

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At an **Ordinary Meeting** of the County Council held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Wednesday 26 February 2020** at **10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor K Corrigan (Chair) in the Chair

Councillors E Adam, J Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, B Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, R Bell, J Blakey, G Bleasdale, L Boyd, D Boyes, P Brookes, D Brown, J Brown, L Brown, J Carr, J Chaplow, J Clare, J Clark, M Clarke, I Cochrane, J Considine, B Coult, P Crathorne, R Crute, M Davinson, S Dunn, S Durham, D Freeman, I Geldard, J Grant, N Grayson, O Gunn, D Hall, C Hampson, K Hawley, T Henderson, S Henig, D Hicks, J Higgins, A Hopgood, K Hopper, L Hovvels, P Howell, E Huntington, S Iveson, I Jewell, O Johnson (Vice-Chair), P Jopling, C Kay, B Kellett, L Kennedy, A Laing, J Lethbridge, K Liddell, H Liddle, L Maddison, J Maitland, J Makepeace, R Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, C Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, M McKeon, I McLean, O Milburn, S Morrison, A Napier, J Nicholson, P Oliver, R Ormerod, A Patterson, C Potts, L Pounder, S Quinn, A Reed, G Richardson, J Robinson, S Robinson, J Rowlandson, E Scott, P Sexton, K Shaw, A Shield, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, A Simpson, H Smith, T Smith, W Stelling, B Stephens, D Stoker, A Surtees, P Taylor, O Temple, K Thompson, F Tinsley, T Tucker, J Turnbull, A Watson, M Wilkes, A Willis, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson, D Wood and S Zair

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Bennett, C Carr, J Charlton, A Gardner, S Hugill, S McDonnell, A Savory, J Stephenson and R Yorke

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2020 were confirmed by the Council as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

3 Chair's Announcements

The Chair proposed that the Council waived Standing Order 4.2(a) of the Council Procedure Rules to extend the time allowed for the length of the meeting, in the event that proceedings took longer than two and a half hours.

Resolved:

That the proposal be approved.

4 Leader's Report

The Council noted a report from the Leader of the Council as follows:

- February had brought some severe weather across the country and the Leader thanked all those who had helped keep residents safe and the county moving by keeping roads clear of snow, debris and water.
- The Council had received a Ministerial visit from Baroness Diana Barran, Minister for Civil Society and DCMS Lords Minister where she heard about the Council's important work on social value procurement in the county and how the Council was leading the way nationally in this area.
- Referring to consultations the Council was currently recruiting young people aged 11 to 17 years to sit on a Youth Council for County Durham which would offer a platform to share opinions on a range of topics. Run by young people, for young people, the Council would meet monthly and would set its own agenda based on the issues that young people felt most strongly about. Each of the County's secondary schools and sixth form colleges would choose two representatives to sit on the Council through a democratic election.
- The Council was also consulting on proposals for the introduction of a Selective Licensing Scheme which would help raise the standards of privately rented properties throughout the County. An increase in well managed and maintained housing through the scheme was hoped to result in fewer empty properties, improve the health and wellbeing of tenants and reduce anti-social behaviour while providing support and training to landlords. The consultation was open until 27 April 2020.
- The Council had been successful in two applications to the government to help tackle homelessness which would support the development of a local lettings agency and pay for both emergency accommodation and the continuation of workers who would help those with a housing need. The funding came from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative for 2020-21. The Council had also been awarded £269,000 towards its ongoing work to establish a lettings agency for County Durham. The Council had also been awarded nearly £1.5 million following an application it led on behalf of eleven North East councils. This would pay for the continuation of Somewhere Safe to Stay across the region. These were sites at which up to seven days emergency

accommodation was provided for those who were not eligible for temporary.

- As part of the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge the Council had secured almost £500,000 to plant thousands of trees in towns and villages to create greener and healthier urban areas. Over the next two years large trees would be planted in areas such as Chester le Street, Ouston, Stanley and Meadowfield, as well as other areas, and smaller trees planted to create copses to link existing woodland.
- The Council's Digital Projects Team had won a Modern Service Delivery Award for leading the way in transforming how customers interact with the Council through significant improvements made to the website and online services. This had also helped to generate savings in excess of £700,000.
- Volunteer Brian Harris had been recognised for his commitment to Stanley Indoor Bowls Club with a Chairman's Medal. Brian had volunteered at the Club since 1987 and became Club President in 2006. Brian was presented with his award by the Chairman at the end of the International Bowls Tournament. The Leader congratulated both Brian and the Stanley Indoor Bowls Club on hosting another successful international tournament.
- The Council had appointed a new Head of Leisure, Culture and Sport. Alison Clark, currently a Director at Arts Council England, would join the Council in May.
- The Council had also recruited Corporate Directors for Regeneration Economy and Growth and for Neighbourhoods and Climate Change. The Chief Officer Appointments Committee had appointed Alan Patrickson as Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Amy Harhoff as Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth. Alan commenced employment with the Council in 2012 and currently occupied the post of Head of Digital and Customer Services having previously employed as the Council's Waste Project Director. Amy was currently employed as Director of Regeneration and Growth at Sandwell Metropolitan Council having previously worked for Transport for Greater Manchester, Transport for the North, Sheffield City Region and Doncaster Metropolitan Council. The Leader extended his congratulations to both appointees and thanked the all-party Chief Officer Appointments Committee for their work during the appointments process.

Councillor Shuttleworth informed Council that Abiodun Macdonald Williams had recently been admitted as a Freeman of Durham City and considered that this should have been included in the Leader's update report.

5 Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

6 Petitions

There were no petitions for consideration.

7 Report from the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council provided the Council with an update of business discussed by Cabinet on 15 January and 12 February 2020 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor M Wilkes asked the following question on Item 13 of the Cabinet report:

Durham County Council spends hundreds of millions of pounds every single year. The amount being proposed to be invested to tackle climate change is completely insufficient. The absolute latest date that we should be aiming for carbon zero is 2030 and many people believe we should be aiming for an earlier date than that and even aiming as a public authority for a carbon Negative status. So whilst welcoming the investments proposed will the Cabinet member commit today to massively increasing this investment in the coming year should funding become available from government, and reconsider how much we are investing from council funding to make sure that we hit the 2030 target to become carbon neutral or better.

Councillor C Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration thanked Councillor Wilkes for his question and provided the following response:

Councillor Marshall differed with Councillor Wilkes assertion that the Council's investment in climate change was completely insufficient. The budget report identified an extra £3m over the next two years. This was in addition to budgets already in place which took the council's investment to nearly £13.5 million over the same period and saw overall investment in the county to over £50 million.

The council's Emergency Response Plan unlocked hundreds of millions in support of climate change. All Council staff now had responsibilities to play their part, all of the Council's new buildings would be built to high carbon reduction standards, many schools and older buildings had programmes for energy efficiency, streetlights were being fitted with LEDs, the Council's fleet was being replaced with lower emitting vehicles, and the Council was supporting more businesses to reduce their carbon footprint than ever before. This was a massive programme of investment.

But this was not all about investment, the Council was making sure that climate change awareness was built into the DNA of how the Council operated.

Resources were indeed important, especially considering the pace and scale of change that was needed. This was why the Council's Emergency Action Plan had a whole section on the asks of Government to provide substantially more resources across the domestic, industry and transport sector, and Councillor Marshall was sure Councillor Wilkes would join with him in endorsing this approach.

As explained clearly in the Council's Emergency Response Plan, the newly raised council target of 80% reductions in carbon by 2030 did not, and never had, counted carbon offsetting by tree planting or other activities. The Council had a substantial programme underway, involving 358,000 trees with community organisations and Area Action Partnerships. These activities and more like them over the next decade, when added to the genuine carbon reductions of 80%, would put the Council close to, and may even exceed the ambition of net zero by 2030.

Councillor A Hopgood asked the following question on Item 2 of the Cabinet report:

Whilst I support the significant commitment being made to leisure services within the county I would like to ask the following when will local members be briefed and consulted about the changes to leisure facilities within their ward, when will the public consultation begin around the changes, and what is the timescale for implementation of the plan and in which order will each site be actioned?

Councillor C Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration thanked Councillor Hopgood for her question and provided the following response:

Councillor Marshall was delighted with Cabinet's decision to support the investment in existing leisure centres which would provide significant benefits to large parts of County Durham. These facilities were important assets within local communities and required investment to maximise the offer they provided to residents.

All investment proposed would be considered on a site by site basis and engagement would take place with partners, users and local members through the AAPs. The timeline for the refurbishments was still to be fully determined but engagement with all AAPs and the wider community would take place from April onwards.

The three proposed new builds required advanced feasibility work to be undertaken which would include a full public consultation, including with AAPs. It was proposed to take a further report to Cabinet later this summer.

Councillor Stoker asked the following question on Item 1 of the Cabinet report:

The County Council has previously used small scale selective licensing of privately rented housing. At the same time, the Council has invested heavily in that local housing stock. Why should we believe that if the Council puts selective licensing in place, across two thirds of the County, without that kind of investment in the properties (in fact removing £16 million from the property owners through the licensing charge), will it achieve anything like the same results?

Councillor K Shaw, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Assets thanked Councillor Stoker for his question and provided the following response:

The Council was currently consulting on this scheme, with the consultation closing on 27 April, and Councillor Shaw explained why selective licencing was essential for County Durham. It was another important tool to resolve the significant blight that was occurring in an increasing number of communities.

Councillor Shaw commended a number of landlords in the county who were rightly proud of the service they provided to their tenants, unfortunately they were becoming increasingly rare with a large number of absentee landlords or properties owners who had not invested in their property and who did not care who they rented to. In some cases the result was that neighbours felt they had no option other than to move rather than put up with the continued and growing problems that poor landlords created.

The Council had, up until this point, used existing powers and in part small scale licencing which had been effective up to a point, but with now well over 50,000 properties in Durham and complaints from both tenants and communities increasing year on year, the time was right to tackle the causes of the problem rather than dealing with the outcome.

In terms of success the Council had seen the results of its small scale licencing in reducing anti-social behaviour, removing unsafe and unfit properties from the market, protecting vulnerable tenants and assisting good landlords in ensuring they were better informed going forward. The Council had also spoken to other councils such as Liverpool, Newham and Scarborough who had consistently identified significant benefits in going down this wider selective licensing route.

In terms of finance Councillor Shaw assured Councillor Stoker that this would be an additional element to the Council's strategy and the Council would continue investing in communities as before at the same time lobbying government for additional resources. In terms of the costs to landlords and their ability to continue to invest in their property, the costs would be no more than £500 over 5 years equating to less than £2 a week, not quite the cost of a cup of coffee.

In conclusion Councillor Shaw believed this to be the most important tool at the council's disposal in protecting communities and tenants.

Councillor Shaw understood the concerns of landlords and would be carefully listening and working with them through the consultation process, but he had no doubts that if approved this would have significant benefits to many communities and residents.

8 Budget 2020/21 - Report under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided information on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves in the Council's Budget for 2020/21 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the Council have regard to the statement when approving the budget and the level of Council Tax for 2020/21.

The Chair reminded Council that under Paragraph 14.6 of the Council Procedure Rules a recorded vote was required for each of the budget and council tax items, including the amendments. The voting record would be detailed in the Minutes.

Councillor J Robinson moved that Agenda Item Nos. 9 and 10 be considered together as they were inextricably linked. This was seconded by Councillor A Laing. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised Council that the Council Procedure Rules allowed for such a Motion and that it was appropriate to consider both Items together. With two Items being considered together, the allotted time for the proposer and seconder would double, with Group Leaders each being allotted 10 minutes, Movers 10 minutes, Seconders 6 minutes and other speakers 3 minutes.

Resolved:

That the motion be carried.

9 Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2020/21

10 Council Tax Setting in Order to Meet the County Council's Council Tax Requirement for 2020/21

The Council considered reports from Cabinet which detailed budget recommendations for the 2020/21 balanced revenue budget, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(10)) 2020/21 to 2023/24 and a fully funded Capital Programme, and provided financial information and forecasts to enable the Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2020/21 (for copies see file of Minutes).

In **Moving** adoption of the Cabinet reports, Councillor Henig made a statement on the Budget and Precept for 2020/21, summarised as follows:

Proposals were approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 February 2020. The Council had faced a decade of austerity and still faced an uncertain future beyond 2021, with no certainty regarding budgets beyond 2021.

There would be an estimated reduction in council posts of almost 3,000 by 2020. This compared with just over 100 lost as a result of local government reorganisation in 2009.

In County Durham core spending power was significantly below the average for England and this was deeply unfair. Because of the financial management and planning of the Council, despite years of cuts, funding was available for investment with £31m revenue spending to allow increased climate change initiatives, increased cleanliness in communities, 11 extra Neighbourhood Wardens, support for vulnerable residents and the continuation of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the only Council in the North East to continue this. £10m would be allocated to towns and villages and all AAP's would be consulted to prioritise spending.

The Budget for 2020/21 contained a significant Capital Programme of an additional £100m in 2020/21 which would allow for investment in leisure, schools, Locomotion, highways and infrastructure, new history centre and regeneration of towns and villages.

In closing the Leader thanked all officers and especially the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance for their careful, robust and forward thinking financial stewardship in what were very difficult times. The Leader **moved** the reports and recommendations.

In **seconding** the reports and recommendations, Councillor Napier, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance informed Council that this was the most uncertain time financially for local government, with a one-year funding settlement being announced. Although the Council was able to continue to invest because of

its prudent financial management, the level of uncertainty was not helpful and there was a need for a full spending review.

The proposed increase in Council tax was in line with government expectations. The Council had maintained its Council Tax Reduction Scheme which would help those most in need. Additionally, the Council had ensured no savings in frontline services, despite increased cost pressures.

An additional £20m revenue investment would be placed into Children and Young People's Services next year with an additional Capital Investment of over £100m. Councillor Napier was proud that the Council had managed to achieve this level of additional investment despite the enforced austerity agenda.

Councillor R Crute, Chairman of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board informed Council that there had been two scrutiny meetings to consider the budget. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had scrutinised the budget setting, savings proposals and settlement and commended officers on the way savings had been carried out to date and the planned way savings were to be carried out. Members were very concerned about the level of uncertainty in the financial outlook. Feedback from the scrutiny process could be found at paragraphs 67 to 70 of the report at Agenda Item 9.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Shuttleworth, **Seconded** by Councillor Blakey as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider :

(a) County Durham News – Cease Publication

Cease entirely the publication of the County Durham News from April 2020. This produces an annual saving of £200,000.

(b) Comms & Marketing Team Staffing

Reduce the staffing in the Communication and Marketing team to one press officer and two assistants. This would produce a saving in 2020/21 of £828,000 and the same in 2021/22.

TOTAL REVENUE SAVING – 20/21 - £1,028,000 with an additional £828,000 in 2021/22.

The revenue savings identified above to be invested as follows:

(a) Reduce Council Tax

Reduce the 1.99% Council Tax increase in 2020/21 to 0.99%. The total council tax increase in 2020/21 will therefore be 2.99% once the Adult Social Care 2% precept increase is included. The lost income in 2020/21 is £2,200,000 from this proposal.

(b) Re-Open the DLI Building

One-off costs of re-opening the building are estimated at £500,000 with on-going running costs estimated at £212,000.

(c) Increase Members Neighbourhood Budgets for 20/21 only

Increase Members Neighbourhood budgets from £19,400 to £22,000 at a cost of £327,600

(d) One-Off 20/21 contribution to Village Halls / Community Associations

Provide a contribution to each village hall and community association at a cost of £200,000

Total Revenue Costs from (a) to (d) total £3,439,600 in 2020/21

There will be a requirement to utilise additional Budget Support Reserve of £2,411,600 in 2020/21. The total use of the Budget Support Reserve in 2020/21 will increase from £2,733,000 to £5,144,600 reducing the forecast balance on the Budget Support Reserve to £14,028,000.

The estimated savings shortfall for 2021/22 to 2023/24 will increase by £1.025 million from £32.457 million to £33.482 million to reflect the revenue and capital proposals set out in this budget amendment.

In relation to the capital budget, additional capital investment as follows:

(a) Highways Maintenance – Additional £10 million Investment

An increase in the Highways Maintenance capital budget of £10.000 million in 2020/21 with a subsequent borrowing cost estimated at £469,000 per annum from 2021/22.

Additional Revenue Costs of Additional Highways Capital Schemes total £469,000 from 2021/22

The net MTFP impact of the budget proposals is set out below:

Summary of MTFP Impact	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Savings	-1,028	-828	0	0	-1,856
Revenue	1,240	-1,028	0	0	212
Investments					
Capital Investments	0	469	0	0	469
Reduced Council Tax	2,200	0	0	0	2,200
Increase Use of Budget Reserve	-2,412	0	0	0	-2,412

Adjustment for PYR use of Reserve	0	2,412	0	0	2,412
Change in MTFP Savings	0	1,025		0	1,025
Revised MTFP Savings	0	10,186	4,651	18,645	33,482

The council's estimated savings shortfall for 2021/22 to 2023/24 will increase from £32.457 million to £33.482 million to reflect the revenue and capital proposals set out in this budget amendment.

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Bell, R Bell, Blakey, D Brown, L Brown, Cochrane, Coult, Durham, Freeman, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Oliver, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Watson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, Brookes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Geldard, Grant, Grayson, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stelling, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

None

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Hopgood, **Seconded** by Councillor Martin as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider:

Investment

(a) Towns and Villages Regeneration

Earmark £1,260,000 from the Towns and Villages reserve to provide each councillor with £10,000 to be spent on regeneration schemes in their local areas.

There is no net impact on the 2020/21 net revenue budget or the Medium Term Plan arising from this proposal.

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, Blakey, Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, Cochrane, Coult, Durham, Freeman, Geldard, Grant, Grayson, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Oliver, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Watson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

None

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Wilkes, **Seconded** by Councillor Temple as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider :

Investment

(a) Expansion of the Link 2 Accessible Bus Service

An increase in the number of vehicles operating to expand the service available across the County and the introduction of a weekend service. This will expand the service and provide an improved offer to eligible passengers across County Durham. The estimated cost of expanding the service is £460,000 per annum.

There will be a requirement to utilise additional Budget Support Reserve of £460,000 in 2020/21.

The net MTFP impact of the budget proposals is set out below:

Summary of MTFP Impact	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Investments	460	0	0	0	460
Increase Use of Budget Reserve	-460	0	0	0	-460
Adjustment for PYR use of Reserve	0	460	0	0	460
Change in MTFP Savings	0	460	0	0	460
Revised MTFP Savings	0	9,621	4,651	18,645	32,917

The estimated savings shortfall for 2021/22 to 2023/24 will increase by £460,000 from £32.457 million to £32.917 million to reflect the proposals set out in this budget amendment.

There is a possibility that this proposal could be funded in future years by increases in taxbase being more than currently estimated in 2021/22. There is an estimated increase in total taxbase in 2021/22 of £3m. The taxbase estimate would therefore need to increase to £3.460m in 2021/22 to fund this proposal but would ultimately be subject to the Corporate Director's Resources assessment of taxbase in future years.

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Bell, R Bell, Blakey, Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, Cochrane, Coult, Durham, Freeman, Geldard, Grant, Grayson, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Oliver, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Watson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, Mckeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

None

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Maddison, **Seconded** by Councillor Thompson as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider:

(a) Area Action Partnership Investment – Towns and Villages

Allocate £500,000 from the Towns and Villages reserve for distribution to Area Action Partnerships and to be used specifically for infrastructure and environmental projects that will benefit the local community.

There is no net impact on the 2020/21 net revenue budget or the Medium Term Plan arising from this proposal.

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, Blakey, Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, Cochrane, Coult, Durham, Freeman, Geldard, Grant, Grayson, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Oliver, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, Watson, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

Councillor Freeman

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor R Bell, **Seconded** by Councillor Henderson as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider :

Investment

(a) Neighbourhoods (Highways)

Establish a capital budget £100,000 with a one-off contribution from the budget support reserve for the preventative maintenance of council owned wooden and composite bridges.

(b) Gully Cleansing

Purchase an additional gully tanker for clearing roadside drains at a cost of £160,000 funded through a one-off contribution from the budget support reserve. Additional staffing costs total £60,000 per annum – to be met from budget support reserve in 2020/21.

Total Revenue Costs from (a) to (b) total £320,000 in 2020/21

There will be a requirement to utilise additional Budget Support Reserve of £320,000 in 2020/21.

The net MTFP impact of the budget proposals is set out below:

Summary of MTFP Impact	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Investments	320	-260	0	0	320
Increase Use of Budget Reserve	-320	0	0	0	-320
Adjustment for PYR use of	0	320	0	0	320

Reserve					
Change in MTFP Savings	0	60	0	0	60
Revised MTFP Savings	0	9,221	4,651	18,645	32,517

The estimated savings shortfall for 2021/22 to 2023/24 will increase by £60,000 from £32.457 million to £32.517 million to reflect the proposals set out in this budget amendment.

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, Blakey, Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, Cochrane, Coult, Durham, Geldard, Grant, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Oliver, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, Watson, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

Councillor Freeman

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Henderson, **Seconded** by Councillor R Bell as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider :

Investment

(a) Strategic Tourism Initiative Fund

Establish a Strategic Tourism Initiative Fund at a cost of £2 million. Council is asked to earmark £2 million from the established £20 million available in the Towns and Villages reserve.

(b) Community Buildings Fund

Establish a Community Building Fund of £1 million to provide grants for community buildings. Council is asked to earmark £1 million from the established £20 million available in the Towns and Villages reserve.

(c) Bus Services to Upper Teesdale

Establish an evening bus service from Barnard Castle to upper Teesdale from April to September at an estimated cost of £10,000. Council is asked to earmark £10,000 from the established £20 million available in the Towns and Villages reserve

There will be a requirement to earmark £3.010 million from the established Towns and Villages earmarked reserve.

There is no impact on the MTFP or 2020/21 net budget requirement from this budget proposal.

For the Amendment

Councillors A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, Blakey, D Brown, L Brown, Coult, Durham, Freeman, Grant, Hawley, Henderson, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, L Mavin, Nicholson, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Watson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Geldard, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Hicks, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, Mckee, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stelling, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

None

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Durham, **Seconded** by Councillor R Bell as follows:

MTFP 10

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider :

Investment

(a) AAP Youth Funds

Remove the proposed £100,000 ongoing revenue proposal to establish a youth parliament and instead provide this funding to Area Action Partnerships to augment their existing youth funds – for more localised investment.

This budget amendment is a reallocation of proposed expenditure within the 2020/21 budget and there is no impact on the 2020/21 net budget requirement or the MTFP model.

For the Amendment

Councillors A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, D Brown, Durham, Henderson, Howell, Makepeace, Richardson, Rowlandson and Shuttleworth.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Avery, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Geldard, Grant, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Hawley, Henig, Hicks, Higgins, Hopgood, Hopper, Hovvels, Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Jopling, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddell, Liddle, Maddison, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, Martin, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Nicholson, Ormerod, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Scott, Sexton, Shaw, Simmons, Simpson, H Smith, T Smith, Stelling, Stephens, Stoker, Surtees, Taylor, Temple, Thompson, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, Watson, Wilkes, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson, Wood and Zair.

Abstentions

Councillors Blakey, Freeman, Jopling, Nicholson, Reed, Shield and Willis.

The Amendment was **Lost**.

An amendment was **Moved** by Councillor Shield, **Seconded** by Councillor Jopling as follows:

MTFP 10

Budget Amendment

The Council, in respect of the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget and MTFP 10 to consider:

Investment

The Neighbourhood Budget/Members Initiative Fund which is currently **£19,400** per member (£14,000 - Capital; & £5400 - Revenue) be increased to **£22,400**, an increase of **£3,000** per annum per member and representing an increase of 15.5%.. The split between Capital & Revenue to remain the same at 75%/25% (Revised Capital £16,800 & Revised Revenue £5,600).

This increase in members Neighbourhood Budget would permit all members to further address outstanding issues within their representative division in a fair and equitable manner.

This increase of £3,000 per member x 126 total elected members equates to a total cumulative increase of £378,000. This additional expenditure is to be funded from General Reserve in 2020/21 which currently stands at £27.2 million. The investment of £378,000 equates to a reduction in this reserve of 1.4% but ensures that the General Reserves are retained within the stipulated 5.0% - 7.5% criteria.

The investment is to continue in future years which would result in an increase in the 2021/22 savings target to £9.539 million and the overall MTFP(10) savings shortfall will increase to £32.835 million.

The net MTFP impact of the budget proposals is set out below:

Summary of MTFP Impact	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Investments	378	0	0	0	378
Use of General Reserve	-378	0	0	0	-378
Adj. for use of General Reserve	0	378			378
Change in MTFP Savings	0	378	0	0	378
Revised MTFP Savings	0	9,539	4,651	18,645	32,835

For the Amendment

Councillors Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, Blakey, D Brown, L Brown, Coult, Durham, Geldard, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Liddell, Maddison, Makepeace, Martin, Nicholson, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, S Robinson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Watson, Wilkes, Willis and Zair.

Against the Amendment

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Grant, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Abstentions

None

The Amendment was **Lost**.

Votes were then taken on the main Motions which were the recommendations contained within the reports.

Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2020/21.

For the Motion

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Geldard, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maddison, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, Watson, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Against the Motion

Councillors A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, D Brown, L Brown, Coult, Durham, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Jopling, Laing, Liddell, Makepeace, Martin, Nicholson, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Willis and Zair.

Abstentions

Councillor Blakey, Simpson and Wilkes.

Resolved:

That the report and its recommendations be adopted in full.

Council Tax Setting in Order to Meet the County Council's Council Tax Requirement for 2020/21

For the Motion

Councillors Adam, Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, Batey, A Bell, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, Blakey, Bleasdale, Boyd, Boyes, J Brown, J Carr, Chaplow, Clare, Clark, Clarke, Considine, Corrigan, Crathorne, Crute, Davinson, Dunn, Geldard, Gunn, Hall, Hampson, Henig, Higgins, Hopper, Hovvels, E Huntington, Iveson, Jewell, Johnson, Jopling, Kay, Kellett, Kennedy, Laing, Lethbridge, Liddle, Maddison, Maitland, Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, McKeon, McLean, Milburn, Morrison, Napier, Nicholson, Patterson, Potts, Pounder, Quinn, J Robinson, Shaw, H Smith, T Smith, Stephens, Surtees, Taylor, Tinsley, Tucker, Turnbull, Watson, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson and Wood.

Against the Motion

Councillors A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, R Bell, D Brown, L Brown, Coult, Durham, Hawley, Henderson, Hicks, Hopgood, Howell, Liddell, Makepeace, Martin, Ormerod, Reed, Richardson, Rowlandson, Scott, Sexton, Shield, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Simpson, Stelling, Stoker, Temple, Thompson, Wilkes and Willis.

Abstentions

None

Resolved:

That the following be adopted:

- (a) It be noted that on 13 November 2019 the Cabinet calculated the council tax base 2020/21 for:
 - (i) the whole council area as 141,742.0 Band D equivalent properties [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)]; and;
 - (ii) dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix 3.
- (b) The Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish precepts and the Charter Trustees for the City of Durham) is £234,458,277;
- (c) Agree the following amounts in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act being the:
 - (i) aggregate of the gross expenditure which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils is £1,273,964,349;
 - (ii) aggregate of the gross income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act is £1,025,868,561;
 - (iii) amount by which the aggregate at (c) i) above exceeds the aggregate at (c) ii) above in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act) is £248,095,788;
 - (iv) amount at (c) iii) above (Item R), all divided by Item T ((a) i) above), in accordance with Section 31B of the Act as the basic amount of its council tax at Band D for the year (including parish precepts) is £1,750.33;
 - (v) aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act: (total of all parish precepts including Charter Trustees) is £13,637,511;

(vi) amount at (c) iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (c) v) above by Item T ((a) i) above), in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax at Band D for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates is £1,654.12.

(d) It be noted that for 2020/21, the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority has recommended the following amounts be in the precept issued to the County Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, as shown in the table below:

COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
70.32	82.04	93.76	105.48	128.92	152.36	175.80	210.96

(e) It be noted that for 2020/21, the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner has recommended that the following amounts be in the precept issued to the County Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, as shown in the following table:

DURHAM POLICE, CRIME AND VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
143.49	167.41	191.32	215.24	263.07	310.90	358.73	430.48

(f) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of council tax for 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,005.81	1,173.44	1,341.08	1,508.71	1,843.98	2,179.25	2,514.52	3,017.42

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – ADULT SOCIAL CARE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
96.94	113.10	129.25	145.41	177.72	210.04	242.35	290.82

**AGGREGATE OF COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS
(excluding Parish, Town Council and Charter Trustees)**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,316.5 6	1,535.9 9	1,755.4 1	1,974.8 4	2,413.6 9	2,852.5 5	3,291.4 0	3,949.6 8

- (g) That the Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of council tax for 2020/21 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and that the increase in council tax is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZC Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);
- (h) As the billing authority, the council has not been notified by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority and Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner, as major precepting authorities, that their relevant basic amount of council tax for 2020/21 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);
- (i) The County Council, in accordance with Section 11A (3) of the Act set a 0% discount for Second and Empty Furnished Homes;
- (j) The County Council, in accordance with Section 11A (4A) of the Act set a 0% discount for dwellings defined in classes C or D;
- (k) The County Council in accordance with Section 11B (1b) of the Act, set premium charges for long term empty homes: 100% premium for properties which have been empty between two and five years and 200% premium for properties empty for longer than five years;
- (l) The Chief Executive be instructed to publish a notice in accordance with Section 38 (2) of the Act, relating to the amounts of council tax set;

- (m) The Chief Executive be instructed to publish a notice in accordance with Section 11A (6) and 11B (6) of the Act, relating to the discount set.

11. Questions from Members

Councillor M Wilkes

At a previous budget meeting, full council approved a motion I put forward to increase our empty homes staffing from 3 to 6. This has started to have a positive impact. The number of empty properties brought back into use with the help of officers has increased significantly.

Unfortunately, the manager in charge of that department has left the authority and rather than recruit to that position, the job has been split between other posts.

I recognise the need for service heads to have the autonomy to manage their teams as they see fit. However, this department has been given specific additional resource for a specific purpose by this full council. It does not seem appropriate for that service to then be cut, both in principle and without even telling any of us about it. Any suggestion it will not have an impact would make no sense given just how good this manager was.

The saving by not replacing this position is in the order of £60-£80,000. We still have over 6000 empty properties in the County, a grotesque waste of resources especially when we are planning to build on the greenbelt.

It would seem appropriate for an additional staff member to be recruited to make sure that we achieve our targets and bring more properties back into use. The department would still save money on staffing costs.

Will the Cabinet member commit to investigate this and seriously consider giving the team back this lost resource; and could we as councillors be notified where management jobs are deleted or senior staff leave the authority so we are not wasting our time calling people who no longer exist and so we can legitimately challenge the loss of posts if we feel it appropriate to?

Councillor K Shaw, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Assets thanked Councillor Wilkes for his question and the continued support and acknowledgement for the great work that the housing team continued to provide.

In respect of the empty properties, the Council was continuously monitoring the performance of the team and how they worked with colleagues in ensuring their impacts were maximised. This was not just about numbers,

but the location and what went alongside this work in terms of investment and impacts in the wider community. Even prior to the previous manager leaving, it was identified that to place the empty property team within the regeneration team with other professionals dealing with property and area improvements may provide better outcomes for communities as a whole.

Councillor Shaw assured Councillor Wilkes that the existing manager had significant experience and Councillor Shaw believed there would be no overall loss in respect of this particular area of work, and was hoping to see more numbers of empty homes brought back into use as a result.

In terms of cuts to the service, staffing numbers had increased and continued to increase due to the excellent work and reputation of this service area accessing external funding to increase frontline services. Work and financial investment in respect of homelessness, selective licencing, the local lettings agency and housing support had all seen increases in staff numbers over the past three years.

The Head of Service alongside his management team continued to make efficiencies across the service team which did not impact on and can sometimes improved the operation and outcomes of frontline services. Councillor Shaw had been fully informed of the decisions and why they had been taken and fully supported the team in this area. Councillor Shaw was also assured that they would continue to monitor the outcomes of the team and keep members engaged in the process going forward.

In terms of keeping members informed of staff changes Councillor Shaw did not intend to introduce what undoubtedly would be an administrative burden on already busy staff. Councillor Shaw was interested in how senior management were using the resources allocated to them in the budget process to deliver positive outcomes for our communities. Councillor Shaw was tempted to ask why Councillor Wilkes did not seek the same arrangements at the height of the coalition government's austerity programme that had led to nearly 3,000 jobs being lost at the Council.

Councillor R Ormerod

It appears that the Millburngate development is causing major cracks to the road on Framwellgate Peth. Furthermore, there are cracks in the brickwork of the retaining walls and steps to the Highgate development. Given Durham County Council's interest in this development and the seriousness of the situation, can the relevant cabinet members please confirm how long the council has been aware of the problem with the road surface, when they were going to tell the public and what they now intend to do to ensure that neither the road nor the nearby buildings suffer further potentially irreversible

damage which could result in road closures and risk of serious damage to residential properties.

Councillor Stephens, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships thanked Councillor Ormerod for the question.

The Council was aware of signs of movement in the carriageway and footpath on Framwellgate Peth together with reports of issues with adjacent private properties.

The Council was undertaking investigations to determine the cause of the movement and were in discussions with and were due to meet the developer to review the situation. The Council would, of course, assess whether the adjacent development works had contributed to this and action accordingly.