

**COUNCIL**  
**1 FEBRUARY 2022**

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**OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Resources Portfolio.

**Climate Change**

2. As part of the ongoing development work to the Crematorium and Chapel, the existing three cremators will be replaced by two new cremators. As well as a reduction in number, the new cremators will be more energy efficient leading to a reduction in the carbon footprint of the facility.
3. Officers will soon be meeting with members of the supply chain to review alternative methods of construction and materials for the housing programme. The aim of this is to establish if carbon savings can be made both during the construction of the properties and the whole life by making the properties more energy efficient.

**Medium Term Financial Plan**

4. Since the draft MTFP was produced the Local Government Finance settlement has been announced which has delivered more government funding than anticipated. This along with any further changes and the outcome of consultation will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 8 February, before proposing the final MTFP to Council at the special meeting on 17 February.

**Capital Projects and Design Services Management**

5. The Council's capital programme has a wide range of exciting projects being developed and delivered:
  - (a) Design work is progressing on a number of schemes. The Bank Top Gateway East and West scheme Compulsory Purchase Order proposals are to be reviewed at a Public Inquiry from 18 January 2022, and work is still ongoing to try and acquire land by agreement. The planning application for the Railway Heritage Quarter scheme is currently being determined. Site work continues on the Hybrid Innovation Centre on Central Park, Crematorium and new Chapel development. A tender package for the demolition of the ex-Sports Direct building at East Street will be issued shortly.
  - (b) Business cases continue to be developed to secure additional projects from funding opportunities.
  - (c) The likely site requirements for the Treasury North Campus are being reviewed with the Government Property Agency and is hoped to have a final location decision early

in 2022.

- (d) The implementation of an integrated control point system 'Project in a Box' continues with the new projects to be added to the system.
- (e) There remains a risk of delay costs from Covid-19 related effects and construction material price increases. There are more signs that construction material costs are rising and there are some material shortages, the impact is being monitored.

### **Parliamentary Boundary Review**

- 6. The secondary consultation on the proposed new map of constituencies in England will take place between Tuesday 22 February to Monday 4 April 2022. Feedback on the proposed new constituencies can be made via the Boundary Commission for England consultation website [BCE Consultation Portal \(bcereviews.org.uk\)](https://bcereviews.org.uk), by e-mail or letter or in person during a public hearing.
- 7. Two public hearings are scheduled to be held for the North East region and they will be held in Newcastle on 28 and 29 March 2022 and Middlesbrough on 31 March and 1 April 2022, with Newcastle being the lead authority for the region. During the consultation the Boundary Commission are looking forward to listening to views on how the boundary lines could be improved and on constituency names. Comments are also welcome on the responses received during the first consultation and those responses will be published on the Boundary Commission for England's website during the week commencing 7 February 2022 together with further information on the public hearings.

### **Register of Electors**

- 8. The Annual Canvass, the second under the new Canvass reforms, was completed on time, and the new Register of Electors was published on 1 December 2021. Work will continue during the year to keep the register up to date by locating new electors and encouraging them to register and removing electors who no longer reside at a property.

### **Member Code of Conduct**

- 9. Following the Council decision on 25 November 2021 to adopt a replacement Code of Conduct modelled on the LGA Code of Conduct (effective from 1 January 2022) work has been underway to facilitate this. The Constitution has been updated and relevant webpages. A number of member training sessions have been held on the replacement Code of Conduct and updates to Register of Interest entries have been published on the website. Parish Councils have been contacted and updated and are in the process of considering adopting the replacement Code of Conduct. Training is being arranged for parish council members about the replacement Code of Conduct.

### **Customer Services and Digital Strategy**

- 10. The Customer Services and Digital Strategy for 2021-2024 has now been approved. The strategy sets out our vision for delivering excellent services to our customers and in particular, how more of these will be delivered through digital channels.

11. The strategy also provides a commitment to support those customers to access Council services who, for whatever reason, are unable to use our on-line services and tackle digital exclusion in Darlington.
12. Further work will be undertaken during 2022 to develop a set of clear customer performance standards that will apply across all Council services.

**Councillor Scott Durham**  
**Cabinet Member with Resources Portfolio**