

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Cabinet

Date: 27 November 2023

### Title: 2024–2028 Financial Planning and Budget Process – Cabinet’s Initial Budget Proposals

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Portfolio(s):	Elected Mayor	Cabinet Member(s):	Dame Norma Redfearn DBE
	Deputy Mayor		Councillor Carl Johnson
	Finance and Resources		Councillor Anthony McMullen
	Housing		Cllr John Harrison

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Report from Service Area: Senior Leadership Team

Responsible Officer: Jon Ritchie, Director of Resources (Chief Finance Officer) Tel: (0191) 643 5701  
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Wards affected: All

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#### PART 1

##### 1.1 Executive Summary:

1.1.1 This report represents a key milestone in the development of the 2024/25 Budget and 2024–2028 Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as it sets out Cabinet’s initial Budget proposals for the next financial year and beyond. The report also includes the Authority’s approach to budget engagement and the Budget Engagement Strategy. The Our North Tyneside Plan remains the

delivery focus for the Mayor and Cabinet, and the Budget is driven by the Authority's key priorities that make up the Plan – a thriving, secure, family friendly, caring and green North Tyneside. Despite the economic challenges facing the country and the local government sector, the Authority continues to be ambitious to ensure anyone who needs support can access it, to continue to help the most vulnerable members of the community and to continue investment in all parts of the Borough.

- 1.1.2 Local government finance continues to be challenging. However, the Mayor and Cabinet have worked with the Senior Leadership Team over a number of years to maintain a degree of financial stability. Global issues associated with war in Ukraine combined with economic fragility and uncertainty post-pandemic and post-Brexit have manifested themselves locally. These have resulted in much higher than forecast levels of inflation, supply chain disruption and significant labour market pressures. The Mayor, Cabinet and Elected Members have seen each of these have an impact across the Authority's financial planning, as can be seen from the September 2023 Performance and Financial report (to be discussed at this Cabinet meeting) where the current General Fund pressure forecast to the end of March 2023 is in the region of £9.648m.
- 1.1.3 Since May, the Senior Leadership Team has been focused on delivering a programme of activity to tackle the current in-year pressure and to balance the Medium-Term Financial Plan over the next 4 years to 2027/28. This approach has focused on those projects identified as requiring maximum innovation and involving significant financial values. This is not purely a financial exercise; the programme of activity needs to be understandable and relatable for the wider organisation, Mayor, Elected Members, and the taxpayers and businesses of North Tyneside.
- 1.1.4 Unlike recent previous years, as part of the 2023/24 financial settlement, the government produced a policy statement on the 2024/25 financial envelope outlining the likely size of a number of key funding streams. Whilst this gives an indication of funding levels for 2024/25, uncertainty remains around some other key funding sources and how the impact of inflation will feed through into the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (expected mid to late-December). The Autumn Statement is planned for 22 November 2023, but this is after the date of publication of this report. Whilst the most up to date information has been used in the production of Cabinet's Budget proposals, the level of uncertainty does make financial planning difficult and requires the Authority to be flexible and adaptable as it considers setting the 2024/25 Budget and the MTFP for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

## 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) agree the key principles being adopted in preparing the Medium-Term Financial Plan, which is the Annex to this report, for the Authority, subject to an annual review;
- b) note performance of the Authority against the Our North Tyneside Plan outcomes;
- c) consider and agree the initial Budget proposals in relation to the 2024/25 General Fund Revenue Budget (Section 1.6 of this report) and Dedicated Schools Grant (Section 1.9 of this report), including the assessment in relation to the current year's Budget monitoring information;
- d) consider and agree the proposed 2024-2029 Draft Investment Plan (Section 1.8 of this report), which has been developed in accordance with the Capital Strategy (Appendix B(v) of this report), including initial prudential indicators for 2024-2029 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Prudential Framework and a proposed Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy in line with capital finance regulations (Appendix B(ii) & B (iii) of this report);
- e) note that all schemes within the 2024-2029 Investment Plan will be kept under corporate review by the Investment Programme Board;
- f) consider and agree the initial proposals in relation to the Treasury Management Statement, Annual Investment Strategy for 2024/25 and Treasury Management Practices (Appendix C & D of this report);
- g) note the formal Reserves and Balances Policy for the Authority, subject to review at least annually (Appendix H of this report);
- h) note the Provisional Statement by the Chief Finance Officer (Section 11 of the Annex to this report);
- i) consider and agree the 2024/25 rent policy for housing; and consider and agree the initial Budget proposals in relation to the 2024-2028 Housing Revenue Account budget, and associated Business Plan,

including an assessment in relation to the current year's budget monitoring information (2023/24) (Section 1.7 of this report);

- j) note the proposed 7.7% rent increase from April 2024 (subject to any potential rent "cap" being implemented following further Government announcements) (Section 1.7 of this report);
- k) note that as agreed as part of the budget-setting process for 2024/05 a review of services charges has been undertaken which will require consultation with tenants prior to implementation, full details of which can be found in (Section 1.7 of this report);
- l) note the initial proposals in relation to garage rents for 2024/25 as per (Section 1.7 of this report);
- m) note the Governments proposed changes to all housing stock-owning local authorities in relation to retaining additional capital receipts for new build schemes, full details of which can be found in Section 8.4.14 of the Annex to this report;
- n) authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Commissioning and Asset Management, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, to undertake resource allocations to schools for 2024/25 in line with the school funding arrangements set out in the report (Section 1.9 of this report); and
- o) authorise the Elected Mayor, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Deputy Mayor and other Cabinet Members, to work with the Senior Leadership Team to continue their joint review of these initial Budget proposals.

### **1.3 Forward Plan:**

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 8 September 2023.

### **1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework**

- 1.4.1 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules are set out in Part 4.7 of the Authority's Constitution. The Budget is guided by paragraph 4.7.3, covering the process for the preparation, consideration and final approval of the Authority's

Council Tax requirement and Council Tax level. The statutory and constitutional requirements for preparing, considering, and approving these issues drive the timetable for the financial planning and Council Tax-setting process of the Authority.

1.4.2 The Financial Planning and Budget process is a fundamental part of the overall governance and assurance framework of the Authority. This in turn provides assurance that is considered as part of preparing the Annual Governance Statement each year.

1.4.3 The Budget proposals will also be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination and Finance Committee (OSC&FC) during the Budget-setting process. The priorities in the 2021-2025 Our North Tyneside Plan provide the strategic framework within which Budget resources are allocated.

## **1.5 Information:**

### **1.5.1 Background**

1.5.2 Understanding the context in which any budget is set is critical, but this is even more relevant now. In many ways, 2024/25 represents the first post-covid budget, with the temporary funding to support local authorities through the pandemic now ended and activity levels stabilising towards the "new normal". However, at the same time, wider economic factors have come into play, manifesting themselves in the cost-of-living crisis for our residents, business and the wider public sector.

1.5.3 Local authorities across the country have experienced significant financial uncertainty for many years, but since 2018 there have been several local authorities who have issued notices under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (section 114 Notice) which is effectively a notice confirming that an authority is unable to meet its expected financial obligations. The reasons for the section 114 notices issued to date vary between each affected authority, but the current funding levels in the sector mean financial resilience has been weakened and some authorities have struggled to meet increased levels of demand within their current financial and operational arrangements.

1.5.4 The national and international economic position must also be recognised. As well as the increased levels of older people generally, there is a change to the proportion of over-50 year olds in work, reducing the levels of those who are economically active. Despite innovation and changing business processes, productivity in the economy has been weak in the past 10-15 years,

undoubtedly impacted by the events such as the global banking crisis and the pandemic. More recently, rapidly rising inflation and the consequential increase in interest rates, following a prolonged period of historically low rates, are impacting on growth in the economy. However, there remain areas of economic resilience, with continued level of capital investment in many sectors.

1.5.5 Locally, this presents the Authority with challenges, which also change at pace. Since the budget for 2023/24 was set on 16 February this year, increased demand and changing levels of risk have impacted on activity and budgets. This is covered in detail in the latest Performance and Finance report (also on the agenda for this meeting), but include:

- Increased levels of vulnerable children, including those accessing high needs support;
- National pressures on the cost of external provision for both children's and adult social care;
- Increasing food inflation and reducing numbers of schools buying services from the Authority, linked in part to academisation;
- Continued inflationary pressures, impacting on general costs but also contractual uplifts, for example waste and PFI schemes; and
- Recruitment and retention challenges, especially in certain shortage areas such as social care and lawyers.

1.5.6 In response to this, the Authority has continued to evolve and enhance its reporting mechanisms. 2023/24 has seen a new approach to the bi-monthly reporting to Cabinet and OSC&FC. This has focused more on service activity levels that drive the finances, rather than just the financial impacts, giving a much more informed and balanced set of reports to Members. It is also driving the revised approach to the MTFP set out in this report.

1.5.7 Despite these challenges, Cabinet is preparing its budget and MTFP proposals from a position of strength. The bi-monthly Performance and Finance reports set out some of the key achievements in year, demonstrating the support the Authority gives to its residents, business and visitors. The achievements set out in those reports, and summarised in this section, are not exhaustive but include:

- 58% reduction in carbon emissions across Authority service operations, ensuring that the Authority is on track against its commitment to become carbon net-zero by 2030;

- The ambition to deliver 5,000 Affordable Homes is progressing well with 2,348 homes delivered at the end of quarter two;
- The Ambition for North Tyneside Programme is progressing with regeneration projects in all four areas of the borough;
- Almost £12m has been invested in delivering planned improvement works to maintain homes to the decent homes standard including kitchen and bathroom replacements, roof replacements, redecoration works, fencing replacements, heating replacement works;
- Almost £9m of improvement works have been delivered including integrated transport improvements including the North Shields Transport Hub which was opened on the 2 September 2023.
- Work continues to progress on the resurfacing programme, flood alleviation measures and on major highways improvement schemes such as the Seafront Sustainable Cycle Route, Stephenson Street junction upgrade and the next phase of the Routes to Metro Project; and
- Council Tax and Business Rates collection remains strong and compares well with national performance, ensuring that the Authority has the resources required to deliver essential services.

1.5.8 However, the regular monitoring reports also highlight the on-going financial challenge. Without further intervention, there is a current forecast overspend of £9.648m this financial year which, without further improvement, would require some use of strategic reserves. Whilst this is the intended reason for holding reserves, their usage cannot continue indefinitely. In response to this, Cabinet continues to focus on a realistic programme of replenishment of reserves over the period of the MTFP.

1.5.9 In light of these challenges facing the sector, prioritising service levels and budgets is critical, which need to focus on the vulnerable and those impacted most by the cost of living crisis.

1.5.10 However, this planning continues to be undertaken with deep levels of uncertainty facing the Authority. Whilst the 2023/24 finance settlement gave an indication of the 2024/25 funding for some items through a policy statement, it is far from complete and the allocations between councils is not confirmed.

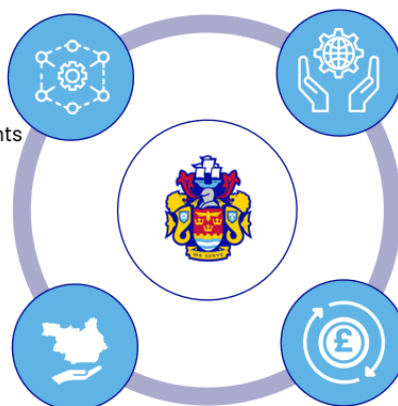
1.5.11 The Autumn Statement will take place on 22 November 2023, which is after the publication of this report. Whilst that will provide further information which will feed into the budget scrutiny process, the date of the provisional finance settlement (which will give further detail on the allocation of funding to

individual councils) is not yet confirmed, but, is unlikely to be before mid-December 2023 (it was not released until 19 December last year).

1.5.12 As a response to this, the Authority has developed a high-level Financial Strategy which set the overarching principles and considerations for medium-term financial planning within North Tyneside. The diagram below sets out the components of the Strategy and each of the themes is covered in more detail within the MTFP, which is appended to this report.

#### Strategic Alignment

- Driven by Our North Tyneside Plan
- 4-year balanced position (MTFP)
- Align revenue and capital plans
- Consider whole life costs of decisions
- Maximise direct service delivery to residents



#### Governance

- Evidence led and benefit measurement
- Deliver value for money in everything we do
- Maximise social value
- Lawful decision making

#### Resilience

- Ensure sufficiency of reserves & balances
- Address key risks without impacting on Our North Tyneside Plan delivery

#### Sustainability

- Set a sustainable Council Tax in line with Government assumptions
- Generate income to support service delivery
- Maximising external funding
- Balanced treasury management

## 1.6 General Fund Medium-Term Financial Plan

1.6.1 This section provides a summary of the MTFP which has been appended to this report and which includes full details of the approach taken for Budget-setting for 2024/25.

1.6.2 The final 2023/24 settlement included funding allocations for 2023/24 and the policy direction for 2024/25. The MTFP, as set out to Council in February 2023, identified that the Authority, in common with other upper tier local authorities, needed to address a material budget shortfall in 2024/25 and beyond. However, there remains some uncertainty about the level of funding for 2024/25 and the potential for additional pressures to emerge during the budget setting process.

1.6.3 At the Council meeting in February 2023, the MTFP for 2024/25 to 2026/27 set out a funding gap of £35.110m over the 4-year period, with a gap of £7.575m for 2024/25. The gap in the February Council report for 2024/25 included the future years impact of the 2023/24 increase in Council Tax (2.99%) and Adult Social Care Precept (2%), which were agreed at that meeting.



- 1.6.4 The Revenue Budget Outturn for 2022/23 was reported to the Cabinet in June 2023, and represented a net overspend on the cost of services of £6.081m. The Strategic Reserve was utilised to fund that overspend, reducing the remaining balance to £6.345m. The September 2023 Performance and Financial Management Report, which is also presented to Cabinet at this meeting, shows that without mitigation and management actions, the forecast pressure to the end of March 2023 is expected to be in the region of £9.648m.
- 1.6.5 Before looking at the new and emerging pressures since the Budget was set, Cabinet should note that the robust approach to financial planning in North Tyneside served its intended purpose. Had new pressures not arisen, many of which are outside the control of the Authority, budget monitoring analysis shows that by updating the assumptions included in February 2023, the residual MTFP gap for 2023/24 would have reduced from £7.575m to £2.265m. This would have been a manageable gap to address in the current budget round. Table 1 below summarises the impact of the revised assumptions which gives the starting gap for 2024/25's budget calculations.

**Table 1: Revised initial budget net gap following updated assumptions**

	£m
Gap as at February 2023 Council	7.575
Inflationary	0.678
Service	0.968
Organisation-wide	(6.956)
<b>Net Gap following updates to assumptions</b>	<b>2.265</b>

- 1.6.6 As part of the Authority's revised approach to setting a balanced budget for 2024/25 and a 4-year MTFP for 2024-2028, thirteen project areas have been established to tackle the highest pressures facing the Authority and to explore areas of opportunity to be more efficient or maximise resources. Since May, the Senior Leadership Team has been working to develop those projects with regular updates being received by members of Cabinet at Lead Member Briefings. The development of those follows the approach that was initially established with Childrens Social Care, which has been used as a blueprint for project development which form part of Cabinet's initial Budget proposals. This approach is also being incorporated into the in-year Performance and Finance reports to Cabinet and OSC&FC, recognising that service activity is driving the financial position of the Authority.
- 1.6.7 Following initial assessments of each project area, the anticipated net impact is an additional pressure of £12.209m increasing the gap for 2024/25. Full details of all the projects are included within section 6 of the MTFP appended to

this report, however table 2 below provides an overview of the position by project where there is a financial impact.

**Table 2: Projects Estimated Financial Impact on 2024/25**

Project Ref		£m
P04	Inclusive Education / SEND	1.291
P05	Ambition for Education	0.151
P06	Home to School Transport	1.500
P07	Handling Childrens Finance	5.452
P08	Climate and Waste	(0.700)
P09	Great Landlord and Specialist Housing	(0.220)
P10	Health and Social Care (Public Health and Adults)	3.424
P11	Financial Management	0.248
P13	Services to Schools	1.063
	<b>Total Estimated Financial Impact for 2024/25</b>	<b>12.209</b>

1.6.8 Taking into account the position after the review of assumptions, summarised in table 1, and the impact of the initial assessments of the projects above, the estimated revised gap for 2024/25 prior to any assumptions regarding additional government grants, collection fund adjustments or increases to Council Tax is £14.474m, as is shown in table 3a below.

**Table 3a: Revised Gap prior to additional funding estimates**

	£m
Net Gap for 2024/25 (from table 1)	2.265
Estimated financial impact of Projects (from table 2)	12.209
<b>2024/25 Revised Gap</b>	<b>14.474</b>

### **Options to reduce the General Fund gap for 2024/25**

1.6.9 As the Budget plans have developed recently, further consideration has been given to potential changes to government grant funding, in particular funding elements that are influenced by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). Initial estimates are that further funding of £4.942m could be received, which would also support the revised gap as described above. Table 3b below shows the impact of the estimated additional funding for 2024/25.

**Table 3b: Revised Gap including additional funding estimates**

	£m
Net Gap for 2024/25 (from table 1)	2.265
Estimated financial impact of Projects (from table 2)	12.209
Additional Government Funding assumptions	(4.942)
<b>2024/25 Revised Gap</b>	<b>9.532</b>

- 1.6.10 For 2023/24 and 2024/25 the Government announced that the referendum limit for increases to Council Tax would be up to 5%, which will form the basis of the Government's assumption for calculating individual councils' Core Spending Power. The MTFP approved by full Council in February 2023 included a 2.99% general increase in Council Tax and a 2% Adult Social Care Precept for 2023/24 but did not make any assumptions for future years. Cabinet will be aware that the general move towards raising income locally places additional burden on those residents not in receipt of Local Council Tax Support, either as part of the statutory scheme or the additional support put in place locally. The National Audit Office has calculated that between 2010/11 and 2020/21, Council Tax in North Tyneside rose by 15.8% in real terms (using 2019/20 prices). Whilst this remains a major concern, the Authority must reflect the Government's assumptions in its financial planning.
- 1.6.11 Whilst no proposal about Council Tax and/or the Adult Social Care Precept are being made in this report, it is useful to set out what this would mean for the Authority for illustrative purposes. Should Cabinet consider the increases in Council Tax, based on current tax base estimates, this would raise approximately £5.865m of additional funding for next year (made up of £3.513m general Council Tax (2.99%) and £2.352m from the Adult Social Care Precept (2%)). The precise final level of any change in Council Tax will be confirmed in February 2024 following a decision by full Council.
- 1.6.12 Cabinet will be aware of the statutory and additional local support that is in place in North Tyneside to assist residents with their Council Tax bills. In summary, it is proposed to retain the current level of support through both the statutory Local Council Tax Support Scheme, which gives up to 85% discount for eligible working age claimants (eligible pensionable age claimants can claim up to 100% of their bill). In addition, there is a local scheme where up to £150 per eligible working age claimant is available, at a cost of £1.5m annually. For a working age couple in a Band A property, this would see their annual bill

reduced to £61 per annum (£8 for a single person). Further detail is included in section 5.6 of the Annex.

- 1.6.13 Table 4 below summarises the revised gap for illustrative purposes taking these factors into consideration, especially recognising that any Council Tax increase proposals will follow in January and February reports to Cabinet and Council. The revised gap reflects the on-going uncertainty noted earlier in this report, especially around central government funding levels.

**Table 4: Revised Gap following illustrative impact of increase in Council Tax**

	£m
Revised Gap Table 3	9.532
2.99% Council Tax	(3.513)
2.00% Adult Social Care Precept	(2.352)
<b>2024/25 Revised Gap</b>	<b>3.667</b>

- 1.6.14 The Mayor and Cabinet have already made decisions in previous years which result in savings during the MTFP period, which are already included in the MTFP gap calculations used in this report. These are summarised in Table 5 below for ease of reference.

**Table 5: 2024-2026 Efficiency Programme as at February 2023**

Efficiency Programme	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Digital, Data & Customer – ICT SIMS	(0.018)	(0.060)
Digital, Data & Customer – Data & Analytics	(0.090)	(0.025)
Commissioning, Procurement & Commercial – Supply Chain	(0.100)	(0.100)
<b>Total Prior Year Budget Proposals</b>	<b>(0.208)</b>	<b>(0.185)</b>

- 1.6.15 Work will continue before January 2024 to update the revised gap to take account of the Provisional Settlement (expected in December) along with any wider Government announcements, including the impact of policy initiatives. In particular, the residual gap around adult social care (ASC) is hoped to narrow based on the realignment of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care funding into the ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. This will also take into account the latest returns to Government on the business rates position, which will not be known until January 2024. However, in the absence of any detailed information, no attempt has been made to quantify

this and the full extent of the social care growth already in the MTFP assumptions has been left unchanged. In the event of the residual gap remaining after the Provisional Settlement updates are incorporated, the Authority will need to consider further usage of reserves or the application of capital receipt flexibilities, as set out elsewhere in this report.

## **2024–2028 General Fund Medium–Term Financial Plan Estimates**

- 1.6.16 The Authority is prudently planning on the basis that it will receive additional inflationary uplifts in Revenue Support Grants (RSG), Business Rates Top Up grants and additional social care grant in 2024/25. From 2025/26 it is likely that the Authority will only receive CPI uplifts in RSG, Business Rates and Top Up grants i.e., no increase in core grant funding are included. This prudent estimate for future years is in line with announcements by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the March 2023 Budget that across the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28 the public sector would only receive a 1% real terms funding increase with Health, Education and Defence expected to receive additional protection. This position will be closely monitored as Budget–setting progresses and during the lead in time for publication of the Autumn Statement which is expected on 22 November 2023.
- 1.6.17 As in previous years, the MTFP has been reviewed and assumptions for the next 4–years have been updated to consider the impact of inflation and demand led pressures across all of the Authority’s services. Full details of the impact of the revised assumptions are included within the Annex to this report. The summary position is included in table 6 below.
- 1.6.18 The revised assumptions have increased the overall funding gap or level of savings required to £46.3m by the end of the current MTFP in 2027/28 (assuming a balanced budget in 2024/25). However, there continues to be a high level of uncertainty on the 4–year planning horizon. Due to this as in 2023/24 a simplified approach has been taken at this stage to set out the 4–year MTFP period.

**Table 6: General Fund MTFP Summary**

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Estimated growth required	10.552	13.026	5.953
Estimated financial impact of Projects	4.195	4.824	8.465
Existing efficiency programme	(0.185)	0.000	0.000
Government Funding assumptions	(1.060)	2.244	(1.691)
<b>In-year gap</b>	<b>13.502</b>	<b>20.094</b>	<b>12.727</b>
<b>Cumulative gap (assumes 2024/25 is balanced)</b>	<b>13.502</b>	<b>33.596</b>	<b>46.323</b>

1.6.19 The ongoing uncertainty is continuing to make financial planning extremely challenging and requires the Authority to be flexible and adaptable to the changing financial landscape. As Budget-setting progresses officers will continue to monitor economic and market updates, and where necessary will apply these to any assumptions currently estimated within the Authority's MTFP.

#### **Review of General Fund Reserves**

1.6.20 The Authority maintains a level of reserves to plan for and manage financial risk. As Cabinet will already be aware, it is important to remember that reserves can only be used once, and that they are maintained to provide a degree of financial resilience and flexibility for the Borough.

1.6.21 Reserves balances have fallen from 2022/23 primarily due to the overspend of £6.081m and the use of the Strategic Reserve to balance the General Fund in that financial year. The Authority continues to have planned use of earmarked reserves, and this will continue in the current financial year and across the MTFP. Cabinet will be aware that this unplanned use of reserves meant that the Strategic Reserve balance is now below the £10m minimum as set out in the Reserves and Balances policy. The MTFP set by full Council last year included plans to replenish the Strategic Reserve to a level above that in the Policy. However, due to additional pressures identified earlier in this report the initial review undertaken by management set out to defer the replenishment of the Strategic Reserve into 2025/26 and the remainder of the MTFP. General Fund reserves balances are forecast to fall to £37.349m by the end of 2027/28. This assumes no utilisation of the Strategic Reserves to underwrite revenue budget pressures over the MTFP.

- 1.6.22 The Authority bought forward General Fund reserves balances of £59.596m into 2023/24, based on the latest forecast of planned usage, it is anticipated £18.271m will be drawn down in 2023/24 to support service delivery. This would result in a 2024/25 balance bought forward for reserves of £41.325m. The planned usage does not incorporate the potential requirement of the strategic reserves to support the revenue budget pressure being forecast of £9.648m for 2023/24 as reported in the Financial Management report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 1.6.23 Whilst there is still a significant level of uncertainty, the Authority will continue to deliver best practice as would be expected. That means there is a refreshed 4-year MTFP for both the General Fund and HRA, alongside a 5-year Capital Investment Programme. Those financial plans have been based on a benchmarked set of assumptions which have included information from HM Treasury, the Office of National Statistics, and the Office for Budget Responsibility, CIPFA, dialogue with the Society of Municipal Treasurers, as well as the local Treasurers across the "LA7" and Association of North East Councils (ANEC) areas. The prudent use of reserves forms a vital part of this financial planning.

## 1.7 Housing Revenue Account

- 1.7.1 Financial Planning for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as with the General Fund, is driven by the Our North Tyneside Plan vision and priorities. The HRA will set a budget and updated four-year, MTFP supported by the updated 30-year HRA Business Plan, which will be agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 29 January 2024.
- 1.7.2 The Authority, in line with most Local Authority Registered Providers, follows the Government's social housing rent policy. In recent years, the increase has been calculated at the CPI rate, as at September, plus 1%. This led to a 4.1% rent increase for 2022/23. However, for 2023/24, due to the cost of living crisis and the high rates of inflation in September 2022, which stood at 10.1%, this would have led to an 11.1% increase. Following consultation, the Government capped the maximum rent increase for 2023/24 at 7%. As part of the proposals, the Government also reserved the right to apply the cap for 2024/25. In response to the level of rent being set, Cabinet will recall that a £3m fund was created to support a range of tenancy sustainment measures over the 3-year period from 2023/24.
- 1.7.3 At September 2023, the CPI rate of inflation was 6.7%, so applying the standard policy would lead to a rent increase of 7.7%. As with last year, a range of

scenarios have initially been modelled within the 30-year HRA Business Plan and outlined in table 7 below, pending any definitive announcements from Government. The default position for 2024/25 is based on a 7.7% increase, with scenarios setting out the implications of reduced “caps” from that point in terms of the savings that would be required to balance the plan in each circumstance.

- 1.7.4 The HRA continues to face a range of cost and supply pressures. Some of the main pressures are:
- Uncertainty over pay awards, for 2023/24 and future years;
  - The outcome of the Craft Workers pay review;
  - The implications of Grenfell Disaster which culminated in the passing of the Building Safety Act in 2022, placing additional responsibilities on Landlords e.g. ensuring carbon monoxide detectors in all properties, and increased level of electrical inspection;
  - Supply chain difficulties sourcing certain materials and services, which adds to cost pressures and uncertainty; and
  - Increased sub-contractor costs as they face many of the same issues in their supply chains and resourcing plans.
- 1.7.5 All of these issues have been factored into the HRA Business Plan, along with the current assumptions on the proposed rent increase, with the aim of ensuring that the 30-year HRA Business Plan can be balanced, whilst still meeting all the Mayor and Cabinet’s key objectives. These include maintaining the existing stock, meeting increased Affordable Homes ambitions and taking steps to continue to respond to the Authority’s Climate Change Emergency plans, by funding increased sustainability measures. In addition, where possible, continuing to address the decarbonisation agenda as part of the Authority’s Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan.
- 1.7.6 As stated above table 7 provides some indicative figures of the potential impact of a cap being imposed. This shows the amount of savings that would be required at each level starting with the balanced plan at 7.7%, and working backwards towards the long-term Government target assumption that annual rent increases would average out at 3%.



**Table 7 – Housing Revenue Account 2024–2054 – Potential Impact of Different Rent Increase scenarios on HRA Business Plan linked to implementation of a “Cap”**

Rent Increase	Available Resource – Revenue & Capital £bn	Required Resource – Revenue & Capital £bn	Current Funding Gap – Revenue & Capital £bn
7.7%	5.331	5.331	0
7%	5.310	5.330	0.020
5%	5.251	5.330	0.079
3%	5.192	5.329	0.137
0%	5.104	5.328	0.224

1.7.7 As can be seen from the above table the implementation of a cap would potentially lead to significant gaps in funding. If a cap was to be imposed, the Authority would need to find savings within the HRA Business Plan to close the gap. At that point there a range of options that would have to be explored to help balance the HRA and provide resources to move towards meeting Cabinet and tenants’ ambitions. These would involve the following areas:

- a) An ongoing review of bad debt provisions and the associated assumptions;
- b) A review of levels of in-year contingency provided within both the Management and Repairs budgets;
- c) Review of the approach to debt management within the Treasury Management Strategy for the HRA;
- d) Analysing any Government announcement on rent policy to assess potential impact;
- e) Balancing the needs of the existing stock whilst ensuring that the HRA continues to provide funding for a new build programme to assist towards meeting Cabinet’s Affordable Housing ambitions;
- f) Ensure that the Authority has the resources available to continue supporting a programme of training and development through Apprenticeships and the Working Roots scheme;
- g) Identifying resources specifically to respond to the Authority’s declaration of a Climate Change Emergency, by undertaking sustainability measures within the housing stock that will reduce the Authority’s carbon footprint and help move towards net carbon zero status in line with the Authority’s Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan.
- ‘h) The Business Plan also assumes that the results of the service charge review as described in Section 8 of the Annex are fully implemented from 1

April 2024, following an appropriate period of consultation with affected tenants, and that an agreed budget for transitional protection for those tenants is also put in place.

- 1.7.8 As part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, Cabinet agreed that a review of service charges would be undertaken to inform the 2024/25 budget and ensure that the proposed charges reflected the cost of delivering the relevant services. For the majority of services, the result of the review was that increasing service charges for 2024/25 in line with the proposed rent increase (7.7%) is considered to be appropriate.
- 1.7.9 However, there were some specific exceptions to this where additional increases are required in order to meet the costs of service delivery, specifically relating to the North Tyneside Living schemes. Details of these are set out in section 8.4 of the Annex, including details of the elements that are eligible for benefit support. For those elements that are to be paid by existing tenants, transitional relief is being put in place to limit increases in 2024/25 to the level of overall rent increase (i.e. 7.7% under current assumptions).

## **1.8 2024–2029 Draft Investment Plan**

- 1.8.1 The Authority's capital expenditure plans are captured within the Investment Plan which is developed in accordance with the Capital Investment Strategy. Effective capital investment plays an important role in the delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives. The Investment Plan captures a range of planned improvements within the Borough, helping to shape the delivery of the Authority's services as well as undertaking regeneration and placemaking activity and encouraging economic and housing growth.
- 1.8.2 The existing 2023–2028 Investment Plan totalling £312.34m was approved by full Council on 16 February 2023. The delivery of projects within the plan and progress to date is subject to ongoing review and challenge by Investment Programme Board (IPB) and has been reported to Cabinet as part of the bi-monthly Performance and Financial Management reports.
- 1.8.3 As part of the MTFP process, the existing plan has been reviewed to ensure this remains affordable and sustainable, challenging existing commitments as well as exploring opportunities for additional investment.
- 1.8.4 At this stage, a schedule of the individual projects included within the draft Investment Plan is attached as Appendix B(ii), with all schemes subject to the

Authority's Gateway process. The overall proposed investment is summarised in the table below:

**Table 8: Summary of the Draft Investment Plan 2024–2029**

Spend	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund	55.350	20.976	20.914	18.414	14.664	130.318
Housing	36.762	36.097	39.148	38.798	38.435	189.240
<b>Total</b>	<b>92.112</b>	<b>57.073</b>	<b>60.062</b>	<b>57.212</b>	<b>53.099</b>	<b>319.558</b>

1.8.5 In addition to the agreed 2023–2028 Investment Plan, emerging proposals for the 2024–2029 Investment Plan for consideration as part of the Budget-setting process are set out below:

- The implementation and upgrade of the Authority's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to replace the current BMS (£4m);
- Investment at the Killingworth depot, providing additional accommodation to facilitate the relocation of the Adult Loan Equipment Service (£2.8m);
- Improvements in the Authority's non-operational portfolio, improving accommodation standards, energy efficiency measures and enhancing its performance (£2.75m);
- Structural improvements works to Royal Quays Marina barrage (£1.65m);
- Investment in additional ICT infrastructure, including the delivery of upgrades to the Wide Area Network (WAN) to enhance security and connectivity (£0.95m);
- A new year 5 (2028/29) has also been added to reflect rolling programme projects such as Asset Planned Maintenance, ICT infrastructure refresh, investment in the Authority's schools and highways infrastructure.

1.8.6 In addition to the above, the Authority has also identified a range of opportunities to utilise the additional flexibility to apply capital receipts to help fund the costs associated with service transformation that would ordinarily be met from revenue resources. The Authority is considering options to invest in 2024/25 in projects to help deliver ongoing revenue savings and address any residual budget gap for 2024/25 once the Finance Settlement is confirmed. Further details can be found in the Authority's proposed Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy in Appendix B(vi).

1.8.7 Cabinet will be aware that as part of the proposals for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA), a regional submission has been made for parts of the region to become an Investment Zone. In North Tyneside, this would include parts of the riverside area, including land at the Port of Tyne. These sites, along with other river locations in South Tyneside and Newcastle, would be known as a Growth Site, which could receive additional Investment Zone funding. Whilst there are no specific projects included within the draft Investment Plan at present, if the Investment Zone bid is successful, it could result in additional funding being allocated to the borough.

## 1.9 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

1.9.1 Cabinet will be aware that school funding is a matter for the Department for Education (DfE), either by direct funding agreements with academy trusts or delegated by local authorities to maintained schools where budget management is the delegated responsibility of each governing body. As in previous years, Cabinet will need to determine the local formula to distribute funding to mainstream schools and academies for the financial year 2024/25. The formula will apply directly to maintained schools for the financial year, and for academies it will form the basis for their funding, distributed by the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA), for the year starting 1 September 2024. The local formula must comply with statutory guidance, but within these confines the final decision on the formula rests with the Authority after consultation with schools and the Schools Forum.

**Table 9: Indicative Dedicated Schools Grant funding allocation 2024/25**

	<b>Schools Block £m</b>	<b>CSS Block £m</b>	<b>Early Years Block £m</b>	<b>High Needs Block £m</b>	<b>Total Indicative DSG 2024/25 £m</b>
Indicative DSG Settlement	155.305	1.554	15.294	34.747	206.900

1.9.2 The Authority's DSG Management Plan, agreed in advance with parents and carers, children and young people, and partners from across education, health, and care, was submitted in February 2023. Without further action, the High Needs block cumulative deficit was forecast to be in the region of £19.500m by 2027/28. The Authority's submission was successful and the DfE agreed financial support to the Authority of £19.500m over a 5-year period, with the first payment of £7.800m paid at the end of the financial year 2022/23. In subsequent financial years, subject to compliance with the conditions set in the agreement, the DfE will release the remainder of the £19.500m.

- 1.9.3 North Tyneside Council is on track to reach a positive in year balance on its DSG High Needs Block by the year-end 2027/28. The Authority's DSG management plan forecast a 2023/24 year-end pressure of £10.474m. The outturn position for 2022/23 was healthier than forecast, however, the Authority was in active discussion at that time with its maintained special schools regarding pupil numbers and funding. These discussions are now concluded and reflected in the revised position.
- 1.9.4 The Authority's current forecast shows that we remain on target to achieve the 2023/24 year-end position detailed within our DSG management plan, with a forecast pressure of £10.473m, ie a small improvement against the plan. The DfE announced that in June 2023, the Authority will receive in capital funding £4.681m and officers are working on detailed plans for this investment.
- 1.9.5 The Authority remains confident that governance arrangements in place provide the necessary political rigour and oversight of its Lead Members, and support and scrutiny by its Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team. The wider SEND partnership remains locked into the deliverables set out in the DSG management plan, incorporated into the partnership's SEND improvement plan.
- 1.9.6 The Authority's Safety Valve communication and engagement plan, and its wider strategic SEND Engagement Strategy, continue to provide a clear basis upon which leaders across the Authority share information, consult and co-produce with children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider workforce.
- 1.9.7 A key risk for the Authority is that the statutory override to ring-fence DSG deficits from councils' wider financial position in statutory accounts is due to end after the accounts for the financial year 2025/26. After this point, unless the statutory override is extended, authorities will need to demonstrate their ability to cover DSG deficits from their available reserves. Due to the level of the deficit on the High Needs block of the DSG it is imperative that the Authority's DSG Management Plan meets the ESFA's requirements to ensure the historic deficit can be supported by funding that is available.

## **1.10 General Fund Initial Budget Proposals and next steps**

- 1.10.1 Cabinet's initial Budget proposals are based upon available information and judgements at the time of the writing of this report. As noted throughout this report, there are several assumptions and judgements built into the figures presented that are outside the control of the Authority and need to be finalised.

1.10.2 These initial Budget proposals are subject to further review and consultation before they can be confirmed. The information to be assessed and finalised includes:

- The overall impact of the Autumn Statement due to be announced on 22 November 2023;
- The Provisional and Final Local Government Finance Settlement announcements for 2024/25, including capital announcements and specific grants, including the DSG;
- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority Precepts (due February 2024);
- Levies, including the North of Tyne element of the Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, and Northumberland Combined Authority Transport Levy (due February 2024);
- Tyne and Wear Joint Service Budgets (due January/February 2024); and
- Consideration of the impact of the economic climate on the residents of the Borough and Council Taxpayers.

1.10.3 Therefore, as some external announcements are still to be received, it is recommended that Cabinet authorises the Elected Mayor, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Deputy Mayor and other Cabinet Members, to work with the Senior Leadership Team to continue their joint review of these proposals.

### **Equality and Diversity Considerations**

1.10.4 The Authority has specific responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. Part of this is to ensure that the potential effects of decisions on those protected by equality legislation are considered prior to any decision being made. The Authority will continually monitor the effect of its Budget-setting process and decision-making by using equality impact assessments.

1.10.5 Full Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken for each of the projects included within the initial Budget proposals in order for Cabinet to

consider, before reaching its final decision. These will also be available for other aspects of budget engagement throughout the engagement process. An Equality Impact Assessment has also been carried out on the Budget Engagement Strategy.

### **2023/24 Financial Planning and Budget process – Timetable of Key Decision Milestones**

1.10.6 Key aspects of the 2023/24 Financial Planning and Budget process timetable are set out at Appendix G to this report, highlighting key decision milestones in the process. The Elected Mayor and Cabinet are responsible for formulating the Authority's Budget. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, in close consultation with the Elected Mayor, has been nominated as the lead Cabinet Member for the overarching 2024–2028 Financial Planning and Budget process. The Director of Resources will be the project sponsor.

### **The Budget Engagement Strategy**

- 1.10.7 The Authority is committed to being an organisation that works better for residents and to ensure that it listens and cares. This commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in the Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.10.8 The Authority is also committed to being an organisation that works better for residents and to ensure that it listens and cares. This commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in the Financial Planning and Budget process.
- 1.10.9 The aim of the Budget Engagement Strategy is to reach different sectors of the population through an approach that encompasses engagement with residents as a whole and customers/users of services as well as particular groups of people, including those with protected characteristics. The approach also ensures reach with particular interest groups such council housing tenants. The Budget Engagement Strategy also ensures targeted activity with specific external and internal stakeholder groups. Full details of the Budget Engagement Strategy are set out at Appendix F to this report.

### **1.11 Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

### Option 1

Cabinet can agree the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of this report.

### Option 2

Cabinet does not agree to the recommendations in paragraph 1.2 of this report and suggest that further / different options are considered by the Senior Leadership Team and be reported back to Cabinet for its further consideration.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

## **1.12 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

Due to external information still to be received, Cabinet is not able to finalise its proposed Council Tax level for 2024/25 in relation to the General Fund. This report will form the basis of Budget engagement and scrutiny over the next two months, but further work will inevitably be required before final decisions are made on the Budgets for next year, hence the authorisation recommendation referred to in section 1.10 above.

## **1.13 Appendices:**

Annex	2024-2028 Medium-Term Financial Plan – Cabinet’s Initial Budget Proposals
Appendix A	2021-2025 Our North Tyneside Plan
Appendix B(i)	2024-2028 MTFP Project Summaries
Appendix B(ii)	2024/2029 Investment Plan Summary
Appendix B(iii)	2024-2029 Housing Investment Plan
Appendix B(iv)	Prudential Indicators 2024-2029
Appendix B(v)	Capital Investment Strategy
Appendix B(vi)	Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy



Appendix C	2024/25 Treasury Management Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Credit Criteria
Appendix D	Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) 2024/25
Appendix E(i)	HRA Business Plan 2024-2028
Appendix E(ii)	HRA Financial Plan, Reserves and Contingency Movement 2024-2028
Appendix F	Budget Engagement Strategy 2024/25
Appendix G	2024/25 Financial Planning and Budget Timetable of Key Future Decision Milestones
Appendix H	Draft Reserves and Balances Policy 2024/25
Appendix J	Glossary of Terms

#### **1.14 Contact officers:**

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### 1.15 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) 2023/24 Financial Management Report to 30 September 2023 – Cabinet 27 November 2023:

[2023/24 Financial Management Report to 30 September 2023](#)

- (2) Autumn Statement 2022

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1118417/CCSI022065440-001\\_SECURE\\_HMT\\_Autumn\\_Statement\\_November\\_2022\\_Web\\_accessible\\_\\_1\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1118417/CCSI022065440-001_SECURE_HMT_Autumn_Statement_November_2022_Web_accessible__1_.pdf)

- (3) Local government finance policy statement 2023/24 to 2024/25

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-finance-policy-statement-2023-24-to-2024-25/local-government-finance-policy-statement-2023-24-to-2024-25>

- (4) Spring Budget 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spring-budget-2023/spring-budget-2023-html>

- (5) Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9721/CBP-9721.pdf>

- (6) Equality Impact Assessment

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

- 2.1.1 The financial implications arising from this report are appraised as part of the decisions made about what will be included in the Authority's Financial Plan, incorporating the 2024/25 Budget-setting process. Decisions on the Budget in relation to the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant, Investment Plan, Treasury Management Statement and Annual Investment Strategy need to be made within the overall context of the resources available to this Authority and within the legal framework for setting budgets. The Authority will need to closely examine the links with its key funding partners and their proposed financial plans, including an assessment of the impact of any grant fall-out over the proposed four-year resource planning period.
- 2.1.2 The report highlights that at this stage a further £3.667m of savings are required to balance the 2024/25 Budget, and over the MTFP period further savings of £46.3m are required. The assumptions leading to these forecasts are likely to change when the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement is announced. It is currently unclear if a 1-year or 3-year settlement is to be expected.
- 2.1.3 Cabinet and Council need to have due regard to the Chief Finance Officer's advice in relation to the levels of reserves and balances proposed as part of the four-year Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2024-2028, as issued in guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) in July 2014. A provisional statement to Cabinet by the Chief Finance Officer is included in the Annex to this report.

### **2.2 Legal**

- 2.2.1 This report, setting out the 2024-2028 Financial Planning and Budget; Initial Cabinet Proposals, has been prepared in compliance with the Authority's Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained in the Authority's Constitution. As stated in the body of the report, once approved by Cabinet the initial proposals will be submitted to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee as part of the Budget-setting process. The outcome of that Committee's review will be reported to Cabinet in February 2024 so that the review can be considered by Cabinet prior to the proposals for 2024-2028 Financial Planning and the 2024/25 Budget being submitted to full Council for Approval.

2.2.2 In accordance with legislative requirements and the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework process, the approval of the Authority's Budget is a matter for full Council.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

2.3.1 Each Cabinet Member has been consulted on the individual proposals put forward in this report, with regular discussions held between the Senior Leadership Team, the Elected Mayor and Cabinet.

#### External Consultation/Engagement

2.3.2 The Authority is committed to being an organisation that works better for residents and to ensure that it listens and cares. This commitment includes giving residents and other key stakeholders an opportunity to be involved in the Financial Planning and Budget process as outlined in the Budget Engagement Strategy.

2.3.3 The Authority's overall approach to engagement ensures that the public have opportunities to have their say throughout the year, through a series of different methods, including engaging with the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and ward members and through activities such as the Big Community Conversation and State of the Area Conference.

2.3.4 In all its engagement activity, the Authority is committed to ensuring that residents with protected characteristics, as set out in the 2010 Equality Act, can participate. In line with this an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the 2024/25 Budget Engagement Strategy and this is available on request.

### **2.4 Human rights**

2.4.1 All actions and spending plans contained within the Budget are fully compliant with national and international human rights law. For example, Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides for a qualified right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to 'hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority'. Article 8 of the Convention states that everyone has the qualified right to respect for private and family life and their home.

## **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

2.5.1 In undertaking the Budget-setting process the Authority's aim will always be to secure compliance with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty under that Act.

2.5.2 To achieve this an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on the Budget Engagement process. The aim is to remove or minimize any disadvantage for people wishing to take part in the engagement programme. Specific proposals on how services will seek to meet budgetary requirements will be subject to EIAs (Equality Impact Assessment), which will be informed by the findings of the Budget Engagement. A cumulative impact assessment of all of these will also be undertaken prior to Cabinet in January 2024 and will be made available to both Cabinet and full Council.

## **2.6 Risk management**

Individual projects within the Financial Plan and Budget are subject to full risk reviews. For larger projects, individual project risk registers are / will be established as part of the Authority's agreed approach to project management. Risks will be entered into the appropriate operational, strategic, corporate or project risk register(s) and will be subject to ongoing management to reduce the likelihood and impact of each risk.

## **2.7 Crime and disorder**

The Authority has in place a range of services that promote the reduction of crime and disorder within the Borough and are funded through the annual Budget and are included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, local authorities have a statutory duty to work with partners on the reduction of crime and disorder.

## **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

The Our North Tyneside Plan states that "We will reduce the carbon footprint of our operations and will work with partners to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint." A number of the proposals will contribute to this including those to reduce the Authority's energy consumption. The environmental and sustainability aspects of individual proposals will be assessed in detail as and when agreed and implemented to ensure these support the Authority's targets under the Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan.

### PART 3 – SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive  X
- Director(s) of Service  X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)  X
- Chief Finance Officer  X
- Monitoring Officer  X
- Assistant Chief Executive  X