

# Public Document Pack



## Council

**Date:** Wednesday, 6 March 2024

**Time:** 1.00 pm

**Location:** Cathedral Room, Civic Centre, Carlisle

**Present:** Cllr C McCarron-Holmes (Chair), Cllr A Harid (Vice-Chair), Cllr T Allison, Cllr R Betton, Cllr L Brown, Cllr MD Campbell-Savours, Cllr B Cannon, Cllr R Dobson, Cllr J Forster, Cllr M Fryer, Cllr J Ghayouba, Cllr A Glendinning, Cllr J Grisdale, Cllr M Harris, Cllr M Johnson, Cllr L Jones-Bulman, Cllr Dr B Kelly, Cllr E Lynch, Cllr J Mallinson, Cllr A Markley, Cllr G Mitchell, Cllr M Mitchelson, Cllr G Minshaw, Cllr D Moore, Cllr L Patrick, Cllr B Pegram, Cllr J Perry, Cllr T Pickstone, Cllr S Pollen, Cllr A Pratt, Cllr D Rollo, Cllr A Semple, Cllr C Southward, Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr H Tucker, Cllr B Wernham, Cllr J Whalen, Cllr E Williamson and Cllr C Wills

**In Attendance** Chief Executive  
Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)  
Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer)  
Director of Business Transformation and Change  
Director of Public Health and Communities  
Director of Children and Family Wellbeing  
Director of Resources  
Director of Adult Social Care and Housing  
Director of Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport

### **C.1/24 Roll Call and Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davison, Eldon, Hawkins, Quilter, Stoddart, Troughton and Weber.

### **C.2/24 Minutes**

The Leader moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 be received and approved as a correct record, seconded by the Deputy Leader Statutory.

**RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 be received and approved as a correct record.

### **C.3/24 Declaration of Interests**

No Declarations of Interest were submitted.

### **C.4/24 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED**, that the items in Part A be dealt with in public and item 17 be dealt with in Part B.

## **C.5/24 Announcements**

### 1. Announcements from the Chair

The Chair made reference to a list tabled for members of engagements that she attended since the last Council meeting.

### 2. Announcements from the Leader

There were no announcements from the Leader.

### 3. Announcements from members of the Executive

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services announced there was going to be the launch of the first Family Hub in Whitehaven on 11<sup>th</sup> April, a one stop shop for families to access information, support and guidance.

The Deputy Leader Statutory announced that Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March was to be International Women's Day, a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The theme for 2024 was Inspire Inclusion.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places asked Council to join her in extending congratulations to one of Cumberland's Enforcement Officers who had won the Excellence in Enforcement Award at the Keep Britain Tidy local authority Network Awards 2024 held in York on 29 February.

### 4. Announcements from the Chief Executive

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

## **C.6/24 Public Participation**

Pursuant to Procedure Rules 9 and 10, no questions, deputations or petitions had been submitted by members of the public.

## **C.7/24 Minutes of the Executive**

The Leader moved the minutes of the Executive meetings held on 15 December 2023, 11 January and 13 February 2024 for noting.

Executive meeting 13 February 2024, Minute EX.84/23 - Early Years Funding Formula 2024-25, Councillor Pratt raised he felt the wording in the second paragraph seemed to suggest that the funding would come in to force from September 2024 and that it should be made clearer the funding started from April '25.

The Monitoring Officer agreed that minute EX.84/23 be reviewed and the point on Early Years funding be made clearer.

**RESOLVED**, that:

1. The minutes of the Executive meetings held on 15 December 2023, 11 January and 13 February 2024 be received;
2. From Executive meeting 13 February 2024, Minute EX.84/23 be reviewed and the details on the Early Years funding be made clearer.

### **C.8/24 Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**

The Assistant Director of HR and OD submitted a report asking members to approve an annual review of a pay policy for chief officers in line with The Localism Act 2011.

Council noted the Staffing Committee had met on 8 February and approved the 2024/25 Pay Policy Statement for recommendation to Council for final approval on 6 March 2024.

The Portfolio Holder for Digital Connectivity and Customer Focus introduced the report and moved the recommendation, this was seconded by Councillor Dobson.

**RESOLVED**, that the Pay Policy Statement on Chief Officers' Pay for 2024-25 be approved.

### **C.9/24 Referral from Audit Committee (22/02/24) - Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy & Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2024-25**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which sought councils approval of the authority's proposed reports in line with the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and codes of practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 February 2024 had considered and agreed the recommendations for referral to Council for final approval.

Councillor Patrick, Chair of Audit Committee introduced the report and thanked the Audit Committee members and Finance Teams for their hard work. Councillor Patrick moved the recommendations as per the report, this was seconded by the Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets.

**RESOLVED**, that:

- a) The proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement & Investment Strategy for 2024-25 (included in sections 2 and 3 of Appendix 1) be approved;
- b) The MRP Policy Statement for 2024-25 set out in section 4 (of Appendix 1) be approved;
- c) The prudential and treasury indicators for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27, including the Authority's Authorised Borrowing Limit, set out in section 5 (of Appendix 1) be approved;
- d) The revised prudential and treasury indicators for 2023-24 (set out in section 5 of Appendix 1) which have been updated to reflect the changes made to the 2023-24 capital budget as part of the 2024-25 capital budget proposals.

### **C.10/24 Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Chief Finance Officer, Section 151 Officer submitted a report which set out the recommended proposed budget for 2024-25 and the transformation plans for 2024-25 to 2026-27 for Cumberland Council for members approval.

The report identified the key factors which influenced and informed the development of the Council's financial plan for 2024-25, and the ongoing impact of those plans into the medium term.

The Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets introduced the report and addressed the Council at length in support of the motion that the recommendations of the Executive in respect of the Budget for 2024-25 be agreed. She spoke in detail on the contents of the budget, of the pressures and significant challenges which faced the Council and its financial stability and the ongoing work which was required.

The Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets moved the recommendations as per the report.

The Leader seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members of the Executive spoke in turn in support of the motion.

Councillor Pickstone moved amendments to the proposed budget on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group.

The amendments related to Schools Prioritised Maintenance Fund, the Purchase of one new Gritter, a Rural Mobility Scheme, a Traffic Regulation Order Programme and climate change/Net Zero grants for Community Panels.

The amendments were seconded by Councillor Wills who spoke in support.

Members were provided with a written opinion of the Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) to the proposed amendments to the budget.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:06pm to allow time for consideration of the opinion.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 2:19pm

There then followed debate with input from a number of Members of the Council speaking both for and against the amendments.

A recorded vote was taken in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Voting for the proposed amendment from Councillor Pickstone:

For: Councillors Betton, Dobson, Pickstone, Wernham and Wills.

Against: Councillors Allison, Brown, Campbell-Savours, Cannon, Forster, Fryer, Ghayouba, Glendinning, Grisdale, Harid, Harris, Johnson, Jones-Bulman, Kelly, Lynch, Mallinson, Markley, McCarron-Holmes, Minshaw, Mitchell, Mitchelson, Moore, Patrick, Pegram, Perry, Pollen, Pratt, Rollo, Semple, Southward, Thurlow, Tucker, Whalen and Williamson.

Abstain: Nil

The amended motion from Councillor Pickstone FELL.

Debate then moved to the substantive motion moved by the Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets, during which various members outlined their support or opposition to the motion.

In his right of reply the Leader confirmed that both CIPFA and DLUHC had confirmed their confidence in the proposed budget and shown approval of the council's plans. He stated that the plan was challenging but realistic, and which acknowledged the reality of the current times.

In her right of reply the Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets drew councils attention to the opinion of the S151 Officer under section 12 of the report.

The Leader and the Financial Planning and Assets Portfolio Holder thanked the Section 151 Officer for the work she had undertaken to prepare the budget in difficult circumstance

A recorded vote was taken in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Voting for the substantive Budget motion from the Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets:

For: Councillors Brown, Campbell-Savours, Cannon, Dobson, Forster, Fryer, Ghayouba, Glendinning, Gridale, Harid, Harris, Jones-Bulman, Kelly, Lynch, McCarron-Holmes, Minshaw, Patrick, Pegram, Perry, Pickstone, Pollen, Rollo, Semple, Southward, Tucker, Wernham, Whalen, Williamson and Wills.

Against: Councillors Allison, Betton, Johnson, Mallinson, Markley, Mitchell, Mitchelson, Moore, Pratt and Thurlow.

Abstain: Nil

The motion of the Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets was CARRIED.

**RESOLVED**, that:

1. The General Fund net revenue budget for 2024-25 of £319,014,005, as outlined in Appendices A to G, be approved;
2. The position on Directorate budgets be noted, and any final amendments between Directorates be delegated to the Section 151 – Appendix J;
3. The calculation of the Authority's Council Tax Base for the financial year 2024-25, including determining the appropriate council tax discounts, of 89,966.79 be approved;
4. The determination to introduce a second home Council Tax premium of up to 100% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, in accordance with the requirements of The Levelling up and Regeneration Act, be approved;
5. The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme assessments be determined in accordance with the Modified Scheme provisions, under which a 100% voluntary disregard is applicable of War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and War Widowers' Pensions, under Section 134(8) and 139(6) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992;
6. Band D Council Tax in 2024-25 of £1,816.80 for Cumberland Council be approved which represented an increase of 4.99% on Council Tax levied across the Cumberland area (2.99% increase in core council tax and 2% Adult Social Care precept);

7. The approval of fees and charges be delegated to the S151, in consultation with the PH Finance and assets, to ensure they were set in line with the approved fees and charges policy;
8. The capital programme as set out in Appendix H be approved;
9. The consultation feedback on the budget as set out in Appendix I be noted;
10. The S25 statement of the Chief Finance Officer as set out in Section 12 and the risk-based assessment of the level of General Fund Balances be noted.

### **C.11/24 Council Tax Resolution 2024-25**

The Chief Finance Officer, Section 151 Officer submitted a report which sought Council to approve the necessary resolutions for Council Tax setting in accordance with Sections 31 – 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Portfolio Holder for Financial Planning and Assets introduced the report and moved the recommendations as per the report, this was seconded by the Leader.

Councillor Betton left the meeting during debate and did not take part in the vote.

A recorded vote was taken in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Voting for the proposed motion:

For: Councillors Allison, Brown, Campbell-Savours, Cannon, Dobson, Forster, Fryer, Ghayouba, Glendinning, Grisdale, Harid, Harris, Johnson, Jones-Bulman, Kelly, Lynch, Mallinson, Markley, McCarron-Holmes, Minshaw, Mitchell, Mitchelson, Moore, Patrick, Pegram, Perry, Pickstone, Pollen, Pratt, Rollo, Semple, Southward, Thurlow, Tucker, Wernham, Whalen, Williamson and Wills.

Against: Nil

The motion was unanimously approved.

**RESOLVED**, that:

1) It be noted that the Council calculated:

a) the Council Tax base 2024-25 for the whole Council area as 89,966.79 (item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")) and;

b) the dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates, as in the attached Appendix C.

2) The Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024-25 (excluding Local Precepting Authorities) is £163,451,664.

3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024-25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

a) £755,016,470 being the aggregate of the amounts 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 Local Precepting Authorities;

b) £585,829,898 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;

c) £169,186,572 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council 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);

d) £1,880.54 being the amount at (c) above (Item R) divided by Item T (1 a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including the average for Local Precepting Authorities); (as detailed in Appendix B1 Local Precept only by valuation band and Appendix B2 Local Precepting Authorities and Cumberland Council by valuation band);

e) £5,734,908 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Local Precept) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act. (as detailed in Appendix B1 Local Precepting Authorities only, by valuation band, and Appendix C Local Precept);

f) £1,816.80 being the amount at (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by Item T (1 a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Local Precept relates.

4) The following table reconciles the above Cumberland Council Tax Band D figures at 'd' and 'f' to the figures included at section 4 of the report (the Proposed Tax Level):

	2024-25 £
<b>Cumberland</b>	<b>1,816.80</b>
Town and Parish Council (average)	63.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,880.54</b>

5) To note that Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue and The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.

	Valuation Bands							
	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Cumberland Council	1,211.20	1,413.07	1,614.94	<b>1,816.80</b>	2,220.53	2,624.27	3,028.00	3,633.60
Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue	62.16	72.52	82.88	<b>93.24</b>	113.96	134.68	155.40	186.48
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria	206.70	241.15	275.60	<b>310.05</b>	378.95	447.85	516.75	620.10
	<b>1,480.06</b>	<b>1,726.74</b>	<b>1,973.42</b>	<b>2,220.09</b>	2,713.44	<b>3,206.80</b>	<b>3,700.15</b>	<b>4,440.18</b>

6) The Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables detailed in Appendix B (1,2 and 3), as the amounts of Council Tax for 2024-25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Councillor Betton returned to the meeting.

#### **C.12/24 Temporary Appointment of Councillors to Parish Councils**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report for Council to consider a procedure to appoint temporary Councillors to inquorate town or parish councils in accordance with Section 91 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Section 91 (1) of the Act provided the power for the principal council to appoint temporary councillors 'where there are so many vacancies in the office of town/parish councillor that the town/parish council are unable to act'.

Members were asked to consider a proposed procedure to provide stability and a consistent approach facilitated by the Monitoring Officer.

The Portfolio Holder for Governance and Thriving Communities moved the recommendations, this was seconded by Councillor Dobson.

Regarding the draft procedure at Appendix A, point 1 proposed responsibility sat with the town/parish clerk to advise Cumberland Council of any issues relating to quorum. Councillor Perry raised the point that in some instances a town/parish council found themselves without a clerk and suggested that the procedure may need amended to address that possibility.

Following advice from the Monitoring Officer, Councillor Perry moved an amendment that the recommendations be approved subject to point 1 of Appendix A being reviewed and amended by the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Thriving Communities, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

This was seconded by the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Thriving Communities. Council unanimously agreed the amended motion.

**RESOLVED**, that:

1. The responsibility to make temporary appointments to inquorate parish and town councils, in accordance with the procedure as set out in Appendix A to the report, be delegated to the Monitoring Officer;
2. Point 1 of Appendix A of the report be reviewed and amended by the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Thriving Communities, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, to remove sole responsibility from the town/parish council clerk;
3. The Constitution be amended to include the recommended delegation above as a function of the Monitoring Officer at Part 2 – Section 6: Officer Scheme of Delegation.

#### **C.13/24 Operation of the Provisions Relating to Call in and Urgency**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to inform members on the position with the requirements of the Constitution relating to the call-in and Urgency provisions.



Members were asked to note the recorded decisions, as detailed in the report and Appendix 1, that had been taken under Urgency and Special Urgency procedure rules.

The Leader moved the report for information.

**RESOLVED**, that the position be noted.

#### **C.14/24 Questions (with Notice)**

##### **1. From Councillor Dobson to the Portfolio Holder for Digital Connectivity and Customer Focus -**

‘Progress on installing hyperfast broadband in rural areas is welcome although there is continuing concern that several more remote areas are not yet planned into the programme.

Unsurprisingly the work of installation is causing disruption and inconvenience with road and pavement closures.

Can Councillor Southward confirm that where fibre optic cable has been laid that Cumberland Council will ensure that roads, pavements and green spaces will be reinstated to the previous standard of repair?’

The Portfolio Holder for Digital Connectivity and Customer Focus responded to say ‘Delivery under the Project Gigabit Contract, awarded by UK Government to Fibrus in December 2022, is continuing to progress in the more rural parts of Cumbria with all works scheduled to be completed in 2026. In parallel with works under this contract there are a number of commercially driven deployment programmes by different network providers across Cumbria, typically focused in Carlisle and market towns. It is currently estimated that, subject to the completion of declared commercial plans, by completion of the Project Gigabit contract more than 99% of properties in Cumbria will be able to access Gigabit capable broadband services. Much of the works under both Project Gigabit and the commercial programmes will use existing Openreach ducting and poles where possible but inevitably significant levels of work on the highways during these deployment programmes is required to deliver this infrastructure.

As a result of the combination of the various fibre deployment programmes and other utility programmes the road network is extremely busy. The Streetworks team, supported by Connecting Cumbria, is proactively engaging with firms undertaking broadband infrastructure deployment to encourage the highest levels of safety and compliance with highways regulations and the Council permit scheme, as well as encouraging cooperation between firms so that where possible sites or traffic management can be shared, reducing repeated disruption. Two new fibre focused Streetworks Compliance Inspectors have been engaged to increase the Streetworks team capacity to inspect work sites and monitor reinstatement. Where required, and allowed by regulations, temporary reinstatement, which still must be to the standard of permanent reinstatement but with interim material, is permitted and some reinstatement works, such as reseeding, may take place a period of time after initial completion of work; in such cases firms have 6 months to undertake permanent reinstatement or be subject to formal defect proceedings. All works must be in compliance with the [Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways](#) (4th edition) and inspection by the Streetworks team is in line with the Code of Practice for inspections. Unless otherwise agreed under an appropriate works order, all work sites in areas managed by the Highways team are required to be reinstated to the same state as that site was pre-works; with fines and other sanctions levied for non-compliance’.

In response Councillor Dobson made reference to Fibrus installing many telegraph poles in the area without prior knowledge, commenting they were using old fashioned poles vulnerable to weather conditions as a short term cost saving, no doubt becoming more expensive in the longer term, and asked the PH to express the Council's concerns to Fibrus.

The PH agreed to the request.

## **2. Councillor Pickstone to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places -**

'So far in 2023-24, what is the percentage of household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting, and how does this compare to other authorities?'

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places responded to say 'So far in 2023-24 Cumberland's percentage of household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting equated to 54.7%, this has not been nationally validated and therefore other Local Authority results are not available yet.

For 2022-23 the wider results are as follows:

Cumbria – 50.7%

Lancashire – 42.8%

Merseyside – 34.5%

Northumberland – 33.7%'

Councillor Pickstone commented that 'from a council meeting in September 2023 it was recorded that the average recycling rate percentage from the three legacy councils had been 37% therefore 54% was either a major achievement or we are talking about different figures' and asked which was correct.

The PH said from September those would have been the 2023-24 figures, now we are in March 2024 the figures would have increased.

## **3. Councillor Wills to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places –**

'What is the average length of time taken from a pot hole being reported, to a pot hole being repaired?'

In response the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places said that from report to repair the average time at the moment was 14 working days.

### **C.15/24 Motions**

No Motions had been submitted.

### **C.16/24 Portfolio Holder Reports**

The Leader moved the Portfolio Holder update reports and the Deputy Leader Statutory seconded them.

Each Portfolio Holder responded in turn to questions on their individual report.

Various questions were asked and it was agreed written responses were to be circulated following the meeting. [Questions and responses are appended to the minutes].

**RESOLVED**, that the reports of the Portfolio Holders be received.

The Monitoring Officer announced the meeting was approaching the three hour maximum duration limit without suspension of standing orders and asked whether Council wished to move a motion as such.

Pursuant to Procedural Rule 22.1 the Leader moved to suspend standing orders for the Council meeting to continue, seconded by the Deputy Leader Statutory. The motion was unanimously agreed.

## **PART B - ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE**

Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information

### **C.17/24 Referral from Audit Committee (22/02/24) - Appointment of Independent Audit Committee Member**

The Acting Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management submitted a report asking members to appoint an Independent Member of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 February 2024 had considered and agreed the appointment for referral to Council for final approval.

The Portfolio Holder for Cumberland Policy and Regulatory Services introduced the report and moved the recommendation, this was seconded by the Chair of Audit Committee.

**RESOLVED**, that the proposed individual as per the report be appointed as the Independent Member of the Audit Committee.

The meeting finished at 4.07 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

## Leaders report

1. Q from Cllr Pratt – when will we see the outcomes from the breakout meetings from the Economic summit in documents to come?

The breakout workshops held during the afternoon of the Economic summit were a great opportunity to start the consultation process on Cumberland's Economic Strategy. The next stage will be to collate the suggestions coming forward on the day through the workshops and "slido" technology and summarise those ideas to formulate the strategy for further development and testing with partners throughout April/May, with a view to creating the draft strategy for consultation early summer. This allows the Council to ensure that the Economic Strategy is co-created, shared and delivered by all partners, towards delivering targeted activity and meaningful change.

2. Q from Cllr Pratt – what was the cost of the Economic summit to the Council?

The cost to the Council of the Summit was £9,450. External funding from UKSPF (£2,246) was also used to support event as many of the promotional materials will be used again to support our wider business growth agenda and place marketing at events across the northwest including Shout in Liverpool, Bolton and the Cumbria Expo in Carlisle, plus Cumberland's attendance at UKREiif in Leeds this May.

## Lifelong learning & Development report

3. Q from Cllr Pratt – from the announcements of Nursery funding rates in November, why is the council holding back 25p per hour from funding and not giving it all to nurseries?

In November 2023, the government published the local authority hourly funding rates for 2024-25 for the existing and new early years childcare entitlements.

The local authority hourly funding rates are determined using the early years national funding formulae (EYNFF). These formulae consider the different costs of delivering early years provision in different parts of the country.

The majority of the local authority hourly rate announced by DfE is to support providers with the core costs of providing entitlement hours.

Up to 5% of the LA allocation can be used to support local authorities to administer the entitlements locally and can also be used to support the elements for deprivation and SEND inclusion funding. For the new 2 year olds and under 2's the table below shows the LA rate and the rate passed on to providers. The variance of £0.25 per hour relates to the centrally retained element of the funding.

	LA level Funding rate	EY Providers Funding base rate	Variance
Under 2s	£10.02	£9.77	£0.25
2 year olds	£7.37	£7.12	£0.25

The DfE guidance states that:

*‘Local authorities are best placed to determine how to use their total funding allocation to meet the needs of their communities. So, using the DfE rates as a starting point, local authorities set their own provider hourly rates using their own local formulae.*

*Before deciding on their local formulae and provider hourly rates, local authorities must consult with their providers and schools forum to decide how the money will be spent. They make sure that at least 95% of the money goes to providers overall’*

In Cumberland, the consultation with the Schools Forum and EY providers ran from 9 – 30 November. The outcome of the consultation was presented to Schools Forum on 15 January 2024 when Schools Forum decided to recommend the EY funding formula to Executive. On 13 February 2024, Executive agreed to implement the funding formula for new entitlement for 2 year olds and Under 2’s.

The confirmed funding rates were circulated to all Early Years Providers on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. The rates and proportions of the Designated School Fund passed through to Providers are confirmed below:

Under 2s base rate	2YOs base rate(s) – or working parents and disadvantaged base rates if separate	3&4YO base rate	Pass-through rate % of overall DSG
£9.77	£7.12	£5.08	Under2s 96.87%
			2 – 3 years olds 96.73%
			3 – 4 year olds 95.41%

### **Vibrant & Healthy Places report**

4. Q from Cllr Betton – regarding swimming at the Sands Centre, why has the requirement for online booking continued since covid? Coupled with the centre no longer taking cash, he asked, will the council help make it easier for people to use the facilities?

The Council continues to work with GLL to offer accessible services. GLL provide the ability for users to walk in from the street and book slots, either for immediate entry or future sessions. The GLL customer services telephone numbers allow for customers to check availability of required.

5. Q from Cllr Mitchelson – can we have an update on where we are with a replacement for Keswick pool

The Council currently is undertaking a review of leisure services. It is through this review that future options for public leisure provision within Cumberland, including at Keswick, would be explored.

6. Q from Cllr Mitchelson – re Sands Centre, catering at the facility, are there any moves to look at new catering providers?

GLL are currently in discussion with their catering operator Hickory with respect to the return of catering at the Sands Centre. Should it not be possible to renew arrangements GLL will be considering alternative options for the provision of services.

7. Q from Cllr Mitchelson – can we have an update on the Sands Centre roof works timetable

The Council has appointed Carlisle-based contractor Cubby Construction Ltd for the design and build of the replacement Sands Centre RAAC roof. The detailed design is now underway with this and delivery programme to be finalised during the Spring.

8. Q from Cllr Wills – where does 'Farming' sit within portfolio responsibilities

It sits under the Leaders Portfolio

This page is intentionally left blank