the Officer confirmed that different regulatory arrangements applied in those circumstances.

The discussion concluded with agreement that ongoing work and communication with residents would continue through the Council's work programme.

Agreed: That the update be noted.

10. Jarrow and Boldon CAF Work Programme 2025/2026

Submitted: Report of the Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs

Members noted that there were no further meetings scheduled for the 2025/26 municipal year and were advised if they had any recommendations of topics for future sessions to contact Democratic Services.

Agreed: That the Work Programme for 2025/2026 be noted.

11. Chair's Urgent Items

There were no urgent items to be discussed.