

**DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE
MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2021**

CABINET

Tuesday, 12 January 2021

PRESENT – Councillors Mrs H Scott (Chair), Clarke, Dulston, Johnson, Keir, Marshall, Mills and K Nicholson

INVITEES – Councillors Curry, Harker, Snedker and Tait

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors Wallis

C75 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

In respect of Minute C80(1) below, Councillor Harker declared an interest as he was on the Governing Body of Darlington Federation of Nursery Schools.

**C76 TO HEAR RELEVANT REPRESENTATION (FROM MEMBERS AND THE
GENERAL PUBLIC) ON ITEMS ON THIS CABINET AGENDA.**

In respect of minutes C84 and C85 below representations were made by a Member in attendance at the meeting and in respect of Minutes C77, C83, C84 and C85 written representations were received from members of the public.

**C77 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS CABINET HELD ON
TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2020.**

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the Meeting of this Cabinet held on 8 December 2020.

In respect of Minute C68(3), the Leader reported, in response to questions raised by the Parkland Heritage Network, that the proposed changes to the Tree and Woodland Strategy 2021/31 had been made and approved and any development would accord with this Strategy in support of the Climate Change Programme.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved.

REASON – They represent an accurate record of the meeting.

C78 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET

There were no matters referred back for re-consideration to this meeting.

C79 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from Scrutiny considered at this meeting.

C80 KEY DECISIONS:-

(1) MAINTAINED SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME - SUMMER 2021

The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio introduced the report of the Interim Director of Children and Adults Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the proposed maintained schools' capital programme for summer 2021 (also previously circulated) and to the release of the capital funds in relation to that programme.

The submitted report stated that the School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding was £207,882, to undertake a programme of works across the maintained schools in Darlington during summer 2021; all works had been identified as a priority for completion as part of a survey of the schools concerned; the surveys covered condition, electrical and mechanical; the 2020/21 Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) was £42,275; this funding was a formula-based grant provided to all maintained schools to help support their ongoing capital needs; and that all projects would be managed in line with the Corporate Capital Process procedures.

RESOLVED – (a) That the total School Condition Allocation of £207,882, be released, and the proposed prioritised capital programme for maintained schools, as detailed in the submitted report, be agreed.

(b) That the 2020/21 Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) of £42,275, be released.

DELEGATIONS - That the Director of Children and Adult Services be granted delegated authority to manage the authorisation of this funding.

REASONS – (a) The release of the funds will enable capital investment to be undertaken in the areas identified with the greatest need, in terms of asset management priorities.

(b) Detailed planning to identify priorities has been undertaken which ensures effective use of all investment.

(2) TENANCY POLICY 2020/25

The Cabinet Member with the Health and Housing Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the updated Tenancy Policy 2020/25 (also previously circulated) in respect of the Council's housing stock.

The submitted report stated that the current Tenancy Policy required updating to ensure that Housing Services made best use of the Council owned stock; target Council housing for those in most need; and to ensure that properties continued to meet resident's needs.

It was reported that the Tenant's Board had been consulted and supported the changes; an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed; and that the Policy had been considered by the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2020 and no amendments were recommended to be made to the Policy at that

meeting.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to whether the policy covered the health and well-being of its tenants and nuisance tenants. Reference was also made at the meeting to the implications of the changes to flexible tenancies and, in particular, on those tenants that were currently on flexible tenancies, and how tenants moved from flexible tenancies to permanent tenancies. The Cabinet Member with the Health and Housing Portfolio responded thereon.

RESOLVED - That the Tenancy Policy 2020/25, as appended to the submitted report, be approved.

REASON - (a) To make best use of the Council's housing stock.

(b) To maximise security of tenure.

(3) PROPOSED DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (DARLINGTON STATION GATEWAY) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

The Cabinet Member with the Economy Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to making and pursuing the confirmation of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to facilitate the acquisition of land immediately to the east and west of Darlington Station, under section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to allow the creation of a multi-storey car-park, multi-modal transport interchanges and new public realm.

The submitted report stated that the Gateway was a strategic project which aimed to transform the access to, and function of, an expanded mainline station by developing land immediately to the east and west of the existing station through the creation and integration of a multi-modal interchange and new multi-storey car park; promotion of sustainable travel through priority enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists; and the creation of gateway approaches and public realm that reflect the economic ambitions of Darlington and the wider Tees Valley region.

It was reported that the scheme and supporting land assembly strategy would deliver transport and regeneration improvements that built on wider regeneration initiatives in the area to better connect the station with the Town Centre and Central Park Enterprise Zone; Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 empowered the Council, to acquire compulsorily, land in its area where it could demonstrate that the acquisition would facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land; and that the Council must not use this power unless it also showed that the development, redevelopment or improvement was likely to contribute to the achievement of any one or more of the following objectives, namely the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of the Council's area, the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of the Council's area or the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of the Council's area.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to the Compulsory Purchase Order process and the impact of that process on the residents and business owners

affected. The Cabinet Member with the Economy Portfolio responded thereon.

RESOLVED - (a) That Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) be made under the powers conferred by Section 226 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to acquire all land to the east and west of Darlington Station as shown on the Order Map (the 'Order Land') attached at Addendum 1.1 to the submitted report, the interests in which are described in the Schedule of Interests, attached at Addendum 1.2 (Part III) of the submitted report.

(b) That the Assistant Director - Law and Governance be authorised to make the CPO for the Order Land, and to take all necessary procedural steps prior to and after the making of the CPO, to enable the CPO to be submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation including:

- (i) finalising the attached Statement of Reasons, attached at Addendum 2 of the submitted report;
- (ii) finalising (including making amendments to) the Order Schedule and/or the Order Map, provided that any increase in the extent of the Order Land so amended shall be less than a substantial change to the Order taken as a whole; and in the case of some plots provided that if considered appropriate rights and/or temporary possession may be required as an alternative to acquisition;
- (iii) serving notices of the making of the CPO on all persons entitled to such notice and placing all necessary notices in the press and on/around the Order Land;
- (iv) to submit the CPO to the Secretary of State for confirmation as soon as possible following the making of the CPO;
- (v) where there are no objections, to confirm the CPO by the Council if authorised to do so by the Secretary of State; and
- (vi) where the CPO is confirmed by the Secretary of State to publicise such confirmation and serve all necessary notices of the confirmation.

(c) That the CPO becomes operative, the Assistant Director – Law and Governance, be hereby authorised to execute one or more General Vesting Declarations under the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981, or, as the case may be, to acquire interests pursuant to the Notice to Treat procedure, and to serve all necessary documents and notices as required after as well as before the vesting or acquisition of the Order Land in/by the Council (including, in either instance, related to the payment of appropriate compensation).

(d) That the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director - Law and Governance be authorised to manage the compulsory purchase process in accordance with all statutory requirements and to otherwise promote and/or support the promotion or confirmation of the CPO including the preparation of and giving of evidence at any public inquiry, hearing or for determination on written representations, and the costs of any inspector, appearances, advocacy and advice relating thereto.

(e) That the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to negotiate agreements with land owners and owners of affected interests, and terms for the withdrawal of objections (including

representations of statutory undertakers) to the compulsory purchase order including where appropriate, seeking exclusion of land from the compulsory purchase order and to agree, contest and pay claims for compensation of any kind as appropriate, (terms agreed to be reported for information on the Schedule of Transactions).

(f) That the Assistant Director – Law and Governance, in consultation with the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services be authorised to grant alternative rights or regrant extinguished rights in respect of land acquired from statutory undertakers and Network Rail in or over the Order Land as he deems necessary to secure confirmation of the CPO or the perfecting of title at any time to land within the CPO; and in relation to rights of persons other than statutory undertakers the Directors acting as above be authorised where necessary to prevent extinguishment by:

- (i) making a Direction under section 236(3) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990; and/or
- (ii) entering into an agreement with affected parties, with or without TVCA, as appropriate.

(g) That the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services be authorised in relation to the Scheme to promote, confirm, make operational and secure all reasonably required dedications, closures (temporary or permanent), stopping-ups, diversions, re-arrangements, improvements, variations, creations or extinguishments, whether by order, direction, notice, declaration, grant, or agreement, of highways, car parks, bus-stops, taxi ranks, parking/loading bays, private means of access, streets, bridges, tunnels, walkways, footways, routes for cycles and roads (including signs, markings, apparatus and structures related thereto) under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, parts IX and X of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Transport Act 2000, and/or the Traffic Management Act 2004, or any order regulations or rules made pursuant to any of those Acts.

(h) That the Assistant Director - Law and Governance be authorised to sign and serve any notices or documents necessary to give effect to these recommendations and to take all the other actions necessary to give effect to these recommendations.

(i) That in the event that structural changes alter titles or responsibilities, the Head of Paid Service be authorised to vary the delegations to the most appropriate postholder.

REASONS - (a) The acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land and will bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the Borough, as well as to the Tees Valley Region.

(b) The Scheme has a high likelihood of being delivered if the Order Land can be acquired. Implementation of the Scheme and realising the benefits of the Scheme are dependent on acquiring the Order Land. The Council has no other way of acquiring good title to all of the interests in the land required for the Scheme in a reasonable timeframe.

(c) There are no reasons in principle why planning permission cannot be granted, and there is a significant funding approval for the Gateway from TVCA. The Department for Transport has committed significant development funding and established the wider scheme on the Department's Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. Bearing these factors and the need for the Gateway in the context of the wider Scheme, there is a clear and compelling case in the public interest to acquire the Order Land.

(4) CENTRAL PARK - HYBRID BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTRE AND LANDSCAPING WORKS

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report (previously circulated) updating Members on the progress being made on Central Park and requesting that consideration be given to the detailed design and construction (subject to planning) of the Hybrid Business Innovation Centre (HBIC), a business incubator comprising of offices and clean workspaces, known as Business Growth Hub 2, and the remediation and landscaping of Central Park and servicing of the remaining development plots.

The submitted report outlined the decisions made at the Executive Decision-making session held in April 2020; stated that the Council had secured additional funding via the 'Getting Building' fund (one of only three awards in the Tees Valley); an increased funding award from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), had been verbally agreed, taking the available project funding package to £11,237,855; and that as a result, on the proviso that ERDF approval was forthcoming, the Council were in a position to deliver this exciting project that included the submission of planning and, if approved, construction of the Hybrid Business Innovation Centre, procurement of an incoming operator to manage the centre and provide business support to the new businesses and undertake a range of landscaping and remedial works across Central Park.

It was reported that following the success of Business Central on Central Park, the Council, with the benefit of external funding would now realise its plan to create additional business incubation / managed workspace accommodation and serviced plots in a quality environment in readiness for occupation by new companies including Small to Medium Sized Enterprise businesses (SMEs); a demand study had been undertaken that confirmed the demand and need for such incubation / managed accommodation within the Tees Valley region; the Covid 19 pandemic had made attracting occupants for business space more challenging, so this timely opportunity to significantly uplift the whole Park and offer quality serviced plots was ever-more important; Central Park remained a key part of the Council's economic strategy moving forward and should be viewed through the lens of a medium to long term priority; the HBIC would accommodate 2,370 square metres of business space; the final internal configuration would be arrived at through discussions with the future operator; and outlined the actions required to progress the project.

Discussion ensued at the meeting on the jobs that would be created by the project; if those jobs would be for local people; and whether, in the current economic climate, it was the right time to be progressing the project. The Cabinet Member with the Economy Portfolio and the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services responded thereon.

RESOLVED – (a) That the work done so far to develop the plans for the Hybrid Business Innovation Centre, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That the release of £10,737,855, be authorised, subject to formal approval of European Regional Development Funding (this being the balance on the funding package following the earlier release of £500,000 in April 2020).

(c) That the Director of Economic Growth be authorised to proceed with the project including applying for planning permission.

(d) That the construction of the Hybrid Business Innovation Centre be designated as a strategic procurement, and the landscaping works and procurement of operator as non-strategic, with powers delegated to the Procurement Board to progress the procurements in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.

Reasons – (a) To enhance the environmental, social and economic well-being of the Borough.

(b) To support actions arising from Darlington's Economic Strategy.

(c) To support the delivery of the Enterprise Zone on Central Park.

(d) To enable the project to move forward.

C82 REVISION TO THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Leader and Deputy Leader introduced the report of the Managing Director (previously circulated) requesting that considering be given to a new Senior Management Structure for the Council and to the appointments to three new posts.

The submitted report presented a new senior structure which had been developed with input from Cabinet that aligned it to the Council's priorities and services to ensure delivery of those priorities; it was proposed to create a post of Chief Executive which had the lead for Economic Growth as well as being the Head of Paid Service; the creation of a Group Director for Operations; the creation of a Group Director of Service; the deletion of the posts of Managing Director and Assistant Director of Housing and Building Services, following the current postholders retirements and the realignment of a number of services to new groups as a result; and the creation of a new post of Assistant Director (Housing and Revenues) by merging the existing Head of Housing and Revenues post with the relevant responsibilities previously held by the Assistant Director (Housing and Building Services).

RESOLVED – (a) That the Senior Management Structure, as set out in Appendix A of the submitted report, be recommended to Council.

(b) That the appointment of Ian Williams as Chief Executive, be recommended to the Human Resource Committee and Council.

(c) That appointment of Elizabeth Davison as Group Director of Operations, be recommended to the Human Resources Committee and Council.

(d) That the appointment of Anthony Sandys as Assistant Director (Housing and Revenues) be recommended to Council.

REASONS - To amend the structure and to make key internal appointments.

C83 CLIMATE CHANGE - UPDATE

The Leader introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) providing an update on the climate change work; progress of the Council's journey to carbon neutrality; and responding to the motion approved at the Council meeting of November 2020.

The submitted report stated that the Climate Change Strategy was approved by Cabinet at its meeting held in July 2020 (Minute C7(3)/Jul/20 refers); the strategy built on achievements already delivered and set out the principles for achieving a carbon neutral Council; work was ongoing to develop a Climate Change Action Plan; Lead Officers were engaged in developing the action plan and a draft would be placed in front of Members for comment at the earliest opportunity; and outlined the actions that had been completed since July 2020.

In response to questions raised by the Parkland Heritage Network, the Leader reported that all political groups would be represented on the Working Group; the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer would attend all meetings of the Working Group; and that only the Leader and the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer would attend the National Climate Change Conference, and that they would provide a full briefing on the Conference to the Group.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to including emissions from council houses, aviation and the Council's waste incinerator, in the scope of the work undertaken by the working group, in achieving a carbon neutral Council. The Leader and the Cabinet Members with Health and Housing and Local Services responded thereon.

RESOLVED - (a) That the update of the progress on climate change, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That the Council's continued support for the Climate Change Working Group, be confirmed.

REASON - To enable the Council to achieve a net carbon neutral status for Darlington Borough Council.

C84 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS FOR DOG CONTROL IN DARLINGTON

The Cabinet Member with the Stronger Communities Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to amending the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) for Dog Control in two areas in Heighington, as the restriction to exclude dogs within the two areas was not included in the original orders.

The submitted report stated that the Public Space Protection Order for Dog Control was approved in July 2020 (Minute C10/Jul/20 refers); due to an oversight, the exclusion of dogs from St Michael's Play Area and Parish Hall Lane Play Area and Playing Field in Heighington were missed off the original PSPO; previously dogs were excluded from those two areas in the Dog Control Orders that the PSPO replaced; a proposed amendment to the order had been made to deal with this oversight; and that a six-week consultation period had taken place with regard to the proposed changes.

RESOLVED – To enable the amendment to the PSPO to include St Michael's Play Area and Parish Hall Lane Play Area and Playing Field in Heighington to become 'Dog Exclusion' areas, it is recommended that:-

- (a) the Public Spaces Protection Order – Dog Control, No.1 of 2021, as set out in Appendix 1, be formally made;
- (b) on the making of the PSPO as set out in paragraph 3(a) the Public Spaces Protection Order – Dog Control, No.1 of 2020 shall be revoked; and
- (c) delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director, Law and Governance to make the Order.

REASONS – (a) To rectify the oversight that has been identified.

(b) To enable a consolidated PSPO dealing with dog control to be made.

C85 SKERNINGHAM DEVELOPMENT HIGHWAY ACCESS POINTS

The Cabinet Member with the Economy Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to a motion from Council regarding access from the Skerningham development to the highway network and the integrity of Green Lane.

The submitted report stated that the the motion proposed at the November 2020 Council meeting requested Cabinet to consider a report which would prevent highway access from the Skerningham Development at various locations and maintain the integrity of Green Lane; highway law dictated that where roads were public highways, there was (in general) no limit to the additional use of those highways, and any restriction of use must be founded by convincing highways evidence; as part of the Local Plan process further control stages would be in place that would consider any necessary highway restrictions or mitigation if, and when, the Local Plan was adopted; the traffic modelling work undertaken by the Council for the Local Plan was a strategic assessment that indicated that the proposed allocations could come forward and this would be independently tested through the inspection process; some additional work was undertaken to consider whether the Springfield Park link road was critical and a high-level assessment found the link road to be beneficial but not critical; and that the assessment did look at other existing roads and found there was sufficient theoretical link capacity to carry additional traffic, but it did recognise that it potentially added significant traffic onto the existing local roads and it identified new roads and infrastructure would be required over the plan period.

It was reported that as there were no detailed planning applications submitted for the Council to consider at this stage Cabinet was not in a position to be able to legitimately substantiate any restriction to the public highway; should an attempt to impose a restriction to the public highway ahead of due consideration of evidence via a planning application it would not be a material consideration in considering that planning application; the Local Plan was a long-term strategy with development coming forward gradually over time with a review of the plan every five years; there were already controls in place that would enable the concerns expressed by residents to be considered in much greater detail at the appropriate time; and that Green Lane was a Public Right of Way (Bridleway) and already afforded protection under Highway Law requiring processes to be considered and followed if any modifications or amendments were proposed to the integrity of the route.

A Member in attendance at the meeting addressed Cabinet in respect of the deletion of the Springfield Park link road and to the access points to / from the Skerningham Development. Questions were also raised by members of the public as to the why the Council could not make a determination on other potential routes if it could rule out the Springfield Park link road and why Beaully Drive and Whitebridge Drive access points could not be ruled out. Reference was also made to a playing field at Caithness Way / Galloway and if it was in Council ownership whether it could be ruled out of any future development.

The Cabinet Members with the Local Services and Economy Portfolios responded thereon.

RESOLVED – (a) That it be noted, as detailed in paragraph 7 of the submitted report, that Cabinet are not in a position to legitimately substantiate any restriction to the public highway at this point in time.

(b) That the protection, under Highway Law already afforded to the integrity of Green Lane, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

REASON - To consider a report to examine possible restrictions on access to the proposed Skerningham development and the integrity of Green Lane.

C86 DEED OF DEDICATION - SPRINGFIELD PARK, DARLINGTON

The Cabinet Member with the Economy Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to a motion from Council regarding the development of a Deed of Dedication for the whole of Springfield Park.

The submitted report stated at the Council meeting held on 26 November 2020 it was agreed that Cabinet would consider a report on the possibility of creating a Deed of Dedication on Springfield Park, Darlington; Springfield Park was Council owned land and had been designated in the emerging Local Plan as a Local Greenspace which gave it added protection; a Deed of Dedication was an added protection on the use of a piece of land; there were different forms of protection for recreational land currently in use, including covenants, town and village green registration and the formal planning process; Springfield Park was already afforded protection as the Council was the landowner, and furthermore Cabinet passed a resolution not to allow an

access road through Springfield Park to the proposed Skerningham development; and outlined the options available.

It was reported that a very small part of the corner of Springfield Park adjacent to the existing Thompson Street mini roundabout had been identified for highway improvement; S.106 Agreements had been completed which, at the relevant time, would result in contributions being made to enable the highway mitigation works for the A1150 which, when implemented, it was believed would have a positive impact upon traffic flow across the borough; and that a Deed on the whole of the site would have serious implications for that proposed highway improvement.

A Member in attendance at the meeting addressed Cabinet regarding the protection and safeguarding of Springfield Park for the future. Questions were also raised by a member of the public on whether Springfield Park was safe, should a Deed of Dedication not be made. Reference was also made at the meeting to the development of the Thompson Street roundabout, which required part of Springfield Park to develop it and the traffic problems associated with the current roundabout.

The Cabinet Members with the Economy, Local Services, Children and Young People and Health and Housing Portfolios responded thereon.

RESOLVED - That the application for a Deed of Dedication for Springfield Park, be not supported.

REASONS – (a) The land has the protection of being land in public ownership and has been referenced in the local plan as public green space.

(b) A Deed of Dedication would fetter all future considerations of the use of this land in perpetuity, including otherwise reasonable changes and development.

(c) A deed on the whole of the site would have serious implications for legal agreements that have been entered into concerning the Thompson Street roundabout and already proposed highway improvement to the A1150.

(d) Making such an application would potentially set a precedent that could have wider implications in other areas.

(e) Given a previous Cabinet resolution not to allow an access road through Springfield Park to the proposed Skerningham development the use and future amenity of this land does not require additional protection through the establishment of a Deed of Dedication.

C87 SCHEDULE OF TRANSACTIONS

The Cabinet Member with the Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the Schedule of Transactions (also previously circulated).

RESOLVED – That the Schedule of Transactions, as detailed in the submitted report, be approved, and the transactions be completed on the terms and conditions detailed

therein.

REASONS – The terms negotiated require approval by Cabinet before binding itself contractually to a transaction

C88 MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - TO CONSIDER ANY MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO OTHER BODIES TO WHICH CABINET APPOINTS.

There were no membership changes reported at the meeting.

C89 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (IF ANY) WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR OF THIS COMMITTEE ARE OF AN URGENT NATURE AND CAN BE DISCUSSED AT THIS MEETING.

(1) NORTHERN POWERGRID INVESTMENT IN DARLINGTON

With the prior approval of the Leader to the matter being treated as urgent in order to inform Members at the earliest possible date, the Cabinet Member with the Local Services Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (previously circulated) advising Members of a significant investment programme by Northern Powergrid (NPg) in the central and northern parts of Darlington.

The submitted report stated that NPg were commencing a £9m investment programme to provide extra capacity to meet the town's future needs, but also to improve reliability and resilience for existing customers; the upgrade would also ready the network as more people move to electric vehicle technology; outlined the key features of the programme; the communications, engagement and project management programme; and outlined the social legacy and community investment initiatives planned as part of the programme.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

REASON - To ensure members are aware of the programme and have the information to manage and direct any issues in their wards.

**DECISIONS DATED –
FRIDAY 15 JANUARY 2021**