

## COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 13 November 2024

### AGENDA ITEM 10 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

1	Question Withdrawn
2	<p><b>Question from Councillor Munro to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“The SLOW road markings at the bend on Sharp Lane need repainting. A refresh was requested in June 2022, but nothing has been done. When will these markings be refreshed?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Unfortunately, the request for the signs and lining refresh at this location was missed during a period of changes between staffing and officer areas, for this omission the Highway Safety team apologise.</p> <p>Whilst we are currently progressing “safety critical” lining renewals at present, as a result of the ongoing budget challenges, this location is one where we believe there is a need. The existing slow marking will be refreshed, and another added on the opposite approach, as part of the Almondbury Ward Lining refresh works due to take place before Christmas.</p> <p>Given the collision history at this location of 0 injury collisions in the last 5 years, we wouldn’t typically undertake any new signage schemes, however we do feel that there is a benefit in doing so here.</p> <p>A recent visit noted that there is an existing sign in place on a lamp column as you approach the bend from the Almondbury direction, with one missing from the opposite approach. The team have agreed to upgrade the existing sign and improve it with a yellow backing board. They have also agreed to replicate it on the other side of the bend, with a new sign. This new sign will be placed in the footway immediately adjacent to the proposed new SLOW marking.</p> <p>These new signs will, take approx. 10 – 12 weeks to order, manufacture and install on site, but we will update you with a more accurate timeframe as soon as we are able.</p>
3	<p><b>Question from Councillor Munro to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Since the economic downturn in the Council’s finances, Members in Almondbury Ward are no longer contacted for their comments in relation to proposed disposals of buildings, land and changes in leaseholds, instead we either find out from residents or items listed for disposal, buried in Cabinet reports. When is the Policy going to change?”</p>

***Cabinet Member Response***

The Council has a clearly defined disposal and acquisitions policy, which states

Consultation

Local ward members will be consulted in the following circumstances: -

- Before disposing of surplus land or property and the release or variation of restrictive covenants
- As part of the process for advertising the disposal of 'public open space'
- Before submitting planning applications on Council owned land
- Before a report goes to Cabinet or Cabinet Committee – Assets on land and property within their Ward

Alongside this in the planning for the previous local plan portfolio holder and officers discussed, and sought the views of local members for buildings/ land within their ward.

4

**Question from Councillor Khan to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy**

“Can Kirklees use its share of the new grant funding of 600m for adult social care announced in the autumn budget, to keep the Specialist Dementia Care Homes in-house?”

***Cabinet Member Response***

The short answer is no.

The Council welcomes the additional £600m social care grant monies announced by the Chancellor in the budget last week.

We will need to await the provisional local government settlement in mid-December to fully understand the impact of this, and the other funding announcements, for Kirklees.

Should this specific announcement of additional £600m of Social Care funding follow in proportion to existing social care grants then it is not unreasonable to assume a sum of £4m additional grant could be received.

However, as Members may recall, the September 2024 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) did assume additional grant income c£4m to help negate the significant demand pressures in the service and so is already committed and not available for use for other purposes including for the care homes.

See Extract below from MTFP report

2.34 It is also assumed that the Social Care grant funding provided to the Council and which are budgeted for in the Directorates, totalling around £69.3m in 2024/25 and including grants such as the Improved Better Care Fund, Social Care Support Grant, Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund will be c£4m higher than the levels currently provided. Further announcements on specific

	government funding in relation to social care are expected as part of the upcoming budget.
5	<p><b>Question from Councillor Khan to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy</b></p> <p>“In 2023, the Council adopted World Health Organisations commitment to creating Age Friendly Communities and the key part of this was the environment and outdoor spaces? Could you please update on progress?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>As part of the whole programme of creating Age Friendly Communities an important factor of this work is to develop appropriate environments and outdoor spaces.</p> <p>It must be noted that in general all Council development of outdoor spaces and environments adhere to industry standards and are of high quality, ensuring any activities consider and meet the needs of people of all ages and meet relevant guidelines.</p> <p>These guidelines include.  Policy LP23 of the Local Plan  Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)  Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (<a href="http://kirklees.gov.uk">kirklees.gov.uk</a>)</p> <p>The overarching duty and intention is that the  “Spaces provided meet the needs of the widest possible range of users, be easily accessible and enjoyed by all people, regardless of visual, physical and cognitive ability, mobility, background or age”</p> <p>For Kirklees specifically the Council have developed the following</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have a programme of environmental improvement schemes with Homes and Neighbourhoods to improve green spaces.</li> <li>2. All benches have backrest and arm rests for mobility</li> <li>3. All Kirklees Council landscape schemes using public open space s106 monies for infrastructure improvements are spent on existing outdoor greenspaces and facilities to improve dwell time and access and enjoyment for people of all ages and abilities, with path surfacing and suitable age-appropriate seating etc, well located for social interaction and safety.</li> <li>4. Our open space and landscaped areas aim to promote Healthy and Outdoor Lifestyles by providing opportunities for outdoor activities and recreation. This can involve designing looped paths, fitness stations, informal sports and play areas that cater for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.</li> <li>5. Our walking and cycling routes aim to be integrated with our outdoor space providing the framework for movement through a truly sustainable community in association with the greenspaces.</li> <li>6. The council has secured 30K of inward investment to involve older people specifically in how they want to use our places, both indoor and outdoor. Kirklees older people will be trained up as leaders in research. Starts Dec 24.</li> </ol>

	<p>The Council invested money in accessible places and spaces project which rates accessibility of our spaces, publishes this and provides training with a view to increasing the accessibility of Kirklees as a place.</p>
6	<p><b>Question from Councillor Munro to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“What is the Council doing to rectify unreliable brown bin collections that is a paid for service?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>We understand the importance of the Brown Bin collections to residents, especially given that this is a paid for service. It is generally a high performing service, receiving only 36 complaints out of 13,633 collections undertaken last week (less than 0.3%, so 99.7% collected without complaint).</p> <p>However, we recognise that any missed collection is an inconvenience for residents, and we constantly seek to improve. We have recently appointed a dedicated a team leader to manage this service going forward and they are already working directly with residents on the ground to find solutions for any collection issues that may occur. These normally consist of access restrictions due to parked cars and, in these instances, we have tried and tested procedures to work to rectify these issues.</p> <p>More recently our smaller garden waste vehicle has been taken off the road for repairs, meaning some harder to reach areas have occasionally been missed. In these instances, we ask all residents affected to leave their bin out until the end of the week to allow us to revisit in a smaller wagon to complete a catch-up collection.</p> <p>I would welcome any more specific detail by email so that I can review further and ensure a consistent service is provided to all residents signed up to this service.</p>
7	<p><b>Question from Councillor Taylor to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>At the last Council meeting I raised the issue concerning the missing bus stop on Rowley Lane which had been moved to the junction with Penistone Road due to a landslip which I had been trying to get resolved since 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024. After the meeting, I wrote directly to you about the issue on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and have not received a response. Could you let me know what action has been taken.</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Following the question at Council and subsequent email, a council officer has contacted WYCA to provide further detail regarding the bus stop in question.</p> <p>The bus stop has been suspended due to the landslip and due to there being no suitable safe alternative location. The bus stop has temporarily been relocated to the first stop southbound on Penistone Road. The Combined Authority will be erecting notices on site to this affect by no later than Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November. Works are underway to remediate the landslip.</p>

8	<p><b>Question from Councillor Taylor to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison</b></p> <p>“What is your assessment of the financial impact of the recent budget by Rachel Reeves will have on the economic growth here in Kirklees?”</p> <p><b>Leader Response</b></p> <p>Whilst we will not know the precise details of the impact of the budget for the Council until the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is published in mid December, the headline figures are encouraging for the sector. Local Government core spending power is forecast to rise by 3.2% in real terms, with further grant increases outside of the core spending power calculation in relation to SEND, Homelessness Prevention and Disabled Facilities Grants announced.</p> <p>With respect to the wider point around economic growth, the budget provided funding which will help local economies and <u>some</u> examples are outline below:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A commitment to reforming the distribution of funding through the settlement based on need and local revenues which will benefit Councils like Kirklees.</li> <li>• Permanently lowering business rates multipliers for retail, hospitality and leisure (RHL)</li> <li>• properties from 2026-27&amp; freezing the small business multiplier for 2025-26.</li> <li>• Confirmation of Levelling Up Funding</li> <li>• More than £300m for Employment Support programmes</li> <li>• £200m to accelerate EV Charging infrastructure</li> <li>• £500m increase in the Affordable Housing Programme</li> <li>• £3.4bn for Warm Homes to help Decarbonise heating systems.</li> <li>• A 6.7% increase to the National Living Wage to £12.21 / hour</li> <li>• Extension of the Household Fund for a further year at a cost of £1bn.</li> </ul>
9	<p><b>Question from Councillor Taylor to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison</b></p> <p>“What are your proposals for re-opening the well used and loved Children’s adventure play area at Cliffe House?”</p> <p><b>Leader Response</b></p> <p>The playground at Cliffe House is currently closed temporarily due to the discovery of a failure in one of the main supporting beams within the central structure. This issue was identified during a routine inspection. The service has engaged multiple suppliers to obtain cost estimates for both the repair and replacement of the playground. These estimates will be used to develop comprehensive options appraisals for both short-term and long-term solutions. The service is currently awaiting receipt of these quotes from the suppliers.</p> <p>Despite the temporary closure of the playground, the service continues to successfully deliver school residential and holiday activity programs. This ensures that children’s activities at Cliffe House remain uninterrupted while a resolution for the playground is being pursued.</p>

10	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hall to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“What will be the net effect to Kirklees Council of the government's decision to increase the level of employers' National Insurance contributions?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The Government has set aside £4 billion nationally to fund the cost of the changes to National Insurance Contributions to public sector organisations and therefore the Council is assuming there is no net effect on the Council's own staffing budget.</p> <p>Some preliminary work has been undertaken upon the effects of the changes upon social care which is provisionally estimated at around £2.6m.</p>
11	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hall to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“When will the RMGrylls school site be released for sale?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The Council have been considering a low carbon council housing scheme on the site, however due to site specific viability challenges the decision to dispose of the site had been made. The site will go to auction in the next calendar year.</p>
12	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hall to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“What is the timescale and cost of the replacement skate park at Royd's Park, and where does it appear in the capital plan?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The current timeframe for delivery of this project is still being worked on. The budget for the project was estimated to be £180K and sits on the Parks services balance sheet.</p>
13	<p><b>Question from Councillor Vickers to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed</b></p> <p>“Residents of Netherton have concerns about the Netherton Greenway project being delayed. Does Kirklees council now own all of the necessary land for the Netherton Side of the greenway to be started and have all the surveys now been completed?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Land transfers are in progress with all of the necessary parties between Crossland Factor Lane and Netherton Fold. Initial surveys such as the topographical surveys, bridge inspection and ecological surveys have completed. More detailed surveys such as a bridge structural survey, bat roosting &amp; badger surveys are still in progress.</p>

14	<p><b>Question from Councillor Bellamy to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport - Councillor Crook</b></p> <p>“How many times can a homes and neighbourhoods (Kirklees property) tenancy be passed on to another family member who is living in the property?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Succession is a legal term used when a person takes over a tenancy when the tenant dies.</p> <p>The Localism Act 2011 introduced new legislation in relation to the succession of a secure tenancy and the Housing Act 1985 was amended to reflect those changes.</p> <p>From April 2012, there is one statutory right of succession to a spouse or partner. There is no statutory right of succession for other family members. This change did not affect secure tenants whose tenancy began before 1st April 2012.</p> <p>However, in December 2012 Kirklees Council agreed that the right to succession should, where the property is not occupied by a surviving spouse or civil partner, be extended to another person who has lived with the tenant as long as qualifying conditions are met. This change applies to tenancies that began after April 2012; tenancies that began before April 2012 already had this right.</p> <p>An overview of succession including the qualifying conditions can be found in the Housing Allocation Policy: <a href="#">Kirklees Council Housing Allocations Policy August 2022</a></p>
15	<p><b>Question from Councillor Bellamy to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Transport – Councillor Crook</b></p> <p>“After discovering a diesel tank on the site of the old castles garage/Holmfirth market hall and having to have the ground tested has this caused any delay in the works progression?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>To date, the discovery of contamination under the old market hall has caused a pause in work on that part of the project site for 3 weeks. It may take another 2 weeks to resolve this issue fully. Ground testing has now been completed which concluded that no further remediation is required due to low contamination levels found on-site. However, as part of Planning Condition 19, this needs to be reviewed by Kirklees’s Environmental Officers before work recommences.</p>
16	<p><b>Question from Councillor Moore to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“The Cabinet report to close Dewsbury Sports Centre stated that between June and August 2023 an average of 20,113 people used the sports centre each month.</p>

	<p>How does the decision to close Dewsbury Sports Centre, which further significantly reduces footfall in the town centre, support the Dewsbury blueprint. Especially when we have seen further shops closing on an almost monthly basis and virtually no retail offer left in the town?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The report does not refer to 20,113 people using the centre each month but to 20,113 visits. As many KAL members visited more than once per month, the actual number of people using the centre was much less than 20K.</p> <p>As part of the assessment of Dewsbury Sports Centre, officers did analyse its impact on footfall to the town centre and found that there was no correlation between visits to DSC and visits to the town centre. It is difficult to link directly changes in town centre footfall to the closure when many other factors associated with retail mix, perceptions etc all influence decisions whether to go into the town centre or not. Also, there was no evidence to suggest people using the sports centre used the town before or after. The Underpass at Railway Street which is the safest route to take from DSC to the town centre had very similar levels of use compared to the previous year when DSC was open.</p>
17	<p><b>Question from Councillor Moore to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison</b></p> <p>“In your press release after being elected as leader of Kirklees Council you gave a commitment to running an administration with transparency and decisive decision making at its core. Are you still committed to this?”</p> <p><b><i>Leader Response</i></b></p> <p>Yes</p>
18	<p><b>Question from Councillor Moore to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison</b></p> <p>“When Dewsbury library moves from its current site to the former Walsh building is this administration committed to ensuring there is sufficient space and capacity for the host of community groups and activities that currently take place to continue?”</p> <p><b><i>Leader Response</i></b></p> <p>Through the consultation process on the potential move of Dewsbury library, we received helpful feedback from individuals and groups about the things that are important to them. The design work for the library layout is intended to reflect and accommodate this feedback, including the development of external space that is a feature not available at the current location.</p> <p>Libraries are about much more than books and we know that community groups and activities are an important part of what libraries offer, and we want to see these continuing.</p>



19	<p><b>Question from Councillor Safdar to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison/Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Would the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member responsible for housing and developments try their very best to give us a clear and swift answer regarding the potential housing developments at the KAL Bradley park facility. Quite a high number of children use this facility for the new football activities as well as the driving range. I’ve been told staff at the facility are very worried about the long-term future of the jobs and they’ve asked similar questions at least half a dozen times without a satisfactory answer</p> <p>Surely the Council can find Brownfield sites for potential housing development without decimating a highly profitable golfing facility which is the only one in the borough?”</p> <p><b><i>Leader/Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The first phase of the Bradley Park housing site is on-going, following the Cabinet Decision on 27th June last year, to progress feasibility and highway access work, and move towards the point of procuring a development partner. Over the next 12 months, as these proposals are finalised, relevant affected parties will be updated to ensure uncertainty and disruption is kept to a minimum.</p> <p>The Bradley Park housing allocation plays an important role in meeting the significant housing needs and pressures facing Kirklees, and the site was considered alongside available and deliverable brownfield and greenfield housing sites across the district. The Government Planning Inspector approved the Kirklees Local Plan which was adopted in February 2019.</p> <p>The council will always use brown field land where it is viable to do so, we have a brownfield register and encourage the private sector to also use brown field where its appropriate and is a viable option, we have in used external government funding to develop some brown field sites in recent year.</p>
20	<p><b>Question from Councillor J D Lawson to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“At last month’s Council Meeting it was said that WYCA had given funding for the extension of the Greenway to Netherton Fold. Can you please tell me how much funding was given?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>WYCA funding being used for the extension of the Meltham Greenway link is £100K.</p>
21	<p><b>Question withdrawn</b></p>
22	<p><b>Question withdrawn</b></p>

23	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hussain to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Has the Council considered how closing Dewsbury Sports Centre may disproportionately impact communities that rely on affordable public facilities for health and wellness?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Yes, the council has considered how closing Dewsbury Sports Centre may impact communities that rely on affordable public facilities for health and wellness. The impact was assessed through an Integrated Impact Assessment which was included with the report considered by Cabinet last week, plus we considered demographic and health data as well as alternative provision in and around Dewsbury.</p> <p>Colleagues in public health and the portfolio holder are working on a plan to help improve the health outcomes for the residents of Dewsbury as we know only too well there are many issues with health outcomes, this work was referenced at the December 2023 cabinet and has been ongoing since despite some issues that have slowed down the plan but I can assure you that the current portfolio holder is moving this work forward as quickly as possible.</p> <p>As I said last week, it was with a heavy heart that we took the decision not to reopen DSC but we simply cannot afford the capital repairs required and especially that it is estimated that there would be an additional annual operating cost of around £1.113 million and presently there is no revenue provision to operate the facilities if they were re-opened.</p>
24	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hussain to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Given the substantial cost of demolition and converting the area to a car park, has the Council fully explored less drastic options, such as limited renovations or partial reopening, which might preserve the sport centres’ role in the community at lower cost?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Council officers prepared a number of options for Cabinet members which were presented at Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> November. The options considered the financial challenges, structural issues and the need for a sustainable health and leisure offer in Dewsbury. The main options were as follows:</p> <p>Option 1: Do nothing and keep the site in its current state.  Option 2: Reopen both the wet and dry sides of the building.  Option 3: Demolish the wet side, reopen the dry side with a new main entrance.  Option 4: Permanently close DSC, demolish the wet side and enter negotiations around the future of the site.  Option 4a: Option 4 plus construct a new leisure centre on a different site.  Option 5: Community Asset Transfer of the buildings to an approved community group.</p> <p>The report laid out the costs of each option, not just the capital costs but the annual revenue costs. Although demolition is costly at just under £3.5 million, it</p>

	<p>is still cheaper than trying to reopen the dry side at a cost of nearly £10 million plus annual revenue costs of £661K. There is not a lower cost option as we must ensure the building is safe for the public to use and that it has access to utilities once the wet side has been demolished.</p> <p>There is no capital allocated in this year's budget for the DSC and no revenue to cover the annual subsidy required to keep the facility open.</p>
25	<p><b>Question from Councillor Hussain to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“What steps has the Council taken actively seek out or engage with third party organizations or businesses that might be interested in taking over, co-managing, or funding the Dewsbury Sports Centre operation?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>No steps have presently been taken as due process means that a decision was required on the preferred option. This decision was taken last week by Cabinet.</p> <p>However, until a decision was made to declare the site closed its not possible to seek out alternative providers</p> <p>Given the option chosen by Cabinet, any third-party organisation or business are now welcome to approach the Council if they are interested in taking over the site. They will need to be able to fund any repairs and maintenance costs, as well as ongoing operating costs as the council is not able to contribute to these. Permission would also need to be obtained from the landlord of the dry site to transfer ownership.</p> <p>So, I would welcome any interest from anyone who feel that are able to take over and operate either the wet side or dry side, all they need do is contact me or our officer team and we will look at their proposals.</p>
26	<p><b>Question from Councillor Darwan to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Does the Kirklees Council have another strategy besides managing the decline by closing, Dewsbury's much needed services, including the Dewsbury Sports Centre?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>We are not managing the decline of services in Dewsbury. We are investing in Dewsbury and have secured millions of pounds of investment in a regenerated market, improved public realm, arcade to house small businesses and community safety measures. Added to this is a growing culture and entertainment programme at Dewsbury Town Hall and plans to modernise the library and customer service centre. An application has been submitted to Sport England to secure funding to establish the barriers which prevent Dewsbury residents from moving more so that we can work with our partners and local people to find effective solutions as analysis of data told us that Dewsbury Sports Centre was not reaching those least active but with higher-than-average adverse health conditions. We remain committed to investing in services in</p>

	<p>Dewsbury although there are limitations to how much we can invest due to the financial challenges we face as an authority.</p> <p>We have invested in the past few years many millions of pounds to refurbish Empire house, this investment has seen a rundown listed building brought back to use, not only protecting its future but providing a much need facility for the local college to deliver education, which will help address the low education outcomes in Dewsbury.</p> <p>Work on a new bus station is planned for next year funded by WYCA.</p> <p>We have the TPU work on going.</p> <p>We want to see Dewsbury’s local economy grow and all these investments are part of that plan, so we will continue to work with partners across the town to deliver investment and bring Dewsbury back to life.</p>
27	<p><b>Question from Councillor Darwan to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner</b></p> <p>“Many people feel that the Council is filtering formation, they don’t give any real choices and force people into a conner to accept everything they say as gospel. Please can the Council be more open and transparent by giving an in-depth breakdown of the 10 million pounds worth of repairs needed to reopen the Dewsbury sports centre?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The detailed breakdown of the quoted repair costs is contained within Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report on page 52 of the PDF published report pack. The financial summary, both capital and revenue, of each option which we as a Cabinet have considered is contained in the Executive Summary of the main body of the report on pages 29 to 33 of the PDF published report pack.</p>
28	<p><b>Question from Councillor Scott to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy</b></p> <p>“With regard to Dementia Care Homes, how has the Council accounted for resident contributions in its savings calculation?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>In calculating the savings, the Council has taken account of the contributions that residents make towards the cost of their care. These only cover part of the running costs of the service and still leave a substantial deficit.</p>
29	<p><b>Question from Councillor Scott to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy</b></p> <p>“With regard to Dementia Care Homes, what specific financial data, aside from the operational costs, informed the Council’s assessment?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p>

	<p>The council has considered both the day to day operational costs (both care and building related) and the capital costs associated with the on-going maintenance and periodic upgrades of the buildings.</p>
30	<p><b>Question from Councillor Scott to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy</b></p> <p>“Is the Council open to involving the Save Our Specialist Dementia Care Homes campaign and other stakeholders in developing an alternative plan?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>The Council is involving and working extensively with the families of those living in the care homes.</p> <p>Through the first consultation, families told us that they were concerned about the impact on residents of moving to a new care home. We have offered conversations with all families to understand their concerns about the current proposal which does mean that residents don't need to move to a new care home.</p>
31	<p><b>Question from Councillor Anwar to the Spokesperson for West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority – Councillor O Donovan</b></p> <p>“Can you provide an update on the current challenges facing West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, particularly in terms of budget and staffing levels?”</p> <p><b><i>Spokesperson Response</i></b></p> <p>The Authority lost £26.1m in central government grant from 2010/11 to the end of the last spending review in 2019/20. This was managed by a reduction of 590 firefighters by freezing recruitment, a reduction in the number of fire stations of 8, a reduction of 16 fire appliances and a fundamental review of support services over this 10-year period. Since the end of the last spending review the Authority has received one-year settlements which has included no real terms growth and makes longer term financial planning difficult.</p> <p>Although inflation has reduced, the cost of goods and services remains high, particularly our capital expenditure which has seen a 40% increase in the development of FSHQ and the rebuild of Keighley.</p> <p>Collectively, the NFCC, the LGA and the Home Office have produced a business case which has been submitted to the Treasury to support additional and sustained funding for the fire sector. The Chair of the Fire Authority has written to ministers supporting this business case which includes the rolling of one-off grants into core funding, all grants to be uplifted by CPI, a £5 precept flexibility and capital funding for the fire sector.</p> <p>The Authority receives notification of central government funding in mid-December which, if there are grants reductions, leaves limited time to set a balanced budget for the following year. The Chair of the Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer along with other Chiefs and Chairs are meeting with Gov't Ministers this week to discuss these challenges further.</p> <p>WYFRS has been faced with a number of challenges in respect of staffing levels. The organisation saw a freeze in recruitment from 2010 until 2017. In</p>

	<p>common with many other organisations we are experiencing high levels of sickness in the post Covid era. Recent changes to Firefighters pension arrangements also make predicting leavers more difficult. For these reasons, and a number of others, the service has in place a Staffing review project which is designing interventions to improve this situation and improve the resilience of the service.</p> <p>The project is scheduled to finish before the end of 2024 and the organisation will have increased wholtime firefighter numbers to 939 following the expected completion of a recruits course of 30 trainees in February. Notwithstanding the challenges presented, the service meets its planned response times on approximately 96% of occasions across all risk area types. This is exceptional performance in a UK Fire &amp; Rescue context</p> <p>Despite such challenges the Authority has invested in a new fleet of fire appliances £22m and updated Personal Protective Equipment and Uniform £2.5m to maintain operational safety and resilience.</p>
32	<p><b>Question from Councillor Anwar to the Spokesperson for West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority – Councillor O Donovan</b></p> <p>“What progress has been made toward implementing new technologies or training programs within WYFRS to improve operational efficiency and firefighter safety?”</p> <p><b><i>Spokesperson Response</i></b></p> <p>Significant strides have been made by the Training Centre this year in implementing new technologies and training programs to enhance operational effectiveness and firefighter safety within WYFRS. These advancements are aligned with our commitment to providing our firefighters with the best possible tools and training to serve our community and ensure their well-being.</p> <p>Key Developments and Benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New Build Training Centre: The development of the new training centre has significantly enhanced our training capabilities. Key features include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RTC Area: A modern RTC area reflective of current vehicle construction enables realistic extrication training, improving firefighters' skills and safety in these complex scenarios.</li> <li>b. Rope Rescue Rig: This complex rig allows for diverse and challenging rope rescue training, ensuring our teams are prepared for a variety of rescue situations.</li> <li>c. Command ICT Suite: A state-of-the-art suite provides a dedicated space for incident command training, incorporating the latest technology for improved decision-making in real-time scenarios.</li> <li>d. Enhanced Training Environment: Overall improvements to the training environment, systems, and facilities create a more conducive and effective learning experience for all staff.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. External Training Programme at the Fire Service College: This program exposes staff to live fire scenarios in unfamiliar building layouts and complex RTC situations on a motorway, enhancing their ability to adapt and respond effectively in challenging and unpredictable environments.</li> </ol>

3. XVR (Virtual Reality) Scenarios: The development of new XVR scenarios, reflective of the risk incidents commanders face operationally, provides immersive and realistic training experiences. This technology allows for repeated practice and decision-making in a safe environment, leading to improved command and control skills and better outcomes in real incidents.
4. Driving Fire Standard Implementation: The full implementation of the Driving Fire Standard, including the extended emergency driving course with upskilled instructors, ensures our drivers are highly competent and safe when responding to emergencies.
5. Water Rescue Training Programme: Conducting water rescue training in the Glasgow white water rapid arena provides a consistent and challenging environment for all crews. This standardised training allows for the introduction of command and control focused on various water incident types, leading to safer and more effective water rescue operations.
6. Flexi Duty Officer CPD Sessions: These sessions focus on critical and emerging risks, including high rise incidents, Battery Energy Storage Sites (BESS), Hazardous Materials, and Wide Area Flooding. This targeted continuous professional development ensures our officers are equipped to manage these complex incidents effectively.
7. Regional Training Initiatives:
  - a. Regional Training Group: The establishment of a regional training group at the Group Manager level fosters collaboration and the sharing of best practices across fire services.
  - b. Regional CPD Sessions: These sessions provide valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and networking, with the next session scheduled for 14th November 2024 in North Yorkshire.
  - c. Regional Training Resources and Asset Review: This initiative aims to optimise resource utilisation and potentially move towards a regional training centre with shared assets and instructors, maximizing efficiency and collaboration.
8. Breathing Apparatus Instructor Course: The introduction of a Skills for Justice accredited Breathing Apparatus Instructor course ensures our instructors have the highest level of competence to train and assess operational staff, maintaining a high standard of safety and proficiency in BA use.
9. Ten Second Triage and Major Haemorrhage Kits: The implementation and testing of these kits service-wide, along with associated training and exercises, enhances our response to mass casualty incidents and aligns with the recommendations from the Manchester Arena Inquiry.
10. DEFRA Boat Code Implementation: The implementation of the DEFRA Boat code, including the provision of equipment and training to all boat crews, ensures compliance with legislative expectations, enhances skills, and provides appropriate equipment for safe and effective water-based operations.
11. Multi-Pump and Multi-Partner Mass Casualty Exercises: Conducting 26 service-wide multi-pump and multi-partner mass casualty exercises with a command-and-control wrap-around provides invaluable experience in managing complex and large-scale incidents, improving inter-agency cooperation and operational effectiveness.
12. Enhanced E-Learning System: The introduction of a new, more technologically advanced and user-friendly e-learning system (LMS)

	<p>improves accessibility and engagement with training materials, supporting a more effective learning experience.</p> <p>13. Advancements in Operational Policy and Procedure: The development of policies and procedures around electric vehicle incidents, driven by the Trauma department and informed by UKRO courses, ensures our firefighters are prepared for the unique challenges these incidents present, improving safety and operational effectiveness.</p> <p>14. Manual Handling Courses: The re-establishment and reset of manual handling courses for all operational staff addresses the persistent issue of musculoskeletal injuries, promoting safe working practices and reducing sickness absence.</p> <p>15. Formal Review of the Trainee Course: A comprehensive review of the trainee course, including benchmarking against other services and gathering feedback from recent trainees and support departments, ensures our training program is aligned with NFCC competency frameworks and delivers the highest level of training for new firefighters.</p> <p>16. Advanced and Strategic Command and Control Testing: Implementing advanced and strategic command and control testing ensures our command teams are prepared for the most extreme incident types, enhancing their decision-making abilities and overall incident management skills.</p> <p>17. Command Gap Analysis: The completion of a command gap analysis for the Yorkshire and Humber Management Group ensures interoperability and harmonious working between services during cross-border incidents.</p>
33	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sheard to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“In the Council’s waste strategy in 2021 the Cabinet said it would aim to achieve a recycling rate of at least 70% by 2025. In 2023 the Cabinet knew it would fail to achieve that ambition and revised it to achieve 70% by 2030. With the closure of Nab Lane household waste and Recycling centre we must be well on our way to achieving that figure now. What is the Council’s current rate of recycling and will it achieve its ambition of a 70% recycling rate by 2030?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>Our Waste Strategy and consequent improvement in recycling rate was reliant on the previous Government delivering on its commitments and ensuring the correct funds were in place for Local Authorities. However, the previous Government continually failed to do this, which was pointed out in the Public Accounts Committee report released in December 23, which stated their concerns about a lack of certainty and continually delayed collections and packaging reform programmes, meaning local councils could not invest and improve their recycling services, Kirklees being among them.</p> <p>This was further reinforced earlier this year by the Office for Environmental Protection, whose report set out their concern about the failure of the previous Government policy due to the delayed or incomplete implementation of waste management policies, which were often announced and anticipated, but not then developed or delivered.</p>



	<p>We have been open and honest about the impact this has had within Kirklees and have discussed this at both Scrutiny and within the Member Reference Group for waste.</p> <p>The Council's most recent reported recycling rate is 26%, which is publicly available and published annually in line with all other authorities. We are presently working with the new Government to gain the clarity needed to invest and are aligning this with the procurement of a new waste disposal contract in 2028, with a view to achieving our ambitions in 2030.</p> <p>The closure of Nab Lane has been discussed in detail at Scrutiny and Cabinet, and it was made clear that it was the least used and worst performing site within Kirklees, recycling only 41%, and as such was not contributing to achieving our ambitions.</p>
34	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sheard to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“One of the Council's 5 year aspirations as part of its aim to achieve ‘zero waste to landfill’ vision is to improve Household waste and recycling centres. With nab lane being closed down by the Council and other centres seeing hours reduced. Will the cabinet member admit that the Council has failed in its waste strategy to improve Household waste and recycling centres?”</p> <p><b>Cabinet Member Response</b></p> <p>The Council has made many improvements in its Household Waste and Recycling Centres, including the hugely successful introduction of re-use collection points to sites which feed our two reuse shops. This not only avoids waste but also creates access to affordable items for our communities. We have also introduced other new waste streams such as for the collection of Vapes, which are a growing issue, and our sites now allow for the safe and secure disposal of these devices minimising the risk of fires. We are also currently working on improving the booking system for some specialised waste streams to improve the customer experience.</p> <p>We have also secured the development of a brand-new facility at our Weaving Lane site, funded by partners, which will also benefit residents who previously used the Nab Lane site.</p>
35	<p><b>Question from Councillor Sheard to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways - Councillor Ahmed (Referred to Councillor Crook)</b></p> <p>“The Council's resources and waste strategy says the council needs to take an “equitable view” of services it provides to “ensure communities are allocated the appropriate resources”. With Nab Lane now being closed, Huddersfield has a total of three Household waste and recycling centres compared to the one in Dewsbury to be shared by the whole of North Kirklees. Can the Cabinet Member tell me how he considers this to be equal?”</p> <p><b>Cabinet Member Response</b></p> <p>Huddersfield has a single HWRC with a further site in Dewsbury at Weaving Lane (subject to significant upgrade) and two additional sites with reduced opening hours in rural locations in the south of the borough.</p>

	<p>A detailed discussion on the future of this service was held as part of the Scrutiny and Cabinet decision making process. I would direct the Cllr to the records of these meetings and reports that detail the factors considered in the change, which ensured that the remaining service was compliant and equitable under the national WRAP Guidance so that all of our residents can have access to high quality and safe provision.</p>
<p>36</p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor H Zaman to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services - Councillor Hawkins</b></p> <p>“How many members of staff from BAME backgrounds are employed by the Council in directors/senior- management positions?”</p> <p><b><i>Cabinet Member Response</i></b></p> <p>"In our top three layers in the Council, Executive Director, Service Director and Head of Service, 6 members of staff have reported that they are from a BAME background."</p>
<p>37</p>	<p><b>Question from Councillor H Zaman to the Leader of the Council – Councillor Pattison</b></p> <p>“How do you propose to build community cohesion given communities are voicing disconnect with the Council?”</p> <p><b><i>Leader Response</i></b></p> <p>The role of promoting and building community cohesion is a priority for the council and our approach is best outlined in the partnership focused Inclusive Community Framework. The council and partners have set out a different direction of working around cohesion; moving away from seeing cohesion as a ‘problem to fix’, to working together with partners to create more inclusive conditions for individuals and communities so as to improve cohesion.</p> <p>The council has a number of community facing teams, who are well placed to work together with partners and alongside communities and do this on a daily basis, listening to what matters to communities, problem solving together, connecting and celebrating the strengths and achievements of our communities. It is important that we all work together to accept the reality facing our communities and work alongside communities to make things better where there is disconnection. It is also important to not amplify the negatives we hear only too often, especially in the media about our communities, and equally provide those positive counter narratives. There is much positivity and good work that takes place across Kirklees by led by communities and at times this is overshadowed and lost</p> <p>The Council does take into account differences in needs and priorities between different groups and communities and actively tries to engage and reach those who don’t feel like they belong, can participate fully, or feel connected to their communities. We have a strong council and partnership response to community cohesion challenges</p> <p>Please do speak to me outside of council if there are specific issues you wish to raise, and I will work with officers and partners to understand those issues and get a response in place.</p>

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**Question from Councillor H Zaman to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Addy**

“Has the Council explored all potential sources of funding to keep the care homes under local authority management, what alternatives to privatisation were considered, and why were they dismissed?”

***Cabinet Member Response***

These homes provide residential care and so are the funding responsibility of the Council rather than the NHS. Whilst individuals contribute towards the cost of their care, this does not cover the full cost of their care and so the Council has to fund the balance.

The Council previously considered closure of the homes, but families expressed concern about this approach and so it was dismissed. The Council is now considering transferring them to an alternative provider as the only realistic other approach, given the cost of continuing to run them in-house.

It is worth noting that all long-term nursing care and almost all long-term residential care in Kirklees, and indeed across the Country, is provided by the independent sector already.