
Date/Time

Friday 1st March 2019
13:00 – 15:50

Venue:

Advance Northumberland, Wansbeck
Workspace, Rotary Parkway, Ashington,
Northumberland, NE63 8QZ

In attendance:

Cllr Richard Wearmouth
Peter Jackson
Cllr Jeff Reid
Chris Sayers

Arch Chair
Leader NCC
Leader of Liberal Democrat Group
Chair of Board of Governors, Northumbria
University

John Woodman

Present:

Ken Dunbar
Colin Dickson

Alison Elsdon
Kim Grant (Minutes)

Advance Northumberland Managing Director
Advance Northumberland Interim Chief
Finance Officer
NCC Service Director - Finance
Advance Personal Assistant

Part:

Pam Robertson
Michael Black

Advance HR Manager
Advance Interim Director of Investments

Apologies:

Wayne Daley
Daljit Lally
Neil Bradley

Deputy Leader NCC
NCC Chief Executive
NCC Finance Director/Arch Interim Finance
Director

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

1.1 The Chairman welcomed the attendees and declared the meeting quorate.

2.0 Apologies for Absence

2.1 The Chairman reported that there had been apologies for absence from Daljit Lally and Neil Bradley.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4.0 Minutes of Previous Meetings

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 1st February 2018 were reviewed and AGREED as an accurate record of proceedings.

5.0 Matters Arising

5.1 The Managing Director confirmed that Advance Northumberland had received a higher offer for Northumbria House, Blyth which had been accepted.

6.0 Ratification of Board Decision Made Electronically

6.1 The Board ratified their previous decision to **APPROVE** the following Project Approval;

- Northumbria House, Blyth.

6.2 The Board ratified their previous decision to **APPROVE** the following HR Policies;

- Induction
- Probation Period
- Absence Management

Following a Board discussion it was agreed to amend the Driving Safely at Work policy and take back to a future Board.

7.0 Health & Safety

7.1 The Managing Director gave an update on current Health & Safety (H&S) issues.

7.2 The Managing Director confirmed that both the Consultative H&S group (front line staff) and the Managers H&S Group met in late

February 2019. The managers group considered issues raised by front line staff and both groups received reports / updates on matters arising from recent RIDDOR incidents on company premises / sites. The H&S Advisor and the Managing Director were invited to attend both meetings. Near miss identification and reporting remains on the agenda of meetings and a recent near miss incident at Wansbeck Workspace had been positively utilised as a learning opportunity for all staff.

The Ascent Homes team health, safety and environmental monthly meetings would continue to take place and would also feature attendance from the HR Manager, interim Head of Operations and the current H&S Advisor.

- 7.3 The Managing Director stated that Advance Northumberland and NCC were now progressing the recruitment of an H&S advisor who would be on full time secondment to the Company. The job advertisement went out in February with the interview process scheduled to take place in mid-March 2019. The existing interim H&S Advisor arrangements with NCC (under a Service Level Agreement) would remain in place and effectively deal with ongoing issues i.e. site audits, policy development and RIDDOR incident reporting.
- 7.4 The Managing Director confirmed that a small annual allowance would be paid to staff who volunteered to carry out the role of First Aider in the Company from April 2019, following a decision by the Board on 1st February 2019.
- 7.5 The Managing Director informed Board that the January HS&E meeting of Ascent homes managers had discussed the next required round of construction site audits involving the H&S Advisor and these were scheduled for mid-February 2019. All current live construction sites were visited and key issues highlighted. The requirement that all visitors to sites were properly escorted at all times was reiterated.
- 7.6 The Managing Director confirmed that a programme of improvement to office H&S information displays and safety equipment (Defibrillators / First Aid Kits etc) across the company was planned to be completed before the end of March 2019. New noticeboards and equipment storage would raise the profile of H&S issues / information and make equipment easier to access at head office and at all Workspace sites. This was relayed to all staff via the February Newsletter.
- 7.7 The Managing Director brought the Board's attention to the following Issues highlighted in the dashboard reports for January 2019;
- Ongoing work programme in homes/residential to complete required electrical testing certification, note key impact of higher

number of EICR certificates expiring at calendar year end – 31/12/18;

- Ongoing work programme in homes/residential to complete required gas CP12 testing certification;
- Ongoing work programme in commercial property to complete asbestos surveys;
- Awaiting CP12 gas testing certificates in commercial property (tests completed).

7.8 The Managing Director informed Board that a RIDDOR reportable accident had occurred at Blyth Workspace in January (slip / trip / fall) that resulted in injury to a tenant employee requiring hospital treatment for number of days. The company H&S Advisor assisted with support to the tenant company responsible for completing the RIDDOR report to ensure duty of care was delivered to our tenant and their employee.

The Board:

7.9 • **NOTED** the contents of the report.

8.0 Human Resources

8.1 The HR Manager presented the report to update the Board on current HR activities.

8.2 The HR Manager stated that the current headcount within Advance Northumberland at 31st January 2019 was 130 and labour turnover for the period ending January was 14.84% (19 leavers). The figures reflected a slight increase in labour turnover.

8.3 Cllr J Reid stated that he felt the labour turnover figure was high. The HR Manager explained that the 14.84% was an annualised figure and was coming down.

8.4 The HR Manager confirmed that the sickness absence rate for period ending 31st January 2019 was 751 days absence which equated to 5.86 days per person or 2.25%. Last reported data was December 2018 with 648.5 days absence which equated to 6 days per person or 2.64%. This could be accounted for by four long term absences all of which were being managed with occupational health support – three due to accidents at work and one due to recurring ill health. All of these issues have had an impact on our absence levels. All other absences were being managed by HR in conjunction with the relevant line manager.

The NCC Service Director, Finance enquired as to whether a health needs assessment had been done. The HR Manager confirmed that information was awaited from Occupational Health.

- 8.5 The HR Manager stated that recruitment was ongoing with 3 live vacancies, 4 vacancies awaiting approval and 1 post currently under offer.
- 8.6 The HR Manager confirmed that completion rates for mandatory training on the NCC portal were being monitored and at the end of January 2019 were 93%. All new employees would complete the mandatory training during the first month of employment.
- 8.7 The NCC Service Director, Finance asked whether on boarding of new employees was planned for the future. All NCC employees could access on-line mandatory training once their contracts of employment were in place. The HR Manager confirmed that this option would be explored.
- 8.8 The HR Manager confirmed that Advance Northumberland was progressing with plans for Continuing Excellence as part of the Company's on-going commitment to the Better Health at Work award. The assessment date had been deferred to July 2019. New health advocates had been appointed and these have an action plan of activities. A health needs assessment would be carried out in the first two months of 2019.
- 8.9 The HR Manager informed that Board that Advance Northumberland would be delivering Investigation training and enhanced disciplinary training in conjunction with NCC during the first quarter of 2019.
- 8.10 The HR Manager stated that, in relation to other training activities, the focus had been on health and safety training, particularly within Ascent Homes and Estates, to ensure there was reduced risk to the business. Each person had a health and safety training needs analysis, which was role specific. Significant elements of this training had been delivered by the health and safety manager, however it was expected that the training would now need to be outsourced. A programme would be drawn up with the relevant manager on a priority basis. These areas would include;
- Asbestos Awareness refresher training
 - Working at Heights
 - Spill containment
 - Pasma Mobile Tower usage
 - Scaffold Awareness
 - CSCS Cards
- 8.11 The HR Manager confirmed that some of the highlights included;
- 6 people achieved the IOSH Managing Safely course in November.
 - 1 person had completed NEBOSH training, results due February.
 - 2 people had completed 1-2-1 management coaching and a further 2 would commence in January 19.
 - 1 person had attended management training through the NHS leadership programme.
 - 85 people had attended Dignity at Work training

- 1 person had completed an IT apprenticeship

There are currently 9 people undertaking career pathways.

There was currently 1 apprentice within the group studying Business Administration. This number was planned to increase to 5 during the next financial year.

8.12 The HR Manager informed Board that staffing within Ascent Homes was currently being reviewed which may result in a reduction in head count for site-based roles. Appropriate skills matrix would be drawn up with consultation as required. Consideration would be given to the financial delegated authority and who had permission with the business to carry out consultation and (redundancy) dismissals.

8.13 The HR Manager confirmed that confirmation was awaited of funding for the Business Northumberland Programme. Contracts for the team had been extended until June 2019 to give some continuity and security. However, should funding not be secured, there was the potential for 6 roles to be displaced.

8.14 The HR Manager confirmed that the Employee Forum had met on the 17th January 2019. Issues discussed included IT/Gmail/Flexitime/Annual Leave Purchase.

8.15 The HR Manager went on to confirm that the Staff Survey was launched in February 2019 with a view to reporting results in April 2019.

8.16 The HR Manager stated that a review and planning meeting had been held with Advance Northumberland's pensions' advisors. The pension scheme was working well, with low cost and good return on investments [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

8.17 The HR Manager informed Board that a flexitime scheme had been developed was submitted to the Board for approval.

8.18 The HR Manager confirmed that Advance Northumberland would be adopting NCC HR policies, as appropriate. Work was underway to align

these to Advance Northumberland. The following policies had been submitted to Board for approval;

- Acceptable Appearances at Work
- Disciplinary Policy
- Alternative Employment Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Procedure for Hearing & Appeals

The following policies had also been sent virtually to Board for approval;

- Absence Management Policy
- Induction Policy
- Probation Policy

8.19 The HR Manager stated that Advance Northumberland was working with NCC on the introduction of job evaluation. There was some background work to do in relation to job descriptions and pay bands before the job evaluation process and panel could be confirmed.

8.20 The HR Manager confirmed that Advance Northumberland had agreed the purchase of new HR software which ultimately would include learning and development, on-line absence reporting/booking and recruitment. An installation time frame was currently being worked on, with the system going live from 1st April 2019.

The Board:

8.21

- **NOTED** the contents of the report.

9.0 Financial Update

9.1 The Managing Director presented the report and gave the Board an update of the current position and key risks;

Company (Advance Northumberland)

- Full year forecast position had been brought back down to budget level [REDACTED] due to the reduction in expenditure across Business Northumberland, Rural Growth Network and other general overheads [REDACTED] and a reduction in the dividend provided from Advance Northumberland Developments [REDACTED]

Group (Consolidated)

- Advance Northumberland (Group) – the full year forecast position had worsened [REDACTED] from the previous month for two main reasons; overspends within Ascent Homes and recognition of additional revenue in relation to rent free periods being spread over the term of the leases at Manor Walks.

[REDACTED]

Key Risks

- The main risk facing the Group at this present time was the Ascent Homes sales forecast for the remainder of the year.

[REDACTED]

- Given the volatility of sales demand within Ascent Homes and overspends on two projects the charitable contribution from Advance Northumberland Developments was at significant risk

[REDACTED]

9.2 Following a discussion regarding the Capital Programme and the provision for Capital Maintenance the Board requested that a condition report for all Advance Homes properties in the Hirst area of Ashington be brought to a future Board meeting.

The Board:

9.3 • **NOTED** the contents of the report.

10.0 Policies and Plans for Approval

10.1 Acceptable Appearances at Work Policy

10.1.1 The HR Manager introduced the policy explaining that the policy's aim was to set out standards for appropriate workplace appearance as workers represent the Company so their appearance would impact on the image of the Company.

10.1.2 The HR Manager stated that the Company would impose a particular style of dress only where protective clothing and uniforms were required. Whilst there was no desire to impose a style of dress elsewhere, standards appropriate to the effective delivery of our services was necessary.

10.1.3 The HR Manager confirmed that the Company recognised that it may employ workers from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and tastes, who would wish to exercise choice in the way they dressed. The

Company accepted that adjustments may sometimes be necessary due to health, cultural or religious considerations.

10.1.4 The HR Manager confirmed that this policy was aligned to NCC's Acceptable Appearances at Work policy.

10.2 **Disciplinary Policy**

10.2.1 The HR Manager introduced the policy explaining that the policy was designed to encourage an improvement in an individual's conduct where this was necessary and was not merely a method of applying sanctions. In this respect it was accepted by all parties that line managers would play an important role in the day to day counselling and supervision of their staff and, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, they should seek initially to rectify problems through informal discussions without invoking the formal procedures.

10.2.2 The HR Manager confirmed that where the matter could not be resolved through the normal supervisory relationship or where the alleged action or omission was considered to be of a more serious nature, the formal procedure would be followed.

10.2.3 The HR Manager confirmed that the policy was aligned to NCC's Disciplinary Policy with a slight revision whereby the Life of Sanction term has been reduced.

10.3 **Alternative Employment Policy**

10.3.1 The HR Manager introduced the policy explaining that the aim of the policy was to ensure that employees who may need to seek alternative employment were treated in a fair and equitable manner taking into account the statutory responsibilities of the Company together with employment legislation and ACAS Codes of Practice.

10.3.2 The HR Manager confirmed that this policy was designed to apply to any proposal which may lead to employees at risk seeking suitable alternative employment.

10.3.3 The HR Manager confirmed that the policy was aligned to NCC's Alternative Employment policy and formalises what is legally required of the Company.

10.3.4 Following discussion it was agreed by Board to amend the policy to refer to a 6 month excess travel expense payment and/or removal expenses rather than the stated 3 years.

10.4 **Redundancy Policy**

10.4.1 The HR Manager introduced the policy explaining that the policy was designed to apply to any proposal which may result in the redundancy of an individual employee or groups of employees.

10.4.2 The HR Manager explained to Board that Advance Northumberland strove to be an employer of choice and, as such, believed in taking all reasonable steps to avoid redundancies. However, from time to time, modernisation, service improvements, reorganisations and financial considerations affect numbers of employees or the need for particular types of employees and redundancies become necessary. The aim of the policy was to ensure all employees affected by redundancy proposals were consulted and treated in a fair and equitable manner, taking into account compliance with employment legislation and ACAS Codes of Practice.

10.4.3 The HR Manager confirmed that the policy was aligned to NCC's Redundancy Policy with an amendment to the wording of Section 4 of the policy to reflect the way the policy would apply to Advance Northumberland as an organisation.

10.5 **Procedure for Hearings and Appeals Policy**

10.5.1 The HR Manager introduced the policy and confirmed that it was an exact take of NCC's Procedure for Hearings and Appeals Policy.

The Board:

- 10.6
- **APPROVED** the Acceptable Appearances at Work Policy.
 - **APPROVED** the Disciplinary Policy.
 - **APPROVED** the Alternative Employment Policy with the proviso that the 3-year excess travel expense payment and/or removal expenses be amended to 6 months.
 - **APPROVED** the Redundancy Policy.
 - **APPROVED** the Procedure for Hearings and Appeals Policy.

11.0 **Approvals**

11.1 **Portland Park**

11.1.1 Cllr Jackson declared an interest in the matter and left the room during consideration of the recommendations.

- 11.1.2 The Interim Director of Investments presented the report and reminded Board that the update report and presentation on Portland Park was given to the January 2019 Board meeting. Since this update in January significant progress had been made with the key private investors and Advance Northumberland were close to agreeing and finalising conditional contracts. To be able to enter into these contract Advance Northumberland had to demonstrate it had the funding to fulfil conditions and deliver on developing the scheme anchor.
- 11.1.3 The Interim Director of Investments stated that this report provided Board with a detailed financial appraisal of the proposed scheme and sought approval for the funding to undertake the development. Whilst Board could approve the scheme and the level of funding required, it was ultimately the decision of the Shareholder as to whether funds would be made available and upon the terms set out in the report.
- 11.1.4 The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that formative offers were received for Plot 1 from two cinema operators. Both were experienced, running existing portfolios with multiscreen cinemas that operate predominantly in provincial towns. Both specialise and thrive in local markets with similar demographics to Ashington and represent good covenants that could demonstrate successful track records in their field.
- 11.1.5 The Interim Director of Investments went on to confirm that the highest financial offer received [REDACTED] and the recommendation to Board was to progress with this operator as tenant.
- 11.1.6 The Interim Director of Investments stated that, following a request by Board for an impact assessment on the Vue Cinema at Manor Walks Shopping Centre of a cinema opening in Ashington, the report had been commissioned and would be circulated to Board members upon completion. However the initial view of the consultant was that, following a drive time analysis to exclude Cramlington and the South from competition, 25% of residents in Ashington had no access to a car and there was likely to be market growth given greater accessibility to the local market.
- 11.1.7 The Interim Director of Investments stated that the salient points of the Heads of Terms were as follows;
- Advance Northumberland to develop a 17,000 sq. ft (net), seven screen cinema at first floor level.
 - Advance Northumberland to construct the external shell. The cinema operator would undertake to fit out to an agreed specification.
 - Advance Northumberland was to provide a capital contribution to the fit out [REDACTED] which was within the original budget

cost. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] This would be made in stage payments as follows; 25% on handover / access; 25% 6 weeks later; 25% further 6 weeks later. Final balancing sum payable within 5 working days upon opening and on receipt of a suitable VAT invoice. The Tenant was to provide sufficient copy invoices to enable the Landlord to secure the full Capital Allowances which were to be retained by the landlord.

[REDACTED] would enter into a 20 year lease paying an initial annual rent [REDACTED] with RPI uplifts every fifth year. [REDACTED]

This was in line with similar deals, although invariably the stronger and more established the location, the better the deal available.

11.1.8

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

11.1.9

The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that Advance Northumberland had promoted Plot 2 with a view to delivering more shops and a wider range of goods defined as the most preferred use in the town council's resident's survey. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

11.1.10

The Interim Director of Investments stated that the main difference between Plot 1 and Plot 2 was that Plot 2 would be a land sale and would generate a capital receipt. In addition, this element of the scheme would be delivered by the retailer thus reducing financial risk to Advance Northumberland.

11.1.11

The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that Plot 3 gave an opportunity to provide more shops and a wider range of goods and would be the final piece to create smaller shops in a more granular layout that would encourage both national and local traders. The masterplan currently envisaged a terrace development of approximately 10,500 sq.ft. which would provide an important link into Station Road.

11.1.12

The Interim Director of Investments stated that if the scheme was approved by Board and developed in accordance with the plans outlined in this report, the estimated rental value generated by the completed development [REDACTED]. However, at this stage, the only rent

guaranteed was generated from the cinema [REDACTED] with the remaining income subject to negotiation.

11.1.13 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

11.1.14 The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that the cost of developing the cinema, restaurants and the retail terrace on Plot 3 was estimated to be [REDACTED]. This was due principally to the high cost of developing the cinema and the cinema being at first floor level which added costs and servicing complexities. The additional costs were a cinema fit out contribution [REDACTED] could be required to incentivise the A3 and retail elements.

11.1.15 The Interim Director of Investments went on to confirm that this would take the total estimated development budget [REDACTED], the majority of which was towards funding the development of the cinema. Notably this was [REDACTED] more than the value of the scheme and as such as a purely commercial scheme was not viable. If Board approved the sale of Plot 2 [REDACTED], this would provide a [REDACTED] capital contribution and reduce the cost [REDACTED]. Despite this, based upon the NCC loan rate of 5.75%, the annual loan payable [REDACTED], was [REDACTED] more than the estimated rental income [REDACTED].

11.1.16 The Interim Director of Investments stated that, therefore, if the scheme was to be progressed in accordance with the masterplan, Advance Northumberland would require financial support from NCC to undertake the development and secure a cinema for Ashington. In this regard, Advance Northumberland have explored two finance options to mitigate the costs of funding the development. Both would require the agreement and approval of NCC.

11.1.17 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

11.1.18 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

11.1.19 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

- 11.1.20 [REDACTED]
- 11.1.21 The Interim Director of Investments stated that ultimately the decision could only be made by NCC. However, time was of the essence and a contract [REDACTED] could only be entered if funding was confirmed.
- 11.1.22 The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that if the scheme progressed, it was also worth noting that NCC would have the benefit of Business Rates generated from the scheme [REDACTED]
- 11.1.23 The Interim Director of Investments confirmed that, if approved by Board and NCC, Advance Northumberland and their appointed agents would commence marketing of the A3 element to secure necessary quantum of letting and satisfy the conditions of the contract with the Cinema Operator. This was a key milestone that must be met before the scheme could commence.
- 11.1.24 The Interim Director of Investments reminded Board that the budget for this activity was approved by Board in March 2018.
- 11.1.25 The Interim Director of Investments stated that in the meantime Advance Developments would appoint the Design Team to finalise the draft design and layout of the scheme. Once this work had been concluded the appointed Quantity Surveyor would provide an estimate of the costs and identify the scheme was within the approved budget. Advance Developments would secure planning permission for the scheme and the construction contract would be put out to tender in accordance with Advance and NCC Procurement Policy. This would establish the true costs of the scheme and this item and the preferred contractor would be brought back to Board for approval in due course.
- 11.1.26 C Sayers queried the viability of Cinemas given the national position of Cinemas and large leisure venues. It was noted that 2018 was the largest box office of all time. The wider regeneration impact was understood, but C Sayers asked the Board to consider whether this was Advance Northumberland's role. After due consideration Board were in agreement to approve the proposed recommendations.

The Board:

11.1.27

- **APPROVED** an estimated budget [REDACTED] for the delivery of a comprehensive, mixed use scheme [REDACTED] on Portland Park Ashington including a cinema, restaurants and a terrace of shop units.
- **APPROVED** Advance Developments undertaking the development of a [REDACTED] seven screen cinema with two restaurants and associated car parking on Plot 1, subject to terms and conditions detailed in this report.
- **APPROVED** Advance Commercial granting a lease [REDACTED] at an initial rent [REDACTED] on the terms detailed in this report.
- **APPROVED** a capital contribution by Advance Northumberland [REDACTED] in stage payments as a contribution to fitting out of the cinema, subject to the satisfactory completion of the lease and all conditions having been satisfied.
- **APPROVED** the sale of 1.44 acres (Plot 2) [REDACTED] for the development by the purchaser of a 20,000 sq ft [REDACTED] retail store with car parking.
- **APPROVED** the net receipt realised from the sale of Plot 2 [REDACTED], to be recycled into the funding of Portland Park to reduce the funding requirement [REDACTED].
- **APPROVED** Advance Developments undertaking the speculative development [REDACTED] on Plot 3, to complete the Portland Park scheme (within the estimated development budget).
- **APPROVED** delegation to the Advance Managing Director to ensure satisfactory contractual arrangements are in place to support the investment and if contractual conditions are satisfied, enter into the Building Contract for the cinema, restaurants and shop units.
- **APPROVED** the sale of completed development to Advance Commercial [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] **NOTED** the scheme is subject to funding being approved and provided by NCC on the terms detailed in this report, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

11.2 Working Protocols in Support of NHSI

This report was withdrawn to allow the Managing Director to clarify some technical points with the NCC's Chief Executive.

12.0 Project Updates

12.1 A report on the out-turn position was withdrawn to allow the Managing Director and Chief Finance Officer to look into some matters in further detail. A report would be brought back to the Board in due course.

12.2 Business Northumberland

12.2.1 The Managing Director gave a verbal update on Business Northumberland programme. The Board had been advised in the months leading into December that the programme change request (PCR) and application for an extension to the programme were being viewed positively. Unfortunately, the position changed in January when communication from MHCLG suggested that there might be issues with the PCR and the bid to extend the programme. Meetings with HMCLG were continuing and both the Councils Executive Director of Place and the Managing Director are overseeing matters to achieve the best possible outcome. The Head of Economic Growth is working hard to provide HMCLG with all the information they require to enable them to reach a decision. It is hoped that a report can be brought to the Board in April.

12.2.2 Cllr Jackson requested that the Corporate Scorecard be re-instated in the Board papers as a 6 monthly output report.

12.3 Bedlington Town Centre

12.3.1 The Interim Director of Investments gave a verbal update on the progress being made with Bedlington Town Centre, stating the current position with the anchor tenant and that further information would be forthcoming during discussions over the next few weeks.

13.0 AOB**13.1 ICO Case RFA0787001**

13.1.1 The Managing Director presented the paper to inform Board of the outcome of an ICO investigation into Arch Corporate Holding's handling of a Subject Access Request relating to an applicant for a job with Arch.

13.1.2 The Managing Director stated that the ICO's assessment covered three main areas;

- Arch's handling of the applicant's Subject Access Request (SAR);
- Arch's handling of the applicant's interview notes;
- Arch's correspondence about the matter with NCC and data sharing arrangements.

13.1.3 The Managing Director confirmed that the Case Officer's judgement in her final assessment and recommended areas for improvement for Arch, (but which carry forward to Advance Northumberland to implement) were as follows;

- Advance Northumberland to review its documentation procedure/s to ensure it holds documents for the appropriate length of time and in line with its retention schedules;
- All data processed by Arch was subject to appropriate organisational and technical controls with regards to its security (this would help ensure documents were retained appropriately);
- All staff attend mandatory data protection training, specifically in relation to SARs, which was routinely tested and refreshed.

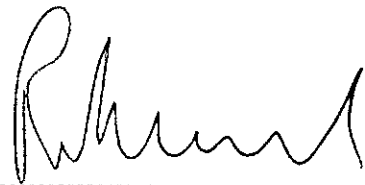
13.1.4 The Managing Director confirmed the following points were intended to provide assurance to Board of the Company's response;

- It was highly unlikely that applications or interview notes relating to jobs within Advance Northumberland would ever be lost or misplaced as, in all cases, HR would only ever share copies if and when required, always retaining originals in a secure location. However, this would be reinforced with additional procedures.
- The Company had applied strict rules relating to GDPR whereby records are held in secure locations and file structures organised to ensure appropriate controls.
- Following discussions with NCC's legal team, there are further steps that Advance Northumberland would need to take relating to data sharing protocols with NCC and others, which the Company would do in conjunction with NCC's legal team and the Company's own legal advisors.
- All employees would undergo mandatory GDPR training. It was possible that further training or better procedures may be required for the handling of SARs. This would be addressed as part of Advance Northumberland's improvement planning, again in conjunction with NCC.

Board:

- **NOTED** the contents of the report and the steps to be taken.

14.0 The Chairman thanked the Board for their attendance and closed the meeting at 15:50.



.....CHAIRMAN

