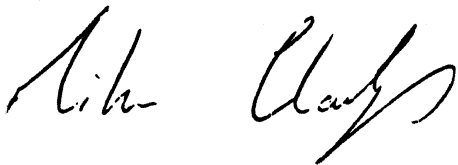


ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Dear Councillor,

Your attendance is invited at an Ordinary Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 21st October 2008 commencing at 6.00 p.m. for consideration of the undernoted agenda. I trust that it will be convenient for you to attend.



MIKE CLARK

Chief Executive Officer

Agenda

1. LONG SERVICE AWARDS

The Chairman will present personally engraved wristwatches to the following employees to commemorate their years of service with Derwentside District Council:

- Andrew Chipchase
- Maurice Clarke
- Michael Connolly
- Colin Davidson
- Kenneth Graham
- Kim Cramb
- Helen Tyers

- Alan Clark
- James Handy
- David Stoker

Please note that G. Cronney had requested that in lieu of a watch the equivalent amount of money be donated to the Chairman's Charity Appeal 2008.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING

(A) Special Meeting of the Council - 30th June 2008 (Herewith 'A').

(B) Special Meeting of the Council - 30th September 2008 (Herewith 'B')

Attached Documents:

[30th June 2008 \(A\)](#)

[30th September 2008 \(B\)](#)

5. COMMON SEAL OF THE COUNCIL

To advise that the Common Seal of the Council has been affixed to the following documents:-

(A) Burial Grants:

024/08 – 036/08

037/08 – 050/08

054/08 – 067/08

079/08 – 090/08

(B) Cancellation of entries relating to a Registered Charge:

2 York Street, Catchgate. Stanley, Co Durham, DH9 8SN

(C) Contract:

For the sale of freehold land with vacant possession at 47 Wylam Street, Craghead, Stanley

For the sale of freehold land with vacant possession at 42 Railway Street Craghead, Stanley

(D) Contract and Transfer:

60 Sheridan Drive, Fellside Estate, Stanley, Co Durham

(E) Transfers from the Council:

Land at East View, Harelaw, Stanley, Co Durham

Land at Hownsgill, Consett, Co Durham

Land on the North side of 77 Durham Road, Blackhill, Consett, Co Durham DH8 8RR

Land at Busty Bank, Burnopfield

Approx 34 square metres of land adjacent to 12 Waveney Gardens, South Stanley, Co Durham, DH9 7NE

Land situate at Derwent Crescent, Hamsterley

The Dugout, High Westwood

Land situate at Shaw Lane, High Westwood

(F) Deed of Release of Covenants:

380 Square Yards or thereabouts situate at Provident Terrace, Annfield, Co Durham

In relation to the freehold land at the North West side of Consett, Park Terrace, Moorside. DDC and Haslam Homes

(G) Tree Preservation Order:

202: Woodlands Hall

201: Esh Hall, Esh (Varied)

203: Finnings Farm (Varied)

204: Deanery Cottages

155: Ushaw Farm, Hill Top, Esh (Varied)

023: Esh Glebe House, Esh

(H) Transfer to the Council:

George Wimpey, open space at the Elms, Shotley Bridge, Co Durham

Land at Herrington Close, Langley Park, Co Durham

(I) Licence to Sub Let:

Between DDC, Treadstone Limited and BTCV Enterprises Ltd, relating to 53 Derwentside Business Centre

(J) Dedication Agreement:

Land at Hadrians Way Estate, Ebchester

(K) Assignment of Contract Hire Agreement:

Between DDC, Derwentside Homes and Lloyds TSB Autolease Limited.

(L) Road Closure Order:

Remembrance Day Parade 9th November 2008.

(M) Licence:

Relating to Stanley market at Front Street, Stanley, Co Durham

5. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, identify the item on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

6. TO RECEIVE ANY COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, LEADER, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

To receive the report of the Director of Corporate Administration & Policy and letter received from the RNIB (Herewith 'C')

7. TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

8. THE ASKING AND ANSWERING OF ANY QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 10

9. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER ANY REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

10. **TO CONSIDER ANY STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS ON THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE AND ANY STATEMENTS BY COMMITTEE/PANEL CHAIRS**

11. **TO ADJUDICATE ON ANY "CALL-IN" ITEMS REMITTED TO FULL COUNCIL WHERE THE EXECUTIVE HAVE NOT ACCEPTED THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES DECISION, REASONS OR FINDINGS IN WHOLE OR IN PART.**

12. **TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9 IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE RECORDED AS HAVING BEEN RECEIVED.**

Notice of Motion received from Councillor A. Watson:

The following Members request that the decision of the Special meeting of the Council made on the 30th September 2008 with regard to item 7 (Disposal of land to Derwentside Homes) be considered at the ordinary meeting of the Council to be held on 21st October 2008, and that a re-worded recommendation (as follows) be put before Members:-

“it is recommended that, subject to approval through the Local Government Reorganisation process, the sites detailed in the report at Para.3.10 are disposed of to Derwentside Homes for the development of social and affordable housing for the district. Any disposals must be on the clear proviso that Derwentside Homes have developed a detailed site specific proposal that will be delivered within three years of each individual disposal.”

Signed by Councillors

A. Watson

E. Turner

W. Gray

D. Lavin

G. Coulson

S. J. Rothwell

A. Atkinson

J.I. Agnew

O. Johnson

M. Malone

A. Taylor

T. Clark

P.D. Hughes

J. Docherty

T.M. Parry

13. TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9 IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE RECORDED AS HAVING BEEN RECEIVED.

Notice of Motion received from Councillor I. McElhone;

Councillor I. McElhone requests that the following motion be put forward for discussion:

"Derwentside District Council is mindful of the coming harmonisation of services under a Unitary Council, and the stated intention that services across the county be brought up to those in the best of each local authority.

In keeping with the principles of harmonisation of services, and in a spirit of co-operation, Derwentside District Council has (to the best of my knowledge) provided assistance in terms of expertise and manpower to neighbouring authorities.

I would therefore ask that Derwentside District Council calls upon its Chief Executive Officer to approach the relevant unitary/county-wide workstream responsible for control of dog-fouling and littering enforcement (believed to be "streetscape") and to request that it now provides expertise and manpower support to Derwentside District Council in respect of these issues in order that the promise of equality of service can be delivered from the inception of the new authority. Derwentside District Council further calls upon its Chief Executive Officer to provide details of the response it receives to this request within one month of this resolution being put".

14. TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS FROM, AND PROVIDE ANSWERS TO, THE PUBLIC IN RELATION TO MATTERS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, ARE RELEVANT TO THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

15. ELECTION RESULTS - CASTLESIDE WARD

The Chief Executive will report the results of the Castleside By-Election held on 17th July 2008. (Herewith 'D')

Attached Documents:

[ELECTION RESULTS - CASTLESIDE WARD \(D\)](#)

16. ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

To consider the report of the Director of Corporate Administration & Policy (Herewith 'E')

Attached Documents:

[ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES \(E\)](#)

17. CONSETT SPORTS PROJECT - UPDATE

To consider the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Herewith 'F')

Attached Documents:

[CONSETT SPORTS PROJECT - UPDATE \(F\)](#)

18. DERWENTSIDE YOUTH STRATEGY

To consider the report of the Director of Corporate Administration & Policy (Herewith 'G')

Attached Documents:

[DERWENTSIDE YOUTH STRATEGY \(G\)](#)
[DERWENTSIDE YOUTH STRATEGY](#)

19. HONORARY ALDERMEN

To consider the report of the Director of Corporate Administration & Policy (Herewith 'H')

Attached Documents:

[HONORARY ALDERMEN \(H\)](#)

20. SOUTH MOOR PARK, STANLEY

To consider the report of the Director of Environmental Services (Herewith 'I')

Attached Documents:

[SOUTH MOOR PARK, STANLEY \(I\)](#)

20. EXCLUSION

THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE LIKELY TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY INVOLVE THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12(A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS

AMENDED).

21. CONSETT BUSINESS PARK

To consider the report of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Herewith 'J')

22. TREASURY MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

To consider the report of the Head of Financial Services (report to follow - Herewith 'K')

Agenda prepared by Lucy Stephenson Democratic Services.

Tel: 01207 218249 Email: l.stephenson@derwentside.gov.uk

Date: 13th October 2008

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 30th June 2008 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chairman in the Chair: Councillor E. Turner.

Vice-Chairman: Councillor S. Rothwell.

Councillors: R. Alderson, A. Atkinson, D.I. Barnett, D. Bennett, D. Broadley, M. Campbell, C.D. Christer, T. Clark, B. Cook, G. Coulson, J. Docherty, E.J.S. Edwards, R. Ellis, K. English, B. Gray, R. Hemsley, D. Hicks, P.D. Hughes, D. Hume, J.C. Hunter, O. Johnson, D. Lavin, D.G. Llewellyn, M.J. Malone, C. Marshall, L. Marshall, I. McElhone, S.E. Mellor, O. Milburn, P. Murray, J. Nicholson, R. Ord, T. Parry, T. Pattinson, G. Reid, A. Shield, A. Taylor, O.L. Temple, F. Todd, W.J. Tyrie, D. Walton, A. Watson, M. Westgarth, T. Westgarth, J. Williams, J. Wilson and R. Young.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J.I. Agnew, G. Beckwith, H. Christer, D.V. McMahon and W. Stelling.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman announced the sad news that former Councillors J.T.S. Graham and G. Glass had both recently passed away. As a mark of respect, the Chamber observed a one minute silence.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

- A) Councillor J.C. Hunter – Item 3 – Petition received from Derwentside Licensed Taxi Drivers Association.
- B) Councillor J. Docherty – Item 6. – Craghead Housing Interventions Project.
- C) Councillor T. Parry – Item 6. - “ “ “ “
- D) Councillor C. Marshall – Item 6 “ “ “ “
- E) Councillor P.D. Hughes – Item 10. – Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy
- F) Councillor A. Watson – Item 11 – Consett Sports Village.
- G) Councillor O. Johnson – Item 11- “ “ “
- H) The Chief Executive advised that for Item 10 –officers would leave the chamber with the exception of the HR Manger who would present the report and

then leave the Chamber and the Chief Executive who was to remain to answer any questions from Members.

The Chairman advised that Item 3 on the agenda would be taken as the next Item as Mr Cooper from D.E.L.T.A. was in attendance to speak to the petition.

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 33, Councillor J. Hunter declared a prejudicial interest in the following item of business as he was aware that some of the signatories were customers of his employer. He therefore left the meeting at this point and took no part in the discussion or decision made. He subsequently returned to the meeting.

23. PETITION - DERWENTSIDE LICENSED TAXI DRIVERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Cooper advised that he was the Chairman of Derwentside Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (D.E.L.T.A.) and wished to present a petition to the Council regarding the following:

“We the undersigned hereby request that we are granted an increase in the hackney tariff of 35% in cost of per yard travelled in respect of the extensive rise in the cost of fuel, which has risen by approximately 50% over the last eighteen months”.

The petition contained 50 signatures from owner drivers and business owners.

Mr Cooper made the following points:

- December 2007 fuel had been 95p per litre and was now £1.32 per litre an increase of some 40%.
- Taxis could not charge more than the price displayed on the meter and were now not covering costs - this was in contrast to Private Hire cars which were not restricted by a set meter charge.
- Taxi drivers were finding it difficult to cover fuel costs and had been working 60 hours per week – some were now having to increase this up to 70 hours per week.
- No one could have predicted the fuel crisis would escalate and prices would increase to this level.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cooper for presenting the petition.

Councillor Watson proposed that the petition be forwarded to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

Following a vote the Council

RESOLVED: That the petition from D.E.L.T.A. be received and this be forwarded to the Licensing Committee for debate.

24. REVIEW AND UPDATE OF DERWENTSIDE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND DELIVERY PLAN

The Housing Options Manager presented the report, which informed Members of the review and update of the Derwentside Homelessness Strategy and Delivery Plan and asked for approval of the revised Homelessness Strategy.

The current Homelessness Strategy and Delivery Plan had been produced in 2003, as required by the Homelessness Act 2002 and had been kept under review since 2005. This was due to be replaced by an updated document and there was a statutory requirement to have a new strategy in place before July 2008.

By conducting a review, Officers have been able to bring understanding of homelessness in Derwentside up to date, evaluate progress against the targets set in 2003, and continued to develop the Housing Advice and Homelessness Service.

Officers had incorporated what was learned from the review into a new Strategy and Delivery Plan for 2008/09 to 2010/11, subject of course to future revisions which may be required following the establishment of the unitary authority from April 2009.

The Council and its partners had consulted with users and stakeholders, and examined best practice elsewhere in order to produce updated documentation which described how to continue to work in partnership to fulfill all statutory requirements placed upon the Council, and above all, meet the housing needs of the people of Derwentside.

The review had shown that homelessness or the threat of it was an increasing problem in Derwentside. The response to this had been to draw up a strategy which emphasized prevention, as well as describing how to support people through the actual crisis of homelessness.

Working with partners, Officers had identified five main objectives that the updated Strategy and Delivery Plan must deliver. These were:

- introduce a proactive and preventative housing options service;
- maximise access to all types of affordable housing in the District;
- provide support for homeless households or those at risk, through a multi-agency approach;
- work with our partners to monitor homelessness as a strategic priority; and

- adhere to DCLG targets for reducing the use of Temporary Emergency Accommodation.

There had been a number of key changes since the Derwentside Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2003, both in terms of policy and performance.

The main development in the updated Strategy and Delivery Plan for 2008/09 - 2010/11 was its emphasis on preventative work. One key change in Derwentside occurred in November 2007 with the move away from a traditional reactive homelessness service to a proactive housing advice service with the key focus placed upon homelessness prevention.

With reference to the document:

- Section 1 of the document provided an introduction to the strategy.
- Section 2 of the revised strategy looked at key National, Regional and Local policy developments since 2003.
- Section 3 gave consideration to homelessness trends both nationally and locally.
- The performance of the 2003 strategy is considered and evaluated in sections 4 and 5, with section 6 looking at the future delivery of the revised strategy.

Members were asked to formally adopt the updated Derwentside Homelessness Strategy and Delivery Plan for the period 2008 -11.

Councillor Watson questioned as to whether Derwentside were working with partners and other housing authorities across County Durham on a sub-regional strategy. The Housing Options Manager advised that the development of a sub-regional homelessness strategy was ongoing and it was envisaged that this strategy would be implemented from April 2009.

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED: That the Council formally adopt the updated Derwentside Homelessness Strategy and Delivery Plan for the period 2008-2011.

25. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2008

The Director of Corporate Administration and Policy presented the report which provided Members with details of the Best Value Performance Plan 2008 which included:

- Performance of the Council against statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for 2007/08, including comparisons with both national performance quartile data from 2006/07 and also with other local authorities in our 'Nearest Neighbour' Benchmarking Group.

- Performance of the Council against a set of local indicators developed to monitor the seven Corporate Aims of the Council.
- A round up of achievements made during 2007/08 that support the overarching Corporate Aims of the Council.
- A brief statement on compliance with the Code of Practice on Workforce matters.
- Details of the new National Indicator Set for new statutory indicators collected to a district spatial level for 2008/09.

He advised that the requirement for best value local authorities to publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan had been deleted. However, as a duty to compile a plan by June 2008 remained, and in common with other Durham authorities it was proposed that the plan be published on the Council's website.

The Council had retained 34% of indicators in the top performing quartile nationally, which was above average for district councils. Performance for some indicators e.g. planning and sickness absence deteriorated during the latter quarter of 2007/08 and this may have been due in part to staffing capacities in light of the on-going local government review

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted and that the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan 2008 be agreed.

26. ANTICIPATED ELECTORAL REVIEW OF COUNTY DURHAM

The Director of Corporate Administration and Policy presented the report which brought to Members attention the likelihood that the Boundary Committee for England would be commencing an Electoral Review of Durham.

At a recent presentation to District and County senior officials, the Director of the Boundary Committee for England had highlighted that he was expecting to commence an Electoral Review of Durham on 15th July 2008. He had acknowledged correspondence from the Durham authorities highlighting the difficulties the workload associated with a review would cause in the build-up to Vesting Day. However, he had advised that it was precisely as a consequence of Local Government Review that it was considered necessary to ensure election arrangements reflected the new functions and ensure the new council met its bid commitments to engage and empower communities.

The Boundary Committee would be piloting a new six phase approach to the review and the structure and approximate timings were set out in the report.

The co-ordination of the review would be via the County Council, the way in which they would involve the districts and other stakeholders was still to be finalised. The Boundary Committee would be making contact with parish councils directly as part of the review process as they had highlighted the importance of

reflecting parish boundaries in proposed divisions and avoiding, if at all possible, proposing divisions that divided parishes. They had also advised against carrying out parish reviews during the period the Electoral Review. Emphasis had been placed on parish boundaries being used (where they existed) as 'building blocks' for proposed divisions, whilst existing divisions, wards and district boundaries were not considered particularly important for what is effectively a new council.

It was anticipated that the Council would be required to comment on the review and further reports would be presented to Members as the review progressed.

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED: That the information in the report regarding an Electoral Review of Durham be noted.

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 33, Councillors J. Docherty, T. Parry and C. Marshall declared personal interests in the following items of business (as family members may be affected). All three left the meeting at this point, took no part in the discussion or decision made. The subsequently returned to the meeting.

27. CRAGHEAD HOUSING INTERVENTIONS PROJECT (CHIP)

The Project Manager presented the report which requested Members consider and approved the details and conditions to be applied to both group repair and face-lifting schemes in properties covered by the Craghead Housing Interventions Project (CHIP).

Members were reminded that they had now considered two reports (16th October 2007 and 13th May 2008) regarding the Craghead Housing Interventions Project which was aimed at extending housing choice, improving housing conditions and strengthening the housing market within Craghead.

The group repair scheme comprises a major external renovation and refurbishment of a whole block or street in one contract. Work varies from house to house. Typical works included rebuilding of chimney stacks, re-roofing, installing new windows and doors, repointing or rendering of walls, replacement of rainwater goods and relaying of yard surfaces. Rebuilding or remodelling of substandard or unsightly extensions could also be included within a scheme.

A facelifting scheme was a lighter touch version of a group repair scheme where a full scheme was not considered appropriate. Works were usually restricted to rebuilding of yard and garden boundary walls and relaying of yard surfaces but some, more limited works to the external fabric of the home could be included.

Members were asked to note that the project would require consideration by the County Council's Treasurer under the 'Business as Usual' protocols that had been set up for the Local Government Reorganisation process. The protocols required that budgeted projects that had a reliance on external finance being secured prior to them being contractually committed, and/or requirement for Member approval to proceed, also require approval of the County Treasurer before they could progress.

Following a vote the Council

RESOLVED: That Members accept the report and approval be granted to the scheme details and conditions attached as an appendix to the report under powers available to the authority under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002.

28. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Head of Financial Services presented the report which informed Members of the current position with regard to the capital programme, available resources and capital initiatives which were currently being considered. Members were reminded that this followed on from the report to Council in February where the Capital Programme for the final year of the authority was agreed, the details of which were incorporated within the Transitional Plan.

Members were asked to note that under the Business as Usual Protocol developed for LGR there were certain exclusions that would result in some schemes being referred to the County Treasurer for approval. The pertinent exclusions were:

- *Where part of an authority's capital spending is predicated on the basis of external/ new finance becoming available during the year and/or*
- *Where an authority would seek approval from Members to proceed with projects which were specifically identified in budget plans.*

Following a vote the Council

RESOLVED: that

1. The position regarding the capital programme and available resources as set out in the report and appendices be noted.
2. It be agreed that the final HRA balance can be used to fund capital projects if a shortfall in capital receipts occurs.

29. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Head of Financial Services presented the report which sought approval for the Draft 2007/2008 Statement of Accounts, which had a statutory requirement to be completed by the end of June.

As in previous years the accounts presented at this stage were in a draft format and the audit had not yet commenced. It was important that Members recognised that if any material amendments to the accounts were required by the external auditors then these would be reported back to Council. The deadline for the accounts being signed off by the Audit Commission was the end of September.

The draft statements were considered by the Audit Committee on 25th June and the minutes from the meeting had been circulated for Members' consideration.

Councillor C. Marshall wished to pass on thanks and appreciation to the Head of Financial Services and his team of officers for the tremendous work put into this document.

Councillor Watson also wished to have recorded his thanks to staff for their hard work in meeting tight deadlines to produce the accounts.

Following a vote the Council

RESOLVED: That the report be received and the draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008 be approved.

30. APPOINTMENT OF THIRD INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Director of Corporate Administration and Policy advised that the vacancy for the third independent member of the Standards Committee had been advertised and four applications had been received. Having interviewed the applicants Officers were recommending the appointment of Mr Roger Jeffries as the most impressive of the candidates.

RESOLVED: That Mr Roger Jeffries be appointed as the third independent member of the Standards Committee.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100(B)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED) THE CHAIRMAN AGREED THAT THE FOLLOWING ITEM OF BUSINESS BE CONSIDERED AS URGENT IN VIEW OF THE NEED TO APPOINT A REPRESENTATIVE PRIOR TO THE NEXT MEETING.

31. ASSOCIATION OF NORTH EAST COUNCILS ANEC

At the Annual Meeting of the Council Councillor O Johnson had been appointed as the Council's representative on the above organisation, he had now resigned from this appointment and it was proposed that the position be filled by the Leader of the Council.

Following a vote the Council

RESOLVED: That from 30th June 2008 the Council representative for the Association of North East Councils be the Leader of the Council (by position).

32. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

ON THE MOTION OF COUNCILLOR M. MALONE SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR D.G. LLEWELLYN THAT UNDER SECTION 100(A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY INVOLVE THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPHS 1, 3 AND 4 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT A1972 (AS AMENDED).

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 33, Councillor P.D. Hughes declared a personal interest in the following item of business (as a former employee of the Council). He left the meeting at this point and took no part in the discussion or decision made.

All officers with the exception of the Chief Executive and The Divisional Head of Human Resources left the meeting at this point. All subsequently returned to the meeting.

33. EARLY RETIREMENT / VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY ER/VR

The Divisional Head of Human Resources presented the report which sought Members views upon proposals to harmonise the ER/VR schemes across all Councils engaged in the Durham Local Government Review process.

In May 2008 the Government had issued draft guidance on staffing issues related to Local Government Restructuring. This document amongst a number of issues urged the Implementation Executives and Councils to consider a co-ordinated ER/VR scheme for redundancies and early retirements occurring prior to the transfer date. The reason for this was to achieve consistency for all employees engaged within the transition to a new Council. By doing so this demonstrated a willingness to work together and act in a positive way to achieve both equality and fairness within the review process up to and beyond vesting day.

If the Council agreed to a common scheme, the final decision on approving an ER/VR application would remain with the employing authority.

The Divisional Head of Human Resources then withdrew from the meeting. The Chief Executive remained in the meeting and explained he would not apply this policy to himself.

Discussion ensued on job evaluation and possible discrepancies and in response the Chief Executive advised that a meeting was scheduled with Unison in August and it was hoped that the single status would be agreed. If this was not achieved it would mean two levels of negotiations for any ER/VR situations. He also advised that work streams were looking at issues such as job evaluation, pay harmonisation, terms and conditions, TUPE transfers and flexi-time to try to ensure transfer terms did not disadvantage staff. However, all issues with financial implication would have to have input by the County Treasurer. Questions were also raised on whether Scrutiny would have any input and in response the Chief Executive advised it was unlikely that the County Council would submit any reports on this issue for consideration by this Council.

Councillor C. Marshall commented that this process needed to be managed as stringently as possible and if this revised scheme was agreed he suggested that consultation take place with relevant Portfolio Holders prior to any decision being made.

Councillor Watson proposed that any consultation include both the Leader of the Council and relevant Portfolio Holder.

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED: That the revised scheme as detailed in the report be agreed in principle and that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and relevant Portfolio Holder be empowered to implement the scheme in practice, consider any cases of potential detriment that may occur, and where appropriate exercise discretion to pay compensation.

Councillor P.D. Hughes returned to the meeting at this point.

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 33, Councillor A. Watson declared a prejudicial interest in the following item of business (as a Member of Project Genesis Board). He left the meeting at this point and took no part in the discussion or decision made. Councillor O. Johnson declared a prejudicial interest (as he sits on the Board of the Leisure Trust). He left the meeting at this point and took no part in the discussion or decision made.

34. CONSETT SPORTS PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

The Deputy Chief Executive presented the report which outlined options relating to the development content of the Consett Sports Project and requested that Members confirm the preferred content.

Members were reminded of the decision made at the meeting of the Council held on 22nd October 2008 when it had been agreed that sports facilities to replace the existing Belle Vue Leisure Centre and Belle Vue Swim Centre should be

developed at Berry Edge. The results of consultation with the Operator and User Groups of the existing Belle Vue facilities were set out along with an update on the budget position and modular costings for content options.

Members were requested to confirm:

1. the wet and dry development content for the provision of replacement sports facilities in the Consett area;
2. the budget treatment of savings in fees; and
3. the "design quality" allowance that should be incorporated within the construction budget.

Following a query from Councillor Hunter, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the development had been costed against anticipated design and development timescales, i.e. that inflation had been built into the project schedule. Additional inflation costs, currently estimated at £60,000 per month, would only apply if there was a delay to the project.

In response to a query from Councillor Temple, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the costings presented included provision for facilities that would need to be provided under contractual obligation and for reception, viewing and other public areas. He further confirmed, in relation to a question from Councillor Docherty, that independent assessment had confirmed the ability of the new facility to generate revenue savings but the precise magnitude of these could not be determined until matters such as the preferred development content had been agreed.

The Deputy Chief Executive further confirmed that the next phase of the work would involve the finalisation of a Design Brief based on the preferred development content and the completion of Outline Designs that would then be the subject of further consultation and Member decision.

Councillor Malone thanked the officer for the report and commented upon the feedback from consultation with the Belle Vue User Groups and Operator. He suggested that, whereas a sports facility could be developed within the budget set by Members in January, there was a need to take on board the results of consultation and seek to deliver the most practical scheme possible, whilst also ensuring that the build is of an appropriate quality and capable of future expansion. He proposed that the development needed to include a Learner Pool. Whereas the call from some users for a 33m Pool was understood it was clear that a 25m Pool met the requirements of most users and funders. He further suggested that a Double Hall, Small Hall and Squash Facilities needed to be incorporated in the facility.

Councillor Malone further commented that the call for retention of a dedicated Bowling Green was noted. This was a matter that had been considered previously and the desire for this was understood. Unfortunately the additional cost for this was just a step too far. It was, however, clear that bowling could still

be accommodated within the new centre even if dedicated space was not provided. He further suggested that most of the remaining issues raised through consultation would be the subject of more detailed consideration when outline designs and associated costings were prepared.

Councillor Malone further commented that there was a need to plan a facility that was affordable but, at the same time, ensure that adequate facilities were provided. To that end he suggested that it would be appropriate to use the available options set out in the report to increase the agreed construction budget and also to utilise available capital contingencies. This would allow both a good quality development, with enhanced public areas and appropriate additional facilities provision.

The Chief Executive highlighted that Durham County Council would need to be formally asked to support the project under Local Government Reorganisation "Business As Usual" protocols and, in seeking to ensure that project costings remained valid, he suggested that a decision from the County Council be sought before September.

Councillor Temple suggested that he would be supportive of the development content proposals put forward by Councillor Malone but proposed that a provision should be made for the Small Hall to be designed with due regard to its proposed dual use as a bowling facility. Councillor Malone confirmed that this appeared reasonable. The Chief Executive confirmed that, if Members were minded to agree to this and it resulted in any variations to costings, this would be brought back for consideration at the Outline Design stage.

Councillor Alderson confirmed that he also would be supportive of the development content proposals put forward by Councillor Malone but would like any additional funding that came forward, which was not attached to any specific provision, to go towards the provision of a sauna.

Councillor Malone therefore **MOVED** that, in order to progress the delivery of a facility that is affordable, of high quality and able to meet the needs of the majority, the following should be agreed:

1. That the comments made during the consultation with the Belle Vue User Groups and Operator be noted.
2. That the new facility's development content be designed to include a 25m Main Pool, a 13m Learner Pool, a Double Hall, Squash Courts and a Small Hall, with the latter to be designed with due regard to its proposed dual use as a bowling facility.
3. That the budget available for the development be modified to accommodate these facilities through the utilisation of £50,000 of savings in the agreed design budget, the use of the capital programme contingency of £2 million and the retention of £800,000 in a design quality allowance to be targeted at public areas.

4. That any additional funding that comes forward, which is not attached to any specific provision, go towards the provision of a sauna.
5. That Durham County Council be formally asked to support the project under Local Government Reorganisation "Business As Usual" protocols and be requested to make a decision on this matter before September.

The Chairman put the **MOTION** to the vote.
Following the vote the **MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED.**

CONCLUSION OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.22 pm.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Minutes of a Special meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on Tuesday 30th September 2008 at 6.00 p.m.

Present

Councillor E. Turner (Chairman)
Councillor S. Rothwell (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J.I. Agnew, R. Alderson, A. Atkinson, D.I. Barnett, D. Broadley, M. Campbell, T. Clark, B. Cook, G. Coulson, E.J.S. Edwards, R. Ellis, K. English, B. Gray, R. Hemsley, P. Hughes, J.C. Hunter, O. Johnson, D. Lavin, S. Mellor, O. Milburn, J. Nicholson, R. Ord, T. Pattinson, G. Reid, A. Shield, W. Stelling, A. Taylor, O.L. Temple, F. Todd, D. Walton, A. Watson, M. Westgarth, T. Westgarth, J. Williams, M. Wotherspoon.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors G. Beckwith, D. Bennett, C.D. Christer, H. Christer, J. Docherty, D. Hicks, D. Hume, D.G. Llewellyn, M.J. Malone, C. Marshall, L. Marshall, I. McElhone, D.V. McMahon, P. Murray, T. Parry, W.J. Tyrie, J. Wilson and R. Young.

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stelling, Alderson and Milburn declared an interest in Item 7 on the agenda, Disposal of Land to Derwentside Homes.

54. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Members should be aware that the Council has commissioned a book on the history of Derwentside Council, 1974-2009, to be published early next year. Every member of Council has been circulated with a letter from the author, Chris Foote Wood, asking for brief personal details for inclusion in the book, together with any personal recollections. Any member who has not yet responded, can they please do so as soon as possible.

55. PETITION – BIKE PARK IN MOORSIDE

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting teachers and children from Moorside Primary School who were in attendance to present the petition to members.

The Children in turn advised of the problems that had occurred around the Moorside area involving children using their bikes and road traffic accidents that had occurred where children had been injured. The children advised that if a bike park was not provided for the children of Moorside there could be a fatal accident.

The Children had written to District and County Councillors requesting a safe bike park, with good security which could also be locked at night, to include a quiet area and an area for small children. They further requested that there be a trials area, shelter and seating area and litter bins provided.

In conclusion they advised that the Children of Moorside deserved a safe place to play.

In response Councillor Watson congratulated the children of Moorside school for submitting a sound proposal and added that they should be applauded for their initiative. Unfortunately as a District Council this matter could not be progressed by this Council, however with the backup of Durham County Council this could be taken forward. He advised that the matter would be referred to the County Council Leisure and Recreation Workstream who would take on board the Schools request. He further suggested that a meeting could be set up with the appropriate officer at the County Council if the school wished to meet direct.

In conclusion he again thanked the Children present and commended the hard work that had been carried out by the school.

Councillor Agnew as ward Councillor for Consett South further commended the children for their excellent citizenship.

The Chairman thanked the children and teachers present and reiterated the comments of Councillor Watson.

RESOLVED: that the petition be referred to the relevant workstream at the County Council for their consideration.

56. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Head of Financial Services presented the report which he explained had arrived late due to the Audit Commission's decision that the County Council's Pension Fund accounts be restated, a measure which meant that each district council had to wait for a revised set of actuarial figures before the accounts could be revised accordingly.

He advised that the report advised members of the changes to the Statement of Accounts 2007-08 that the Audit Commission had recommended as a result of their annual audit work which had been ongoing through August and September.

He advised that this item linked in with the following item regarding the Annual Governance Statement which Paul Heppell from the Audit Commission would take members through. The Audit Commission, providing members accept the recommendation were intending to give a unqualified decision on the 2007/08 accounts.

He went on to highlight the significant changes as shown in paragraph 3.2 of the report and advised that the more minor changes were highlighted in the full copy of the Statement of Accounts.

In conclusion he advised members of the recommendations as stated in paragraph 4 of the report.

Councillor Watson added that he thought the document had been well reported and the significant changes had been identified. He made reference to the Penison Fund Accounts and accepted that this had in turn a knock on effect on the timing of the finalisation and circulation of reports.

He moved that the recommendations be approved. This was seconded by Councillor O. Johnson.

RESOLVED: that members receive the report and approve the amendments to 2007-08 Statement of Accounts, as detailed in the revised Statement, and consequently approve the final audited version of the Statement as witnessed by the Chair's signature; and,
that members approve the continued treatment of funds set aside for single status as reserve due to the continued uncertainty.

57. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

The Chairman introduced Mr. P. Heppell, Audit Manager with the Audit Commission and Ross Woodley who were in attendance to present the Annual Governance Report, copies previously circulated.

He advised that the document in accordance with the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice provided a summary of the work carried out during the 2007/08 audit of accounts, the conclusion reached and the recommendations made to discharge the statutory audit responsibilities.

He also advised that on the basis of the audit work undertaken, it was proposed to issue an unqualified audit report. He acknowledged and commented upon the late circulation of the report with reference to the comments made earlier

regarding the Penison Fund accounts across the County. He continued to take members through the report and introduced Ross Woodley who ran through Appendix 2 of the report highlighting adjusted non-trifling errors in the financial statement.

Councillor Watson thanked both Paul Heppell and Ross Woodley for their presentation of the report and for being in attendance to answer any questions. He added that the report was good for Derwentside considering the complexity and timescales managed. He further added that the Audit Commissions intention to release an unqualified decision was good especially in the current climate of loss of staff due to LGR.

RESOLVED: that the content of the Annual Governance Report be noted.

58. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: on the motion of Councillor O. Johnson seconded by Councillor T. Clark that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act (as amended).

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 33, Councillors W. Stelling, R. Alderson and O. Milburn declared a prejudicial interest in the following item of business as they sat on the Derwentside Homes Board. They therefore left the meeting at this point and took no part in the discussion or decision made.

59. DISPOSAL OF LAND TO DERWENTSIDE HOMES

The Chief Executive officer presented the report which updated members with regards to the transfer of the first three sites of land to Derwentside Homes; which was agreed to in principle on 26th February 2008 at a Special Meeting of the Council, the report further advised of the outcomes of investigations into the transfer of further plots to Derwentside Homes. He advised that the report recommended approval of the transfer of these plots which were outlined within the report. The transfer of these plots would also be subject to County Council approval.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that as previously reported in February 2008, key reasons for the transfer of land was due to the reported intention of Derwentside Homes to develop land as part of the overall LSVT package; and the need to increase the supply of affordable housing within Derwentside.

He continued to run through the report which provided details of the proposals and advised that these had been provided to affected ward members and the comments of which were included within the report.

In conclusion he advised that with the recent change in the housing market a change in the recommendation was required removing shared ownership properties from the proposals and replacing with social rented housing in an attempt to alleviate current issues with the market.

Lengthy debate took place regarding the proposals and the following points were raised:

- Funding for the development of the sites;
- Status of land if funding not secured for development;
- Average house prices within the area;
- Reference to previously transferred land at low cost;

In response to comments raised the Chief Executive Officer advised that funding would be required for all sites and would be subject to a bid which would be submitted by Derwentside Homes. With regard to the status of land, he advised that if in the eventuality that Derwentside Homes could not secure funding to develop the land it would revert back to the authority after a period of 3 years.

The Chief Executive Officer acknowledged that the value of land was currently symptomatic of the market, however the sale of land for development would bring significant employment into the area in the building trade.

He further advised that the land was not previously on the asset register and therefore was not required to facilitate capital income within the Council.

It was further raised that some of the areas of land proposed for transfer were not small slugs of land but much larger and this concerned some members due to the value the land would be transferred at, however the Chief Executive Officer did assure members that all factors had been taken into account when the sites had been selected, particularly its proximity to existing Derwentside Homes properties.

Some members did agree that there was a desperate need for social housing in the area and the Council should as a responsible authority do all that they could to help meet the shortage by utilising land to develop this type of housing, it was also noted that by developing land jobs would be created for builders and labourers in the area who were currently finding it difficult to get work as major developers were not progressing any developments due to the current market and falling house prices.

Councillor Watson added that the basic facts should be considered, there was major problems in the current economy and housing market. He made reference

to problems with homelessness and the necessity to provide sustainable housing in the area, he further pointed out that Derwentside was currently in a growth situation and if affordable housing was not provided people would eventually leave the area. He added that the proposals were good for Derwentside's economy and the opportunity should not be passed up.

With the deletion of 406 rented houses and addition of social rented housing Councillor Watson **MOVED** the recommendation. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor O. Johnson.

Councillor Temple added that he felt there were still matters to be discussed and added that by approving the scheme the hands of the strategic housing authority would be tied for the foreseeable future. He added that there was a proviso in the report in that it stated that if the development has not been commenced within 3 years that date could be extended beyond the control of the association. He felt in conclusion that members were being asked emotionally to approve the proposals. He added that he opposed the motion.

The Chief Executive Officer reminded members that the final decision lay with the County Council and the report sought agreement in principle only.

The Chairman put the motion to the vote.
Following a Vote the **MOTION** was declared **LOST**.

Conclusion of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chair

TITLE:	ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BLIND PEOPLE
TO/ON:	COUNCIL – 21st OCTOBER 2008
BY:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STATUS:	REPORT

1. SUBJECT MATTER AND PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a letter received from the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) dated 1st September 2008. (attached as Appendix 'A')

3. BACKGROUND.

The letter from the RNIB advised of a national campaign launched in August 2006 to ensure blind residents are given access to essential mobility benefits to enable them to travel safely and live independently.

The RNIB requested that the motion regarding mobility benefits for blind people (attached at Appendix 'A') was submitted to the Council for consideration.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS.

Members views are requested on this item.

G. ELLIOTT
Director of Corporate Administration and Policy

Background Papers:
Letter from RNIB dated 1st September 2008.

RNIBsupporting blind and
partially sighted people**RNIB**105 Judd Street
London WC1H 9NE
020 7388 1266
rnib.org.ukLeader Of the Group
Labour
Civic Centre, Medomsley Road
Consett
Co Durham
DH8 5JA

1st September 2008

Dear Group Leader,

Mobility Benefits for Blind People

The Royal National Institute of Blind People launched a national campaign in August 2006 to ensure that your blind residents are given access to essential mobility benefits to enable them travel safely and live independently.

Many blind people live in isolation, often facing difficulties in accessing the basic essentials of life. Whether it's getting to the supermarket, visiting the doctors or seeing friends and relatives, blind people face huge financial and physical barriers.

The concessionary travel scheme has opened up more leisure options to blind people. However, blind people still face significant difficulties when using public transport, such as how to identify which bus is coming, how to know where to get off, or how to get to a bus stop or train station without support from a friend, neighbour or family member.

Travelling to essential NHS services such as a Doctor or Dentist, using community facilities or local leisure centres, visiting friends or family, even paying bills at council offices or going to vote in elections is a huge challenge to blind and partially sighted people.

Royal National Institute of Blind People

Chairman Lord Low of Dalston CBE • **Chief Executive** Lesley-Anne Alexander
Incorporated by Royal Charter • Reg charity no. 226227 • VAT reg no. 524 4558 45

CS20135

Blind people are users of public transport however, their mobility, freedom and choice is restricted to bus routes. Alternative methods of transport involve reliance on friends, family, community transport facilities and taxis, denying them independence and resulting in additional unaffordable costs.

Accessing these facilities and services may require multiple bus changes, and ultimately may not even be near a bus route. Often have to rely on friends, family, community transport facilities (where any of these exist) and taxis, denying them independence and resulting in additional, often unaffordable costs.

Under current social care eligibility criteria blind people are not considered to have "critical" or "substantial" care needs. This results in people being excluded from care support which would enable them to lead full and independent lives as active citizens and members of their community.

I am writing to you now because the campaign to secure greater support for blind people in meeting the extra mobility costs they face is at a critical juncture.

RNIB has been working with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Officials and Ministers for over a year to put in place the detail about how blind people can be given access to the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). This extra cost benefit gives disabled people support with the additional expenses they face because of their impairment.

Disability Living Allowance (mobility component) is the key benefit which enables disabled people to achieve a level of independent mobility. The higher rate of DLA (according to the regulations which govern who is eligible) is payable to people with severe physical disabilities which impair their mobility. Having no useful sight for mobility purposes is not considered a physical disability, nor is it considered to impair mobility significantly to be eligible for the higher rate. The obvious difficulties that sight loss presents to blind people with independent mobility shows that the current eligibility criteria are unjust and it is this anomaly which our campaign is seeking to rectify.

We welcome the progress that has been made and are pleased that officials have advised Ministers that this is an achievable change. However, James Purnell has now said that whilst he understands the force of our arguments and is sympathetic with our aims he is not able, at this time, to commit to amending the existing arrangements.

I would ask you to submit the motion enclosed for consideration at your next Council meeting. In supporting this motion your Group is sending out a clear message of support to your blind residents. It also demonstrates to the Government that you believe accessibility, mobility and independent living are an important priorities.

Last December the largest ever lobby of parliament by blind people took place in Westminster in support of this change, when 1200 people made the journey to London to meet with their MPs. There is a huge groundswell of feeling amongst the blind community that exclusion from the Higher Rate DLA Mobility Component is a great injustice that must be addressed. I hope you will support RNIB, the other organisations supporting this campaign, and your blind residents in pushing for this change.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

*Lesley-Anne
Alexander*

Lesley-Anne Alexander
Chief Executive

Briefing on Mobility benefits for Blind Residents

Leaders of Local Authority Political Groups

Dear Group Leader,

Context:

Thank you taking the time to read our letter and the enclosed motion. I hope your group will be able to support the needs of blind residents in your local authority area, the support of local Councils is essential to this campaign and is vital to improving the mobility of thousands of blind people across the country.

This campaign has been launched as a result of a huge groundswell of support and anger from blind people throughout the UK who have been denied access to the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance.

The current rules state that to get the higher rate the claimant must have a physical impairment which causes difficulty with movement – sadly many blind people have difficulty leaving the home independently and then, only at great expense.

Many blind people have a mobility aid such as a Guide dog or Long Cane which greatly improve their quality of life however, even aids as vital as these have limitations to independent mobility.

The concessionary travel scheme has also gone some way to increasing mobility for blind people although most often this is used for small leisure activities in tandem with an assistant or mobility aid as mentioned above. The concessionary travel scheme is also limited to the routes bus companies use and therefore blind people are often restricted to services located along those routes.

Ultra Vires:

Your monitoring officer may possibly argue that this motion is ultra vires. The motion is not definitely not ultra vires, it refers directly to the needs of local residents and the way they are affected in accessing local services.

If they require precedent during 2003-2005 many motions were passed by local authorities against top-up fee's as these also affected local residents.

Further Information:

If you require further information on this campaign please call either:

Helen Dearman, RNIB Campaigns Officer:

E: Helen.dearman@rnib.org.uk
T: 020 7391 2083

John Dickinson-Lilley. RNIB Assistant Parliamentary Officer:

E: John.dickinson-lilley@rnib.org.uk
T: 020 7391 3267

Mobility Benefits for Blind Residents

Briefing for Local Authority Group Leaders - Model Motion

This Council Notes:

- 1) That blind people experience significant barriers to independent mobility
- 2) That blind people are often isolated and find it difficult to access basic services without mobility assistance
- 3) That many blind residents in this authority area find it difficult to access Shops, Supermarkets, Doctors, Dentists and Community facilities and centres
- 4) Our blind residents find it difficult to access many Council Services ranging from housing to voting without mobility support and face additional costs as a result, such as using taxis or private hire vehicles.

This Council Further Notes:

- 1) That blind people are not entitled to the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance
- 2) Loss of usable sight clearly causes significant independent mobility problems and incurs significant additional and unmet costs
- 3) That blind people are in many parts of England excluded from social care support because their needs are not considered "critical" or "substantial"

This Council resolves:

- 1) To ask the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions, the Rt Hon. James Purnell MP, expressing these concerns
- 2) To ask the CEO and Leader of the Council to write to our local MPs asking that they sign up to EDM number 1982 and write to the Secretary of State expressing these concerns
- 3) To support the Royal National Institute of Blind People's (RNIB) campaign on securing the higher rate mobility component of DLA for blind people.

DERWENTSIDE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTION

Date : 17th July 2008

Ward	Candidates	Description	Votes Cast
Castleside	Marion Wotherspoon	Independent	297 Elected
Electorate 1313	Michael Carr	The Conservative Party Candidate	64
Seats 1			
Ballot Papers 361			
% Poll 27.49			

TITLE:	APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO THE EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMITTEE
TO/ON:	COUNCIL 21 OCTOBER 2008
BY:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STATUS:	REPORT

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO THE EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMITTEES

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillors:

1	J I	Agnew	15	W	Gray	28	O.	Milburn
2	R	Alderson	16	D	Hicks	29	A	Shield
3	A	Atkinson	17	P	Hughes	30	W	Stelling
4	D	Barnett	18	D	Hume	31	O	Temple
5	D	Bennett	19	J	Hunter	32	F	Todd
6	G	Beckwith	20	L	Marshall	33	W	Tyrie
7	D	Broadley	21	S	Mellor	34	M	Westgarth
8	H	Christer	22	D	McMahon	35	J	Williams
9	T	Clark	23	I	McElhone	36	J	Wilson
10	G	Coulson	24	P	Murray	37	R	Young
11	J	Docherty	25	R	Ord			
12	E	Edwards	26	T	Parry			
13	K	English	27	G	Reid			
14	M	Wotherspoon						

COMMUNITY SAFETY & STRONG COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Chair: L. Marshall

Vice Chair: T. Parry

Councillors:

1	D	Bennett	12	D V	McMahon
2	D	Broadley	13	S	Mellor
3	M	Campbell	14	P	Murray
4	H	Christer	15	R	Ord

5	G	Coulson	16	T	Parry
6	R	Ellis	17	O	Milburn
7	M	Wotherspoon	18	F	Todd
8	R	Hemsley	19	D	Walton
9	J	Hunter	20	T	Westgarth
10	L	Marshall	21	J	Wilson
11	I	McElhone			

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Chair: J I Agnew

Vice Chair: T. Clark

Councillors:

1	I	Agnew	13	D	Lavin
2	R	Alderson	14	O	Milburn
3	A	Atkinson	15	T	Pattinson
4	M	Campbell	16	S	Rothwell
5	H	Christer	17	A	Shield
6	T	Clark	18	E	Turner
7	G	Coulson	19	A	Watson
8	R	Ellis	20	T	Westgarth
9	M	Wotherspoon	21	J	Williams
10	W.	Gray	22	R.	Young
11	P	Hughes	23	B	Cook
12	D	Hume			

PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: J. Docherty

Vice Chair: D. Broadley

Councillors:

1	I	Agnew	9	D	McMahon
2	D	Broadley	10	P	Murray
3	J	Docherty	11	G	Reid
4	M	Wotherspoon	12	W	Stelling
5	W	Gray	13	F	Todd
6	R	Hemsley	14	D	Walton
7	L	Marshall	15	J	Wilson
8	I	McElhone			

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Councillors:

1	J I	Agnew	19	W	Gray	37	R	Ord
2	R	Alderson	20	R	Hemsley	38	T	Parry
3	A	Atkinson	21	D	Hicks	39	T	Pattinson
4	D I	Barnett	22	P D	Hughes	40	G	Reid
5	G	Beckwith	23	D	Hume	41	W.J.	Rothwell
6	D	Bennett	24	J C	Hunter	42	A	Shield
7	D	Broadley	25	O	Johnson	43	W	Stelling
8	M	Campbell	26	D	Lavin	44	A	Taylor
9	C D	Christer	27	D G	Llewellyn	45	O L	Temple
10	H	Christer	28	M J	Malone	46	F	Todd
11	T	Clark	29	C	Marshall	47	E	Turner
12	B	Cook	30	L	Marshall	48	W J	Tyrie
13	G	Coulson	31	I	McElhone	49	D	Walton
14	J	Docherty	32	D V	McMahon	50	A	Watson
15	E J S	Edwards	33	S E	Mellor	51	M	Westgarth
16	R	Ellis	34	O	Milburn	52	T	Westgarth
17	K	English	35	P	Murray	53	J	Williams
18	M	Wotherspoon	36	J	Nicholson	54	J	Wilson
						55	R	Young

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Castleside Youth Centre Management Committee - Councillor M. Wotherspoon

TITLE:	CONSETT SPORTS PROJECT – UPDATE
TO/ON:	Council – 21st October 2008
BY:	Deputy Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO:	Stronger Communities
STATUS:	Report

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1. SUBJECT MATTER AND PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the Consett Sports Project and the impact of the "Business as Usual" process adopted by Durham County Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Council held on 30th June 2008 a report was submitted asking Members to confirm the preferred development content of the Consett Sports Project. In consideration of consultation feedback Members agreed the development content and further confirmed that:
- i) the budget available for the development was to be modified to accommodate the agreed facilities through the utilisation of £50,000 of savings in the agreed design budget, the use of the capital programme contingency of £2 million and the retention of £800,000 in a design quality allowance to be targeted at public areas.
 - ii) the Chief Executive was authorised to finalise a Design Brief based on the above and to progress to the Outline Design phase as soon as possible; and
 - iii) Durham County Council was to be formally asked to support the project under the Local Government Reorganisation "Business As Usual" protocols.
- 2.2 The report also set out that the project was being taken forward against the following timescales:

- i) **Development Agreement Completed** – July 2008
- ii) **Tenant's Requirements Document Finalised** - July 2008
- iii) **Architect Appointed by PGL** - September 2008
- iv) **Outline Design Completed** - December 2008
- v) **Consultation and Member Decision on Design** - February 2009
- vi) **Planning Application Submitted** - February 2009
- vii) **Detailed Designs Completed** - August 2009
- viii) **Main Tender Documentation Completed** – November 2009
- ix) **Main Contractor Appointed** – January 2010
- x) **Build Contract Completed** – August 2011

2.3 In consideration of the above:

- i) a "Business as Usual Request" was submitted to Durham County Council on 15th July, with a request that a decision on this be made by the end of August 2008;
- ii) a Tenant's Requirements Document was finalised during July based on the agreed development content;
- iii) The process of appointing, through an OJEU tendering process, an Architect to progress the project to Outline Design stage has continued; and
- iv) The basis of the Development Agreement for the project has been further progressed. Actual finalisation and completion of the Agreement would only be possible with Durham County Council's consent under the Local Government Reorganisation "Business As Usual" protocols.

2.4 It was expected that, as is normal practice, Durham County Council's Treasurer would determine the Business As Usual Request but he decided to refer this to Durham County Council's Cabinet with a recommendation that the project be reviewed by a company called InsightMSC Ltd. Since then an Information Request was received from InsightMSC Ltd on 30th September 2008 and, in response to a request for clarification of the brief provided to InsightMSC Ltd by Durham County Council, a "Project Initiation Document" was provided by InsightMSC Ltd on 7th October 2008. The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive met with representatives of InsightMSC Ltd on 10th October 2009. In addition to providing documents and other responses to the Information Request this meeting also sought clarification of the project brief to which Insight was working. Insight confirmed that they are undertaking work that will seek to confirm the status of the Consett Sports Project and the remaining stages to completion. This will include "testing" the processes employed,

whether the broader socio-economic aspects of sport and recreation in the community have been considered, the options considered, the reasons for pursuing the preferred option, the funding structure of the project and the financial implications on the County Council. Thereafter Durham County Council will be asked to make a decision. It is understood that this will include consideration of:

- i) the processes undertaken by Derwentside in bringing the project to its current status compared to those that would have been carried out by the County Council;
- ii) whether Derwentside has made appropriate decisions based on the outcomes of the processes undertaken; and
- iii) financial implications, further actions required and risks/uncertainties.

2.5 The County Treasurer has required that an initial report is provided to him by Insight before the end of December 2008. Insight are endeavouring to provide this by late October or early November. It is not yet clear whether the County Treasurer will require any further work to be undertaken by Insight and/or the decision process/timescale involved thereafter.

3. RELEVANT MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND OPTIONS

3.1 The outcome of this process, and the ultimate decision by Durham County Council, remains to be seen. It is, however, clear that the reasonable planning assumptions that had previously been made regarding the timing of this decision are no longer valid.

3.2 A minimum of a three month delay in obtaining any County Council decision on the project appears inevitable. As reported to Members in June, all project costings have been completed against the development timescale set out above and any delay will have an impact on costings at a rate of approximately £60,000 per month. This means that the project is likely to face a minimum of £180,000 in additional costs.

3.3 In seeking to reconcile this, the Council could agree to:

- i) Utilise contingencies currently retained within the Consett Sports Project budget. Use of these contingencies would, however, prejudice future budget flexibility to meet the agreed development content;
- ii) Use the Health & Safety and Contract Contingency Budget currently within the Council's Capital Programme. This would, however, similarly constrain flexibility in being able to manage other projects within the Programme and/or unforeseeable other emergency capital

requirements; or

- iii) Remind Durham County Council of the potential financial impacts of the delay as key gateway decisions on issues such as the outline design and delivery of the project will now likely be outwith of the lifespan of the District Council.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Under Local Government Reorganisation Protocols it is Durham County Council's prerogative to determine whether the Consett Sports Project proceeds and the process it employs in reaching that decision. There are, however, likely to be financial implications associated with the delay being experienced in obtaining a decision on the "Business as Usual" request for the Project.
- 4.2 Given the process undertaken by Durham County Council for the Business as Usual request, the uncertainty of its outcome/timescale and that key gateway decisions on issues such as the outline design and delivery of the project will now likely be outwith of the lifespan of the District Council, it would be appropriate to remind Durham County Council of the financial implications of delay and ask that appropriate provision be made as part of their future budgetary considerations.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members agree to remind Durham County Council of the potential financial impacts of the delay in determining the Business as Usual request and ask that appropriate provision be made as part of their future budgetary considerations.
- 5.2 The reason for this recommendation is the process undertaken by Durham County Council for the Business as Usual request, the uncertainty of its outcome/timescale and fact that key gateway decisions on issues such as the outline design and delivery of the project will now likely be outwith of the lifespan of the District Council.

For Further Information Contact:

John Pearson, Deputy Chief Executive, ext 8235

TITLE:	Strategy for Children and Young People in Derwentside
TO/ON:	Full Council – 21st October 2008
BY:	Director of Corporate Administration and Policy
STATUS:	Report

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of work undertaken with young people across Derwentside to develop a Youth Strategy and to seek views on its potential adoption by the Council. Members should note that members of the Young People's Forum attended the Scrutiny Meeting to present their strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report and attached strategy captures a consultation with young people across Derwentside. The consultation asked young people what they wanted for their futures and is broken-down into six main areas; Education and Economy; The Environment; Feeling Healthy and Staying Safe; Having a Say; Things to Do and Housing.
- 2.2 Over recent years the Council has prided itself for the way it has engaged with young people – efforts that have been recognised through regional and national awards for the Council. Clearly, as we approach Vesting Day, and as recognised in the Council's Transition Plan, it is important that these efforts are not lost and there is a legacy for the new Unitary Council. This strategy, largely developed by the hard work of Youth Forum members will hopefully go some way to ensure that legacy is secured.
- 2.3 In considering whether to recommend adoption by the Council there will need to be some recognition that given its imminent demise, the District Council will clearly not be able to ensure all of the priorities contained within the Plan will be fulfilled by April, 2009 and a number will need to be taken up by the Unitary Council, although a number of the priorities are currently being addressed in partnership with the Youth Forum.
- 2.4 If Members are minded to recommend approval by the Council, the next steps would be to assist the Youth Forum to engage with the County Council and Local Children's Board to help ensure the priorities within it are addressed in the future.

2.5 The strategy was presented by young people at the 'Special' Environment & Health, and Community Safety & Strong Communities Scrutiny Panel on the 3rd July, 2008 and their comments have been incorporated in the current version of the strategy.

3. Recommendation

3.1 Council is recommended to approve the attached Strategy for Children and Young People in Derwentside.

Background Papers:

SPICE Youth Strategy Questionnaire Results document is saved within the SPICE Office

Strategy for children & young people in Derwentside



Introduction

The SPICE Project and the Derwentside Young People's Forum aim to make Derwentside a better place to live in as a young person.

They believe young people have the right to have their voices heard and that they should be involved in decision-making and the steering of services that are being provided for young people.

Over the past two years the Young People's Forum have been researching young people's issues and consulting young people across the district to gather their views for a children and young people's strategy.

Derwentside District Council asked young people aged between 8 to 19 years what they wanted from their area and for themselves in the future.

They came up with exciting ideas on every part of their lives from setting up drop in centres and youth cafés to more under 18's discos throughout the locality.

The following six areas have been identified as areas of concern and interest to children and young people:

- 1. Education & Economy***
- 2. The Environment***
- 3. Feeling Healthy & Staying Safe***
- 4. Having a Say***
- 5. Things to Do***
- 6. Housing***

1. Education & Economy

Young people want opportunities for learning and to be supported and encouraged to attain their highest aspirations.

Young people said they would like:

1. To see more extra curriculum activities available to them in and outside of school.
2. To be respected in their school lives, both by teachers and by fellow pupils.
3. To be involved in making decisions about their school, in a format which they have control and which gives them genuine involvement in the working of the school.
4. The option to receive regular careers advice as early as Year 7 and 8.
5. To see a Job Centre especially for young people in the District.
6. To see the Youth Bus as a tool to access information on careers, etc.
7. To receive recognition for their achievements and a yearly celebration event.

“If you aren’t on the school council you don’t get a say.”

“They sometimes ask us what we want but they never do anything.”

2. The Environment

The environment is crucial if young people and local residents are to have respect for their surroundings.

“All the parks are being taken down and there is no where now for us to play.”

Young people would like to have:

1. Better street lighting and CCTV around parks.
2. Less Litter – More Bins.
3. More places for young people to go.
4. More trees and shrubs.
5. Off road tracks for motorbikes (* where safe and accredited).
6. More involvement in plans for parks and other environmental improvements.
7. No Smoking in public places.
8. Graffiti Walls (run by professionals).
9. More Youth Shelters but only when linked to other facilities.
10. Better parks and more sports facilities.
11. Better bus shelters.
12. More recycling facilities.
13. More Skate Parks.
14. The environment to be respected by all.

“We need an off road track so we can go and ride our bikes that’s free.” *

3. Feeling Healthy & Staying Safe

Young people want to be and stay healthy. They also want to feel safe in their communities and to be able to access safe exciting activities.

Research undertaken indicates that Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs are the main issues of concern for young people. Bullying, Poor Diet, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Crime, Peer Pressure, School Work, Dog litter, etc. are also an issue.

Young people:

1. Want more projects to help young people stop smoking.
2. Are concerned about their safety whilst hanging around on the streets.
3. Want more publicity on letting young people know what's going on in the area.
4. Want more Anti bullying campaigns and support for young people outside of school who are being bullied.
5. Want water to be available at school.
6. Want local Police to talk to them to make them feel safe.

“There are lots of flyers and leaflets available but there is not much face to face stuff.”

“More gyms and exercise classes for young people.”

“Free fruit in all school.”

4. Having a Say

Young people know they need to be taken seriously and are currently working with the Council to positively promote their image in Derwentside.

They are involved in a range of decision-making activities including the Young People's Forum and with a wide range of organisations working with young people.

Young people want to take pride in the locality and see it as a place that offers them the opportunities they deserve.

“SPICE – It gives young people a voice.”

“Helps young people with problems in their area.”



Young people want:

1. To be encouraged to become more involved in decision-making.
2. To be recognised for their involvement in community activities.
3. Help so they and other residents can work together more for the benefit of the community.
4. More ways for them to be involved in consultation through events and the youth bus, etc.
5. A youth newsletter to be produced a few times a year with information of opportunities available to young people.
6. To explore ways to increase the number of young people taking part in elections.
7. To improve access to council services for young people.
8. An increase in the number of young people who feel they can influence decision making.
9. To continue to use the SPICE website to enable young people to vote on key issues, and increase their experience of and confidence in the democratic process.
10. To be shown evidence on how their views are taken forward and used.
11. To further develop the Young People's Forum and increase the number of young people involved as members.
12. The Civic Centre to be more young people friendly.



“SPICE - Helping young people and schools to get new things.”

5. Things to Do

Young people in Derwentside want plenty of fun activities and places to go within their area. They also want to be able to enjoy themselves without it costing too much money.

These are some of the suggestions young people have come up with:

1. More clubs and opportunities for 5 to 13 year olds.
2. Provide a Drop In Centre / Youth Café in both Stanley and Consett Town Centres.
3. Improve the youth clubs and provide more activities and better equipment.
4. Places to hang out – more Youth Shelters but only when linked to other provision.
5. More parks, especially for teenagers.
6. More bigger improved Skate Parks.
7. Continue and expand the under 18's disco nights to Stanley.
8. Continue the existing Youth Bus and explore the opportunity for more buses throughout the locality.
9. An off road motorbike track.
10. More projects that are open to children with disabilities.
11. Cheaper activities / outings all year round.

“Young people in Derwentside feel there are not enough services available on a weekend / evening.”

6. Housing *

Young people should be given more information on leaving home and becoming an independent adult at an early age.

1. Schools and organisations working with excluded or none attending pupils should make it a priority to include housing education into their curriculum.
2. Some young people prefer the idea of being given advice on being independent through managing money and being informed of the options open to them once they feel able to take on the responsibility of living away from home / parents. Some feel education and family values should be promoted better.
3. Young people living on their own have less experience and should be able to make mistakes knowing there is a support network available if they find it difficult to manage.
4. Young people are part of the community and should receive the same level of services from housing providers as every one else with fair and equal treatment.
5. Young people may have different housing requirements from other tenants and may need more support. However to create a balanced community there has to be a mix of different people.
6. There needs to be recognition across the whole community of homelessness problems amongst young people and less judgements made about individual young people who find themselves in the unfortunate position of having no where to live.

* This section was undertaken by young people at SHAID

Priorities & Targets

The Young People's Forum has prioritised the following targets for 2008 - 2009:

1. Would like to see more extra curriculum activities available to them in and outside of school.
2. Better street lighting and CCTV around parks.
3. Want more projects to help young people stop smoking.
4. To be encouraged to become more involved in decision-making.
5. To be recognised for their involvement in community activities.
6. More clubs and opportunities for 5 to 13 year olds.
7. Schools and organisations working with excluded or none attending pupils should make it a priority to include housing education into their curriculum.



TITLE:	HONORARY ALDERMEN
TO/ON:	ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 21 OCTOBER 2008
BY:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION & POLICY
STATUS:	REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

1. SUBJECT MATTER AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 As with previous re-organisations, Councils which were due to be abolished were permitted to appoint Honorary Aldermen from amongst their existing members. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have informed Council's that they intend to follow this precedent once again. In addition, it is intended the newly created Aldermen of an outgoing authority will become Aldermen of the new authority.
- 1.2 Given this anticipated power, this report outlines potential criteria for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen from amongst current serving Councillors should the Council wish to hold a specific meeting to agree such appointments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a Council, by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, confer the title Honorary Aldermen on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council as past members of that Council, but who are not then Councillors of the Council.
- 2.2 In line with previous local government reorganizations, the government has indicated their intention to relax this power and allow outgoing Councils to appoint serving District Councillors and Honorary Aldermen.
- 2.3 Honorary Alderman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide, but shall not, as such, have the right:-
- (a) to attend meetings of the Council or a committee of the Council (including a joint committee upon which they are represented); or
 - (b) to receive any such allowances or payments as are payable under sections 173 to 176 of the 1972 Act.
- 2.4 Whilst Honorary Aldermen have no legal, social or royal precedence, they can be used to support the office of the Mayor / Chairman. Such people can be encouraged to attend en masse all civic ceremonial events when invited and can support the work of the Mayor / Chairman's charity. Similarly, when invited, they can provide valuable support in hosting receptions and promoting civic pride and the Council.

- 2.5 The White Paper, *Communities in control – real people, real power* released in July 2008 has put emphasis on the need for recognition of Councillors work. The Paper further highlights that Council's should be encouraged to use their powers to create Aldermen.

3. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS / OPTIONS

- 3.1 If it is intended to take up the ability to appoint Honorary Aldermen, it will be necessary for the Council to adopt criteria from which nominations can be determined. As none currently exist and the Council has never taken up the right to appoint Aldermen in the past, a review of other authorities suggests the following possible criteria.

- 3.2 Given the key requirement of the legislation in that Councillors should have provided 'eminent' service, generally appointments are agreed on the basis of length of service and the significance of their role (in terms of positions held within the Council). It is therefore suggested that should the Council wish to go ahead with the appointment of Honorary Aldermen from the current membership of the Council, that nominations are open to all serving District Councillors, who fulfill the three requirements set out below:

- (i) have served continuously as a District Councillor since May 1999;
- (ii) have held a senior position within the Council, i.e. have been Chairman, Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder, Chair of a Committee; or would have served continuously as a District Councillor since May 1991;
- (iii) are not currently elected to Durham County Council.

- 3.3 Should the Council agree with this criteria and the government approve the change, it is suggested eligible members inform the Monitoring Officer, in writing that they wish to be considered for Honorary Aldermen status.

- 3.4 In recommending this approach, it is considered it would appropriately reflect the contribution made by Councillors to their work in Derwentside, without undervaluing what has generally been seen in other Council's as a valued honour, bestowed on relatively few Councillors.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Council agree the selection criteria set out above to determine the nomination of Honorary Aldermen and that a Special Meeting of the Council is convened to consider the nominations at an appropriate time prior to the 31st March 2009.

For further information regarding this report contact Gordon Elliott, Director of Corporate Admin & Policy on ext. 8242.

Background Papers:

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972;
Local Government Restructuring Transitional (No.2) Regulations (Draft)

TITLE:	South Moor Park, Stanley
TO/ON:	Ordinary Meeting of the Council – 21st October 2008
PORTFOLIO:	Strong Communities
BY:	Director of Environmental Services
STATUS:	Report

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report, and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to advise Members of the potential funding arrangements for the redevelopment of South Moor Park.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the Annual General Meeting of the Council on 13 May 2008, Members considered a report on South Moor Park and the resolution from the draft minutes (shown below) was agreed.

18. SOUTH MOOR PARK, STANLEY

The Director of Environmental Services presented the report which advised Members of a study which had taken place in relation to South Moor Park following consultation with the local community.

Using funding from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Groundwork West Durham was commissioned by South Moor Partnership early in 2006 to draw up proposals to restore South Moor Park. A number of consultation events have taken place with residents and community groups since that time, to gather views and develop proposals in order that a submission could be made to the Council on how the Park could be developed.

Councillor Watson commented that this project had been on-going for a number of years, there had been obstacles to overcome and it would be good to see this project delivered before the handover to the new Council.

Councillor McMahon advised that the people of South Moor were passionate about this park and fully supported the project.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council agree, in principle, to support the South Moor Park revitalisation project as indicated on the plans attached to the report. This was subject to a further report once further consultation had been carried; also to detail the budgetary implications if implementing the project.

2. That the Council agree that the project should be 'cashflowed' from the Capital Programme at the earliest opportunity.

3.0 RELEVANT MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS/OPTIONS

3.1 Opportunities for external funding for the project have been explored and, as a consequence, a number of grant opportunities have been identified which will require applications to be submitted. Groundwork will support South Moor Partnership in submitting these.

Potential funding sources and time scales are outlined below:

1. **Coalfield Regeneration Trust – Access to Opportunities**

Would contribute to overall project. Discussed with a Grant Officer and she was very positive about it; suggested that it would need more matched than we currently have, but didn't suggest an actual amount to apply for. Next deadline is 23.09.08, with decision early-mid November.

2. **Big Lottery Fund – Changing Spaces**

New programme, would contribute to whole project. Small and medium grants have recently opened; there is a 6 week turnaround for the first phase, followed by 3 months for the second phase for medium grants, which are between £25,000–£49,999. Large and flagship grants open this summer; no further details available yet about time scales. Large grants £50,000-£100,000; flagship £100,001-£450,000 and need at least £50,000 in match funding.

3. **Local Heritage Fund - Your Heritage or Heritage**

Would contribute to natural landscape and heritage aspects of project. Your Heritage is smaller grants of between £3,000–£50,000. New programme of grant assessments starts in September and they expect the first decisions to be within 10 weeks. Heritage is larger programme for over £50,000; applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with a two-stage process which would take at least 1 year, but possibly longer.

3.2 The Play Pathfinder bid for County Durham could also be a source of funding to meet the cost of some of the formal play areas. This project has been included in an initial list of projects to be considered.

The external funding package could be made up of:

Source	Amount	Decision by
Coalfield Regeneration Trust	£118,000	Mid November
Big Lottery Fund – Changing Spaces (Large)	£95,000	Unknown
Local Heritage Fund - Your Heritage	£45,000	Mid November
Total:	£258,000	

When the whole cost of the project is considered, then the funding package would be as shown below:

Source	Status	Amount
Planning Agreement (Sec 106) from Gladedale Development	Received	£100,000
Grant to Groundwork from County Durham Environmental Trust (CDENT)	Grant confirmed	£30,000
Derwentside District Council contribution from Placemakers for South Moor Project agreed at Executive January 2008	DDC funding to be released through Asset Management Group when resources become available	£50,000
Derwentside District Council contribution from Placemakers Project contingency sum agreed at Executive January 2008	DDC funding to be released through Asset Management Group when resources become available	£60,000
External Grant contribution as table above	Grant regimes identified; no application made; positive response to initial enquiries	up to £285,000
	Total up to:	£525,000

Considered against the total estimated cost of the project as previously reported:

	£
1. Fencing and Railings	26,300.00
2. Entrance Gates & Wall	10,500.00
3. Footpaths and Circulations	38,300.00
4. Park Furniture	15,500.00
5. Lighting	17,600.00
6. Recreation area: MUGA, BMX ramps & teen shelter	110,645.00
7. Softworks	20,000.00
8. Interpretation and Signage	15,500.00
9. Stream works	7,200.00
10. Car Park Re-surfacing	16,800.00
Sub-total	£278,345.00
Preliminaries at 15%	41,751.75
Contingency at 5%	13,917.25
Works Total	£334,014.00
Fees	
Landscape Architect, inc CDM Duties	£41,081.68
CDM Coordinator (internal fee cost)	£2,000.00
	£43,081.68
Total Estimate	£377,095.68

It can be seen that with the funding already committed, and the potential grant regimes identified, there is expected to be sufficient funding available to allow this scheme to progress, subject to the conditions below:

- The work is packaged to ensure that only those elements which are fully funded through the relevant funding schemes are progressed. This is to ensure that grants are not compromised as a consequence of works already being carried not being considered for matched funding and the like.
- Funding would be released by the Asset Management Group in line with established priorities.

The matter of cashflowing the project can now be set aside as the Council's funding is secured and the Section 106 funding has been received.

3.3 Consultation

This project has received significant input from the community during the design and concept stage. It is suggested that the plan seen at the Annual General Meeting in May is posted on the site by way of feedback as being the preferred option for the Park within available resources.

3.4 LGR

Members should also note that the project will require consideration by the County Council's Treasurer under the "Business as Usual" protocols that have been set for the Local Government Reorganisation process. The protocols require budgeted projects that have a reliance on external finance being secured prior to them being contractually committed, and/or a requirement for Member approval to proceed, also require approval of the County Treasurer before they can progress.

3.5 Options/Recommendations

The Council can now proceed with the project in several ways:

1. The Council supports South Moor Partnership, working with Groundwork to deliver the project and commit its Capital contribution to the scheme.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The project is supported though its life by one organisation	The ability for the Partnership to act as Client in this project is not clear
	The ability for the Partnership to control the expenditure through established acceptable financial protocols is not known
	The acceptability of the partnership as an accountable body is not known

2. The Council delivers the project directly, working with the South Moor Partnership in seeking external funding by engaging Groundwork as consultants to complete the design, with the procurement and contract management being carried by Derwentside's own staff.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The District Council is well established to manage the project to 1 st April 2009 and thence the County Council is a mature organisation with all of the necessary protocols to ensure completion	There is no continuity of direct client role
The management of the Council funds is kept within Local Authority control	No certainty of prioritisation for project delivery
Support for the grant regimes is available to ensure compliance with grant conditions for external funding	
Supporting District Council	

policies for the project e.g. Play Strategy are in place and robust	
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In each of the above scenarios the project can be phased to allow the opportunity to maximise the funding opportunities.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the project is delivered directly by the Council with the South Moor Partnership supported by Groundwork seeking funding to secure full project financing.
2. That the preferred layout is publicly displayed on the park site.

This option ensures that the Council's financial resources and assets remain within its control and expenditure will be dealt with under the Financial Regulations of the Authority.

For further information on the report, please contact John Shepherd, Divisional Head of General Services - Tel: 01207 218384 or e-mail j.shepherd@derwentside.gov.uk

Background Papers

South Moor Park Appraisal

Report to Annual General Meeting 13 May 2008 - South Moor Park

Report to Executive 14th January 2008 - Place Makers