

POLICY DIGEST, December 2017

This digest presents a summary of the latest policy developments at a national and regional level of strategic relevance to Northumberland and highlights Government announcements of relevance to local government. This issue covers period from Monday 4 December to Friday 30 December. Previous and subsequent editions are available at www.northumberland.gov.uk/policy.

Policy Development	Action	Lead
PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY		
<p>Government sets out further measures to support councils to deliver services (19 December 2017)</p> <p>The government has set out funding plans for councils in England so they can continue to deliver the services their residents need while also protecting Council Tax payers from excessive increases in their bills. Confirming the local government funding arrangements for 2018 to 2019 – the third year of the £200 billion 4-year funding offer accepted by 97% of councils in 2016 - Communities Secretary Sajid Javid announced measures to give local authorities additional freedom to ensure they can protect services for some of their most vulnerable residents. Local authorities will now see 2 years of real terms increases in resources available to local government, and from 2015 to 2020, councils in England have access to over £200 billion to deliver the high-quality services their local communities need. The Communities Secretary also confirmed that the referendum threshold has been set in line with inflation, and so setting the core Council Tax referendum principles at 3%. This change, combined with the additional flexibility on the Adult Social Care precept confirmed last year, gives local authorities the independence they need to relieve pressure on local services, including adults and children's social care, while also recognising that many households face their own pressures.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-further-measures-to-support-councils-to-deliver-services</p>	For information	Alison Elsdon, Director of Corporate Resources
<p>A changemaking vision for local government</p> <p>At a time of intense financial pressures and when central government's mind is on other things, many are asking themselves where local government goes next. In this think-piece, the New Local Government Network calls for councils to embrace a bold 'changemaking' approach focused on the core values of creativity, collaboration and self-determination.</p>	For information	

http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2018/a-changemaking-vision-for-local-government/		
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PLACE SHAPING

Government unlocks £25 million to deliver more homes

This prospectus invites local authorities and third sector organisations to submit bids to the Planning Delivery Fund for an initial £11m of resource funding to support ambitious authorities in areas of high housing plan for new homes and infrastructure. This will equip them with the requisite resources to deliver the agenda set out in the Housing White Paper and the Autumn Budget. There are three funding streams: Joint Working Fund; design Quality Fund; and Innovation Fund. All local planning authorities (including development corporations, mayoral areas and combined authorities) are eligible to bid into the three funding streams, whether individually or in partnership. Third sector organisations (on their own or in partnership with local authorities) are also invited to submit proposals. The closing date for expressions of interest is 11 January 2018. The Government has also announced a package of measures to boost local authority planning capacity, support councils to take a proactive role in planning and encourage ambition and leadership in the delivery of new communities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unlocks-25-million-to-deliver-more-homes>

Officers to consider submitting an Expression of Interest to the Fund

Geoff Paul,
Director of
Planning and
Economy

Hadrian's Wall and Great Wall of China to sign unique agreement as Minister launches new heritage strategy (5 December 2017)

Hadrian's Wall and The Great Wall of China will sign a unique collaboration agreement to increase the historical and cultural understanding of the two sites, Heritage Minister John Glen has announced as he set out his priorities for heritage. Representatives from the two World Heritage Sites will work together to examine the challenges and opportunities of managing large and complex archaeological remains and explore the potential tourism growth in both countries. The agreement - the first of its kind - was announced by John Glen as he launched his framework for the growth of the heritage sector. The Heritage Statement outlines how he wants to strengthen the sector, through regeneration and placemaking, skills and environment and how it will contribute to an outward-looking global Britain. Measures in the statement include: Launching a new Heritage Council, chaired by the Minister, to emphasise the value of the historic environment, build consensus and ensure greater coordination; A new commemorative scheme to be rolled out across England to mark and celebrate the events, people and places that have shaped local communities; Exploring options to strengthen interim protection measures and reduce the risk of damage or destruction to sites while they are being considered for listing; and Working with Historic England and Heritage Lottery Fund to support the digitisation of historic environment records and heritage archives to help councils make informed planning decisions and increase public appreciation for their local heritage.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hadrians-wall-and-great-wall-of-china-to-sign-unique-agreement-as-minister-launches-new-heritage-strategy>

For information

Geoff Paul,
Director of
Planning and
Economy

<p>Highways England's Strategic Road Network Initial Report (13 December 2017)</p> <p>The SRNIR is based on Highway's England's extensive research, evidence base and understanding of the needs of customers and stakeholders. In short, the report sets out our priorities for: a continued focus on our operations, maintenance and renewals; Smart Motorways, which will become the spine of the network; the rollout of expressways; the transformational investments that need to be undertaken; a balanced investment programme that also delivers small and medium schemes; refining our Designated Funds to increase their reach; and preparing for the future. The consultation closes on 7 February 2018.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-englands-strategic-road-network-initial-report</p>	<p>Officers to consider feeding comments into the consultation</p>	<p>Paul Jones, Director of Local Services and Housing Delivery</p>
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ECONOMIC PROSPERITY		
<p>Careers strategy – Making the most of everyone's skills and talents</p> <p>This strategy sets out the Government's plan for raising the quality of careers provision in England. Every school and college in the country will aim to have a dedicated careers leader in place by the start of the new school year, backed by £4m of funding, who can give advice on the best training routes and up-to-date information on the jobs market, helping young people make decisions about their future. The plan will also boost careers support in the areas of the country most in need, with £5m funding to create 20 careers hubs across the country that will link schools and colleges with local universities and employers to help broaden pupils' horizons.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents</p>	<p>For information</p>	<p>Andy Johnson, Director of Education and Skills</p>

HEALTH & WELLBEING		
<p>Reaching out: influencing the wider determinants of health</p> <p>This research from the New Local Government Network (NLGN) calls for public health to be more fully recognised as contributing to our nation's growth potential. The Industrial Strategy White Paper recognises the role of people as a key driver of productivity, but largely ignores the role of public health, which is a missed opportunity if we want our workforce to be fit for the future. The research found that, while public health teams have integrated well with people-focused services in local authorities, there are weaker connections with economic development teams and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The new Local Industrial Strategies now planned need to incorporate a much clearer focus on public health as a driver of workforce productivity. To improve their effectiveness, the research recommends that central government should invest £65m into Health and Wellbeing Boards. This money would be used to support a 5-year 'upstream prevention' programme, which could fund pilots within their area that address the wider determinants of health. It could also be used to secure dedicated staff to engage with stakeholders where relationships could be strengthened, such as with Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authority economic development teams.</p>	<p>For information</p>	<p>Liz Morgan, Director of Public Health</p>

http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2017/reaching-influencing-wider-determinants-health/		
<p>Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper (4 December 2017)</p> <p>The government is asking people for their views on a green paper setting out measures to improve mental health support for children and young people. The green paper focuses on earlier intervention and prevention, especially in and linked to schools and colleges. The proposals include: creating a new mental health workforce of community-based mental health support teams; every school and college will be encouraged to appoint a designated lead for mental health; and a new 4-week waiting time for NHS children and young people's mental health services to be piloted in some areas. The consultation closes on 2 March 2018.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper</p>	<p>Officers to consider feeding comments into the consultation</p>	<p>Andy Johnson, Director of Education and Skills</p>
<p>UK Poverty 2017</p> <p>This report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlights that overall, 14 million people live in poverty in the UK – over one in five of the population. This is made up of eight million working-age adults, four million children and 1.9 million pensioners. 8 million live in families where at least one person is in work. Over the last 20 years, the UK has dramatically reduced poverty among people who had traditionally been most at risk – pensioners and certain types of families with children. But that progress is beginning to unravel; poverty rates for both groups have started to rise again. The analysis highlights that the three factors which have led to a fall in poverty and are now under question; state support for many of those on low incomes is falling in real terms, rents are increasing, and rising employment is no longer reducing poverty. As a result, JRF is calling for a national mission to transform the prospects of millions of people living in poverty in the UK.</p> <p>https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2017</p>	<p>For information</p>	



***Policy Digest* is produced on 4 to 6 weekly cycle by the Council's Economic and Inclusion Policy Team within the Planning and Economy Directorate**

All issues are available at www.northumberland.gov.uk/policy