

## Agenda Item 5(a)

STATUS PUBLIC

<b>Portfolio Member/Director/Head of Service</b> Councillor Les Thomson/Head of Community Services	<b>Portfolio</b> Communities
<b>Subject</b> Provision of Sanctuary Scheme/Target Hardening Initiatives	<b>Date</b> 15 October 2008 <b>Forward Plan</b> No
<b>Contact Officer</b> Anne Delandre, Strategy & Development Manager Tel : 0191 3018220 E-mail <a href="mailto:adelandre@durhamcity.gov.uk">adelandre@durhamcity.gov.uk</a>	<b>Previous Minutes</b> None
<b>Purpose of Report</b> The purpose of this report is to consider the establishment of a Sanctuary Scheme in the City of Durham District.	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<p>Domestic Abuse accounts for around a quarter of all recorded crime and two incidents of domestic abuse are reported to the police every minute. It claims the lives of two women a week and nearly half of all female murder victims are killed by a partner or ex-partner.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse affects all kinds of women; it is not confined to any social class, ethnic origin or particular age. <i>To illustrate this point two cases of Domestic Abuse recently investigated by the authority's Housing Options Officers involve a 73 year old lady who has suffered from physical/verbal abuse from her 79 year old husband, and a lady who is suffering from sexual/emotional abuse from her husband who holds a senior position within HM Forces.</i></p> <p>For some, escaping Domestic Abuse will involve leaving the family home – often as the last resort. In these circumstances a woman and her children are double victims. Leaving home can be an immediate response to a crisis situation or a more planned response to a longer period of abuse or violence. For women living in poverty or who are financially dependent on an abuser, a decision to leave home is likely to be more difficult because of the fear of not being able to find an alternative for themselves and their children. Women in these circumstances are more likely to rely on local authorities or other agencies for help.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse has the highest rate of repeat victimisation of any crime. A perpetrator may pursue the woman and her family, forcing them to move repeatedly. Over 40% of women who reported having been a victim of Domestic Abuse were not living with their abuser at the time of the assault. The experience of being placed in temporary accommodation – bed and breakfast, or a hostel, a long way from the family home, requiring the children to change schools and move away from their friends, important stabilising influences for the children, may seem too traumatic. Children may become unsettled in a new environment and women may feel vulnerable and exposed. In such cases, it may seem a better option to return home.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse is first and foremost a crime and stopping Domestic Abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice is the over-riding priority. Health and children services, community safety and crime reduction programmes all have a critical role in tackling Domestic Abuse. At a local level, a range of initiatives and partnerships are well established through the Chester-le-Street and Durham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. However, Domestic Abuse is a significant feature in homelessness and the availability of safe and</p>	

secure accommodation for women, either as a respite or as a stepping stone to rehousing is critical and potentially life saving.

A meeting has recently taken place involving officers from the Strategy and Development and Community Safety Sections of the authority together with representatives from Durham Police and Durham and Chester-le-Street Domestic Abuse Service to see how the authority can assist victims of both Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime. In addition the County Durham Domestic Abuse Forum has produced a report on Options for the Provision of Sanctuary Schemes in County Durham. The report has identified that Domestic Abuse incidents make up over 25% of all violent crimes reported to the police in County Durham. Over 6,000 incidents are reported each year and many of these victims are also presenting to district councils as being homeless as a consequence of the abuse suffered. During the year 2007/08 185 households were accepted as homeless by City of Durham; of these acceptances 38 applications were made as a result of Domestic Abuse (20%) and this category of applicant was the second highest reason for the loss of last settled home for households accepted as homeless (Figures taken from P1e Quarterly Returns submitted to CLG for 2007/8).

This report highlights the need to provide a Sanctuary Scheme to enable a victim to remain in their own home through the provision of a range of practical security measures and personal support. Whilst a Sanctuary Scheme model is predominantly targeted at victims of Domestic Abuse, it should also be made available to victims of all other types of Hate Crime who are at risk of becoming homeless. There are currently three levels of security recommendations but, in considering the options, a survey of service users was conducted to ascertain their views in respect of the Sanctuary Scheme and responses were received from service users in Easington, Wear Valley, Derwentside and Chester-le-Street as well as City of Durham. Of those surveyed, 57% felt they would have benefited from having the basic level of security measures installed in their homes. They felt that this would have been sufficient to ensure they were safe and felt safe.

Level 3 (also known as Sanctuary minimum) offers the basic level of security. It can include extra door guards, window locks, security lighting, smoke alarms and fireboxes. It does not include a safe room or window grilles. The cost of providing this level of security is approximately £300 for each home.

The Strategy and Development Section has ring-fenced a minimum of £2,000 from the 2008/09 CLG Homelessness Grant towards the provision of Level 3 Sanctuary security. A Local Performance Indicator (LPI206) has also been established with a target of providing eight households with Level 3 Sanctuary security measures during this financial year. £5,000 funding has also been committed from the authority's Crime Reduction Initiative Fund. In addition, the authority contributes £10,000 towards Post Crime Initiatives and this funding may be used to assist with the provision of Level 3 Sanctuary security measures to assist victims of Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime.

A number of meetings have taken place with the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator and consideration is being given to entering into a Service Level Agreement with DISC (Durham Initiatives Supporting Communities) to authorise the organisation to carry out the necessary security measures on behalf of the authority. Members are requested to consider the establishment of a Level 3 Sanctuary Scheme, the costs of which can be found from existing funding.

<p><b>Portfolio Member Recommendations or Items Requiring a Cabinet Decision</b></p> <p>That Cabinet approves the establishment of a Level 3 Sanctuary Scheme.</p>
<p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b></p> <p>To safeguard victims of Domestic Abuse and enable them to remain in their own homes</p>
<p><b>Alternative Options To Be Considered</b></p> <p>Not to approve the establishment of such a scheme. This could be considered as putting victims of Domestic Abuse at further risk, or contributing to their having to leave their homes in order to obtain alternative safe accommodation.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b></p> <p>Consultation has taken place with members of OMT and with the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator. In addition service users were surveyed on their views regarding the effectiveness of Sanctuary Schemes.</p>
<p><b>LGR Implications</b></p> <p>This report does not fall within the direction issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 29 February 2008 and accordingly does not require the consent of any other body prior to a decision being made by Cabinet.</p>
<p><b>Financial, Legal and Risk Implications</b></p> <p>The introduction of the scheme can be achieved within existing financial and human resources and no additional provision need be made. There may be a risk to the Council's reputation in the event that the scheme is not established and subsequently a victim of Domestic Abuse suffers a repeat attack.</p>
<p><b>Resource Implications</b></p> <p>The recommendation in this report can be accommodated via the resources already allocated by the Council to the Housing Strategy, Property Services and Community Safety sections</p>
<p><b>Timescale for Action</b></p> <p>If approved, the Council will seek to implement the recommendation outlined in the report as soon as possible.</p>
<p><b>Associated Policies and Plans</b></p> <p>City of Durham Crime &amp; Disorder Reduction Strategy</p>
<p><b>Supporting Documents</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Background Papers</b></p> <p>None</p>

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## Agenda Item 5(b)

STATUS PUBLIC

<b>Portfolio Member/Director/Head of Service</b> Councillor Dennis Southwell/ Paul Darby	<b>Portfolio</b> Finance
<b>Subject</b> Quarterly Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2008/09 – Position at 30/06/08	<b>Date</b> 15 October 2008
	<b>Forward Plan</b> No
<b>Contact Officer</b> Paul Darby, Director of Financial Services Tel : 0191 301 8622 Email : <a href="mailto:pdarby@durhamcity.gov.uk">pdarby@durhamcity.gov.uk</a>	<b>Previous Minutes</b> None
<b>Purpose of Report</b> <p>The purpose of this report is to present details of the treasury management activity undertaken and actual performance against the associated prudential indicators for 2008/09 during the period 1 April to 30 June 2008. The report is prepared in the context of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies approved by Council on 26 February 2008.</p>	
<b>Executive Summary</b> <p>This report shows that the Council fully complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements in terms of its treasury management activity for the period covered by the report. It sets out details of the Council's Capital Expenditure plans, the impact of the Capital Expenditure on Council Tax and Rents and highlights changes to the financing of the Capital Programme. It also confirms that borrowing was only undertaken for a capital purpose and that the Statutory borrowing limit and the Authorised Limit was and has not been breached. Finally it provides information regarding borrowing and investments in the period and confirms they were made in full accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy.</p>	
<b>Portfolio Member Recommendations or items Requiring a Cabinet Decision</b> <p>That Cabinet note and approve the Treasury Management stewardship report and performance against the prudential indicators for 2008/09, during the period 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2008, as set out in Appendix A.</p>	
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> <p>This report is a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures and is in line with both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes through Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.</p>	

<p><b>Alternative Options to be Considered</b></p> <p>None – the reporting of performance against the Treasury Management and Investment strategies approved by Council is a key corporate and financial governance requirement and therefore not reporting performance is not an option.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b></p> <p>The content of this report and the associated appendix has been considered and approved by the Council's Officers Management Team, including the three statutory Officers, and follows guidance received from the Council's appointed Treasury Management Consultants.</p>
<p><b>LGR Implications</b></p> <p>There are no issues relating to this report which warrant any further clarification or approval from Durham County Council under the provisions of Local Government and Involvement in Health Act.</p>
<p><b>Financial, Legal and Risk Implications</b></p> <p>There are no specific financial, legal or risk implications risks associated with or arising from this report.</p> <p>Financial, legal and risk implications, particularly minimising exposure to risk, underpin the Councils internal controls and procedures within the Treasury Management service. The policies and procedures in place reflect the strategies approved by Council and are subject to close and regular scrutiny. The Internal Audit Service have recently concluded a review of systems, procedures and internal control environment within this function and have awarded it a Level 1 (Excellent) assessment with no recommendations for corrective action being made.</p>
<p><b>Resource Implications</b></p> <p>There are no specific resource implications associated with the approval of this report.</p>
<p><b>Timescale for Action</b></p> <p>Not applicable – the recommendations in this report are not time specific.</p>
<p><b>Associated Policies and Plans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2008/09</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supporting Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix A – Report on the Treasury Management Service and Prudential Indicators 2008/09 – Position at 30/06/08</li> </ul>
<p><b>Background Papers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prudential Capital Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities – Prudential Indicators 2008-09 – Report to Council 26 February 2008</li> <li>• Treasury Management &amp; Investment Strategy 2008/09– Report to Council 26 February 2008</li> <li>• Prudential Indicators 2008/09 – Report to Council 26 February 2008</li> <li>• Guidance from Councils appointed Treasury Management Consultants – Butlers</li> <li>• Agresso Financial Management system and associated working papers</li> </ul>



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# **Quarterly Report on the Treasury Management Service and Prudential Indicators 2008/09**

Paul Darby, Director of Financial Services  
June 2008

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to review the performance of the Council's Treasury Management activities to the quarter ended June 2008. One of the requirements of the Prudential Code is to ensure that an Authority has adequate monitoring of its capital expenditure plans, prudential indicators (PIs) and treasury management operations. This report fulfils that requirement and is based on performance against the Council's Treasury Strategy and PIs, approved by Council 26 February 2008.

## 2. Capital Expenditure

- 2.1 This table shows the Actual Capital Expenditure programme for 2007/08 and the changes between the original capital programme and the current position for 2008/09.

<b>2007/08 Actual £000</b>	<b>Capital Expenditure by Service</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Budget £000</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £000</b>
5,154	Housing Capital Expenditure	4,704	4,849
1,403	Flourishing Communities	895	1,602
3,277	Quality Public Services	1,006	1,821
880	Capital City	240	404
139	Admin Fees	0	0
<b>10,853</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,845</b>	<b>8,676</b>

The approved capital programmes have been amended to reflect the carry forward of underspends in 2007/08 as detailed in the Statement of Accounts approved by Council in June 2008.

## 2.2 Changes to the Financing of the Capital Programme

The table below draws together the main strategy elements of the capital expenditure plans (above), highlighting the original supported and unsupported elements of the capital programme, and the expected financing arrangements for this capital expenditure. The borrowing element of the table increases the underlying indebtedness of the Council in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), although this will be reduced in part by revenue charges for the repayment of debt.



<b>2007/08 Actual £000</b>	<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Budget £000</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £000</b>
5,134	Non-HRA Capital Expenditure	2,141	3,827
5,154	HRA Capital	4,704	4,849
<b>10,288</b>	<b>Total spend</b>	<b>6,845</b>	<b>8,676</b>
	<b>Financed by:</b>		
248	Supported Borrowing	248	248
1,117	Capital receipts (Including S106 Agreements)	1,172	2,208
4,399	Capital grants & Contributions	5,013	5,668
3,330	Reserves (Relates to C/fwd Commitments)	0	61
1,194	Revenue	412	491
<b>10,288</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,845</b>	<b>8,676</b>

### 2.3 Prudential Indicators - Impact of Capital Expenditure Plans

#### Impact on Council Taxpayer

The following indicator estimates the incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the council taxpayer: -

<b>2007/08 Actual £ p</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Estimate £ p</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £ p</b>
77.14	Band D	3.64	4.38

The 2008/09 revised indicator reflects the additional capital receipts required to fund carry over commitments on the 2008/09 Capital programme.

#### Impact on Council Tenants

This indicator identifies the incremental impact of capital investment decisions on housing rent levels and is similar to the Council tax calculation in that it takes into account the trend in the cost of changes in the housing capital programme compared to the Council's original commitments, expressed as a change in weekly rent levels.

<b>2007/08 Actual £ p</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Estimate £ p</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £ p</b>
0.75	Weekly Rents	1.45	1.19

The 2008/09 original indicator reported to Council in February 2008 contained an error in the calculation. The original estimate was overstated (at 4.17), the figure above is the correct base estimate.

#### 2.4 **Changes to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and the External Debt**

The table below shows the CFR, which is the Council's underlying external need to borrow for a capital purpose. It is increased each year by any new borrowing need (as shown above), and decreased by any statutory revenue charge for the repayment of debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision).

<b>2007/08 Actual £000</b>		<b>2008/09 Original Estimate £000</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £000</b>
3,889	CFR – Non Housing	3,734	3,734
18,793	CFR – Housing	19,041	19,041
<b>22,682</b>	<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>22,775</b>	<b>22,775</b>
+86	Net movement in CFR (Year on Year)	+93	+93

#### 2.5 **Prudential Indicator - Limits to Borrowing Activity**

The first key control over the Council's activity is a Prudential Indicator to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose. Net external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2008/09 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years.

2007/08 Actual £000		2008/09 Original Estimate £000	2008/09 Revised Estimate £000
22,153	Gross Borrowing	21,322	21,322
4,787	Investments	5,207	5,207
17,366	Net Borrowing	16,115	16,115
22,597	CFR (Previous Year Only)	22,682	22,682

As can be seen, net external borrowing remains well within the Councils CFR and there are no difficulties envisaged for the current or future years – taking into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals that will form part of the forthcoming budget report.

2.6 A further two PIs measure and control the overall level of borrowing. These are:

The **Authorised Limit**, representing the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The **Operational Boundary**, which is based on the probable external debt during the course of the year; it is not a limit and actual borrowing could vary around this boundary for short times during the year. CIPFA anticipate that this should act as an indicator to ensure the authorised limit is not breached.

2007/08 Actual £000		2008/09 Original Estimate £000	2008/09 Revised Estimate £000
28,782	Authorised limit for external debt	28,875	28,875
26,182	Operational boundary for external debt	26,275	26,275

## 2.7 Interest Rate Movements and Expectations

The outlook for the UK economy has deteriorated and the Bank of England has indicated that monetary policy will err on the side of caution, at least for the foreseeable future.

Domestic activity is set to decelerate sharply in the next few quarters and while a recession is not expected, the quarterly rate of growth is likely to be very modest. (The Bank of England has warned of the possibility of some quarters of negative growth).

The annual rate of expansion will fall to between 1.5% and 2%, the slowest for more than 10 years.

A host of reasons have been identified for this downturn. The main causes can be itemised as follows: the effects of the tightening of credit conditions in the wake of the 2007 financial crisis; a slowdown in housing activity; a faltering in business investment; the weak international backdrop; moderating household sector spending and low public sector spending growth.

The situation is not expected to improve in the near term. The household sector's heavy indebtedness leaves it particularly vulnerable to increased mortgage costs as discounted, fixed rate mortgages are re-set. Consumer spending is in danger of falling more markedly in the months ahead. In addition to this, the parlous state of public sector finances means there is no room for a substantial fiscal boost.

Inflation remains under upward pressure and the MPC is warning that CPI will remain above the 3% upper limit of the Government's target range until well into 2009. While the vast bulk of inflation pressure is currently caused by external factors beyond the influence of the Bank of England, the concern is that upward pressure in key areas such as food and fuel prices will trigger a profound deterioration in inflation expectations.

Growth in the economy is expected to be a good deal weaker than the Bank of England is forecasting and a recovery in 2009 seems less likely. With inflation pressures also predicted to ease as the effects of fuel and commodity price increases evaporate, there will be some limited scope for policy relaxation next year.

While concerns about the health of the financial sector will persist for some time, and these may limit the potential for any increase in bond yields in the very near term, uncertainties over inflation will lend an upward bias to long-term interest rates for the foreseeable future.

## 2.8 External Borrowing & Repayment Activity

An analysis of all PWLB Loans held as at 30 June 2008 is attached at Annex A There has been no new external borrowing undertaken in the first three months of this year.

The Director of Financial Services, under delegated powers, will continue to take the most appropriate form of borrowing depending on the prevailing interest rates at the time, taking into account the risks shown in the forecast above. It is likely that longer term fixed rates will be considered if borrowing levels remain relatively low. This may include borrowing in advance of future years requirements

The following table sets out details of all loan transactions during the three month period to 30 June 2008:-

Type of Institution	Balance at 01/04/08 £000	Borrowed £000	Repaid £000	Premature Repayments £000	Balance at 30/06/08 £000	Estimated Balance 31/03/09
<b>PWLB</b>						
- Annuity	4,164	Nil	(127)	Nil	4,037	3,472
- Maturity	15,500	Nil	Nil	Nil	15,500	15,500
Depfa	2,000	Nil	Nil	Nil	2,000	2,000
Other	350	Nil	Nil	Nil	350	350
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,014</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>(127)</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>21,887</b>	<b>21,322</b>

### 2.9 Debt Rescheduling Activity

Opportunities for debt restructuring are continually monitored, taking into account advice from the Council's Treasury Management Consultants. Action will only be taken where the Director of Financial Services feels it is most advantageous, taking into account the impact of premiums payable on early redemption of any high coupon debt held currently.

No debt rescheduling activity has been undertaken during the period covered by this report.

## 3. Investments

### 3.1 Investment Strategy

Officers assess the Council's cash flows on a daily basis, taking into account detailed forecasts of funds needed throughout the year, and invest any surplus funds in accordance with approved Treasury Management Practices (TMP's). Investments are only made with authorised counter parties.

Fixed investments are made for sums of £500,000 plus and for varying periods up to 364 days. Excess funds that are held temporarily for only a few days, for cash flow purposes, are invested in either the Co-Operative Banks Call Account or 7 Day Account held by the Council.

The objective in the Strategy is to optimise investment income in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Statement, whilst at the same time being cautious and prudent in terms of minimising the Council's exposure to risk.

Expected future activity – The outlook for the UK economy has deteriorated and the Bank of England has indicated that monetary policy will err on the side of caution, at least for the foreseeable future. The Council's investment decisions are based on comparisons between the decreases priced into the market rates against the Council's and advisers own forecasts. The Director of Financial Services, under delegated powers, undertakes the most appropriate form of investments depending on the prevailing interest rates at the time, taking into account the risks shown in the forecast above.

All investment decisions are taken in accordance with the Council's approved TM Strategy and only with organisations included in the counterparty lists.

### 3.2 Investment Activity Undertaken

Short-term investments totalled £4.787M at 1 April, of which £1.456M was held with the Co-op Bank and £3.250M with external investments. At 30 June short-term investments totalled £6.972M, of which £4.250M was held in external investments and £2.722M was with the Co-op Bank. No funds are externally managed; all surplus funds are internally managed / invested. An analysis of all investments held at 30 June 2008 is shown in Annex B.

Treasury Management Practices set out in the Local Code of Treasury Management establish strict controls governing the day-to-day investment activity of the Council. All investments in the year have been made in accordance with these practices in terms of the authorised counter parties that the Council deals with and the maximum deposits / control totals applying to those individual institutions and the investment periods. The Local Code sets a maximum investment period of 364 days and maximum amounts that can be invested with individual counter parties. An analysis of the investment maturity profile at 30 June 2008 is shown at Annex C.

The base budget (prepared 4 months in advance of the start of the financial year) gives an estimated interest receivable of £656,000 for 2008/09. This was based on an assumed average investment portfolio of £12m with an assumed average interest on investment of 5.5%.

Officers have re-estimated the calculations for interest receivable as part of the projected outturn calculations. This was done after the budgetary control report was considered by members. It is forecast that Interest Receivable will be approximately £65,000 lower than originally anticipated in the current year. This is a combination of two factors, the level of investments is lower than originally anticipated (due to the reduced cash flow from RTB sales and the average interest rates earned are lower than that originally forecast. The outturn projections include the interest receivable on the £2M Capital payment to DVRC in 2007/08, which is based on 1% above the Bank rate. The following table provides details of the budgetary control impact of the revised forecast: -

<b>2007/08 Actual £000</b>	<b>Interest Received</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Budget £000</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised Estimate £000</b>
770	Interest	656	591

### 3.3 Prudential Indicator - Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This prudential indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing costs net of interest and investment income) against the net revenue stream.

2007/08 Actual		2008/09 Original Estimate	2008/09 Revised Estimate
0%	Non-HRA	-0.92%	-0.44%
13.0%	HRA	19.01%	13.13%

The revised forecast on interest receivable will be factored into the next budgetary control report.

### 3.4 Other Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

**Upper Limits On Variable Rate Exposure** – This indicator identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments.

**Upper Limits On Fixed Rate Exposure** – Similar to the previous indicator this covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates.

2007/08 Actual		2008/09 Original Estimate	2008/09 Revised Estimate
98.4%	Limits on fixed interest rates	100%	100%
1.6%	Limits on variable interest rates	50%	50%

**Maturity Structures Of Borrowing** – These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate loans (those instruments which carry a fixed interest rate for the duration of the instrument) falling due for refinancing in any one period. In addition to the required indicator this Council also monitors the entire maturity profile including both fixed and variable rate loans. These limits are shown below the required limits.

2007/08 Actual		2008/09 Original Estimate	2008/09 Revised Estimate
4.73%	Under 12 months	20%	20%
2.56%	12 months to 2 years	20%	20%
4.97%	2 years to 5 years	50%	50%
16.44%	5 years to 10 years	75%	75%
71.30%	10 years and above	90%	90%

**Total Principal Funds Invested > 364 Days** – These limits are set to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of investments after each year-end.

2007/08 Actual		2008/09 Original Estimate	2008/09 Revised Estimate
£0	Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days	£0	£0

#### 4. **Regulatory Framework, Risk and Performance**

4.1 The Council's treasury management activities are regulated by a variety of professional codes and statutes and guidance:

- The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act), which provides the powers to borrow and invest as well as providing controls and limits on this activity;
- The Act permits the Secretary of State to set limits either on the Council or nationally on all local authorities restricting the amount of borrowing which may be undertaken (although no restrictions were made in 2006/07);
- Statutory Instrument (SI) 3146 2003, as amended, develops the controls and powers within the Act;
- The SI requires the Council to undertake any borrowing activity with regard to the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
- The SI also requires the Council to operate the overall treasury function with regard to the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services;
- Under the Act the ODPM (now DCLG) has issued Investment Guidance to structure and regulate the Council's investment activities.

4.2 The Council has complied with all of the above relevant statutory and regulatory requirements which limit the levels of risk associated with its treasury management activities. In particular its adoption and implementation of both the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice for Treasury Management means both that its capital expenditure is prudent, affordable and sustainable, and its treasury practices demonstrate a low risk approach.

4.3 The Council is aware of the risks of passive management of the treasury portfolio and, with the support of Butlers, the Council's advisers, has proactively managed its treasury position. The Council has continued to utilise historically low borrowing costs and has complied with its internal and external procedural requirements. There is little risk of volatility of costs in the current debt portfolio as the interest rates are predominantly fixed, utilising long-term loans.

4.4 Shorter-term rates and likely future movements in these rates predominantly determine the Council's investment return. These returns can therefore be volatile and, whilst the risk of loss of principal is minimised through the annual investment strategy, accurately forecasting future returns can be difficult



## 5. Summary – Estimated and Actual Treasury Position and Prudential Indicators

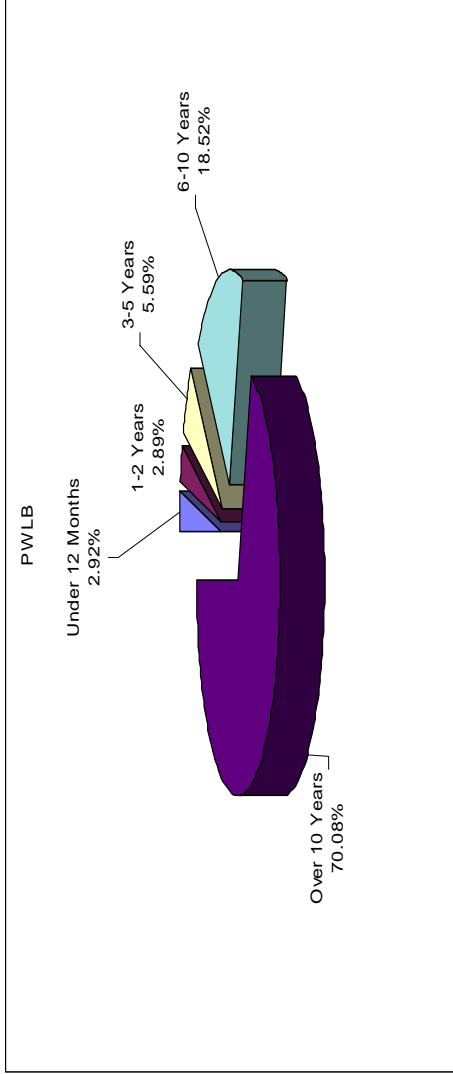
2007/8 Actual	Figures are for the financial year end unless otherwise titled in italics	2008/09 Original Indicator	2008/09 Revised
£10.3m	<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	£6.8m	£8.7m
	<b>Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at 31 March</b>		
£18.8m	Housing	£19.1m	£19.1m
£3.9m	Non Housing	£3.7m	£3.7m
<b>£22.6m</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£22.8m</b>	<b>£22.8m</b>
	<b>Treasury Position at 31 March</b>		
£22.1m	Borrowing	£21.3m	£21.3m
£0.0m	Other long term liabilities	£0m	£0m
<b>£22.1m</b>	<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>£21.3m</b>	<b>£21.3m</b>
<b>£4.8m</b>	<b>Investments</b>	<b>£5.2m</b>	<b>£5.2m</b>
<b>£17.3m</b>	<b>Net Borrowing</b>	<b>£16.1m</b>	<b>£16.1m</b>
<b>£22.5m</b>	<b>Maximum Debt (Actual) compared to Authorised Limit (Original Indicator)</b>	<b>£22.1m</b>	<b>£22.1m</b>
<b>£22.3m</b>	<b>Average Debt compared to Operational Boundary (Original Indicator)</b>	<b>£21.7m</b>	<b>£21.7m</b>
0%	Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream – General Fund	-0.92%	-0.44%
13.0%	Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream – HRA	19.01%	13.13%
£77.14	Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the Band D Council tax	£3.64	£0.58
£0.75	Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the housing rent levels (note 3)	£4.17	£1.18
98.4%	Upper limits on fixed interest rates ( <i>against maximum position</i> ) as above	100%	98.4%
1.6%	Upper limits on variable interest rates ( <i>against maximum position</i> ) as above	25%	1.6%
<b>Actual % Split</b>	<b>Maturity structure fixed rate borrowing (%)</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Actual % Split</b>
3.2	% Maturing Under 12 months	20	4.3
2.6	% Maturing 12 months to 2 years	20	2.0
5.1	% Maturing 2 years to 5 years	50	4.8
16.7	% Maturing 5 years to 10 years	75	15.3

<b>2007/8</b>	<b>Figures are for the financial year end unless otherwise titled in italics</b>	<b>2008/09 Original Indicator</b>	<b>2008/09 Revised</b>
<b>Actual</b>			
72.4	<b>% Maturing 10 years and above</b>	90	73.6
£0m	<b>Maximum principal funds invested (against maximum position) for longer than 364 days</b>	£0m	£0m

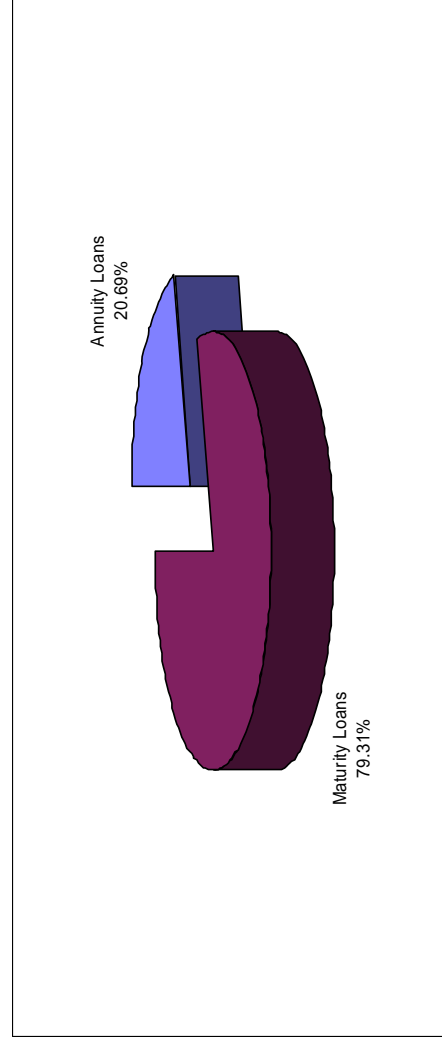
**ANNEX A**

**Analysis of PWLB Loans as at 30 June 2008**

<b>Period to Maturity</b>	<b>Amount Outstanding</b>
Under 12 Months	571,537
1 – 2 Years	564,225
2 – 5 Years	1,093,128
6 – 10 Years	3,618,538
Over 10 Years	13,696,383
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,543,811</b>



<b>Loan Type</b>	<b>Amount Outstanding £</b>
Annuity Loans	4,043,811
Maturity Loans	15,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,543,811</b>



**ANNEX B**

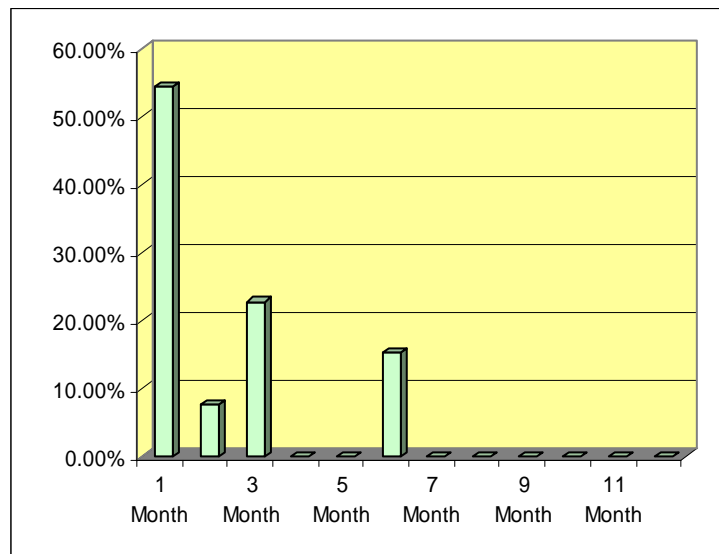
**Durham City Council – Summary of Investments as at 30 June 2008**

Date of Loan	Borrower	Value (£)	% Total	Interest Rate	Loan Period (Days)	Date Repaid
<b>BANKING SECTOR</b>						
N/a	Co-op Call Account	1,690,790	24.25%	4.95%	N/a	N/a
N/a	Co-op 7 Day Account	1,030,782	14.80%	5.0%	N/a	N/a
	<b>SUB TOTAL – BANKING SECTOR</b>	<b>2,721,572</b>	<b>39.05%</b>			
<b>BANKS &amp; BUILDING SOCIETY SECTOR</b>						
	West Brom Building Society	1,250,000	17.93%	5.7%	364	02-Mar-09
	EBS Building Society	1,000,000	14.34%	6.0%	275	31-Dec-08
	Derbyshire Building Society	1,000,000	14.34%	6.0%	183	30-Sep-08
	EBS Building Society	1,000,000	14.34%	5.9%	94	04-Aug-08
	<b>SUB TOTAL – BUILDING SOCIETIES</b>	<b>4,250,000</b>	<b>60.95%</b>			
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>6,971,572</b>	<b>100.00%</b>			

## ANNEX C

## Maturity Profile of External Investments at 30 June 2008

Period to Maturity	Value of Investment (£)	% Total Investments
1 Month	2,721,572	39.05%
2 Months	1,000,000	14.34%
3 Months	1,000,000	14.34%
4 Months	NIL	N/a
5 Months	NIL	N/a
6 Months	1,000,000	14.34%
7 Months	NIL	N/a
8 Months	NIL	N/a
9 Months	1,250,000	17.93%
10 Months	NIL	N/a
11 Months	NIL	N/a
12 Months	NIL	N/a
	<b>6,971,572</b>	



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## Agenda Item 5(c)

STATUS PUBLIC

<b>Portfolio Member/Director/Head of Service</b> Cllr Sue Pitts / Tracey Ingle	<b>Portfolio</b> Culture and Leisure
<b>Subject</b> Town Hall Business Plan	<b>Date</b> 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2008
	<b>Forward Plan</b> No
<b>Contact Officer</b> Jen Straughan, Town Hall Manager (0191) 3018223 jstraughan@durhamcity.gov.uk	<b>Previous Minutes</b> 3rd September Cabinet <b>Minute no.</b> 169
<b>Purpose of Report</b> This Report seeks Members approval of the Town Hall Business Plan, attached as Appendix One and the revised Fees and Charges for the Town Hall at Appendix Two. The Plan has generally followed the approved business plan template, but has been altered to reflect the specific business environment of the Town Hall to make it a more practical document to ensure targets are met and performance maintained in an unpredictable environment	
<b>Executive Summary</b> The Town Hall Update and the development of the Framework Business Plan was reported to Cabinet in September 2008. This has been used as the basis for this final detailed Business Plan. The Business Plan now sets out the current objectives and the options for future management of the Town Hall. This is guided by new targets and use proposals.  The Business Plan sets out in some detail the work required for the next 5 to 12 months to provide a stable foundation to the future business development of the Town Hall as a more commercial facility. Over the next 24 to 36 months the Plan covers the options of the Town Hall retaining some democratic use, should the Unitary Authority be minded to continue this.  The Plan sets out the commercial business activity alongside other uses needed to support the Town Hall into the future and the likely budget implications for this re-shaping of use.  Changes to the Fees and Charges are proposed to ensure the Town Hall can be rented in a more flexible way and that we can promote the best use of the spaces within the building. This is set out in detail at Appendix Two. In brief the Commercial and Standard Charges will be varied dependant on the time of day and day of week. Block bookings will be offered a discounted rate where appropriate. The flexible charges will be managed by the Head of Cultural Services and Town Hall Manager and give a more business like way of promoting future use of the building. These changes will be reflected in amendments to the Constitution and as such reported to Council in due course.	
<b>Portfolio Member Recommendations or Items Requiring a Cabinet Decision</b> It is recommended that:- Cabinet approve the Town Hall Business Plan 2008 - 2011 and Cabinet approve the revised Hire Policy and Charges for the Town Hall.	

**Reasons for Recommendations**

To plan the future five months with certainty and to ensure the future Management of the Town Hall is carried out in a flexible and robust way to best ensure the future growth and development of this historic home of democracy in the City.

**Alternative Options To Be Considered**

1. Do Nothing: This would be potentially high risk as the opportunities offered by the recently refurbished Town Hall could not be clearly laid out for future consideration by the Unitary Authority.

**Consultation**

The Town Hall Business Plan has been written with the Cultural Services Management Team, Town Hall Staff with further support from Corporate Services, Environment and Leisure Services, Property Services and the Press Office.

There has been no specific consultation on the Plan with our customers. However there is specific and ongoing consultation with customers on a booking by booking basis as well as follow up discussions. Many of the Plans proposals have been informed by the close liaison with customers and our other building users.

**LGR Implications**

None: the Business Plan has been written with cognizance of the impacts Local Government Review may have on future business models for the Town Hall.

**Financial, Legal and Risk Implications**

The current income targets are at risk of not being met. This because of the high start up costs and time taken to bring the Town Hall to full operating effectiveness following its re-opening in March 2008. There has been a planned reshaping of our customer base, a review of our charging system and significant procedural changes put in place. At present we have hosted (tbc) events in the Town Hall to date and expect to host (tbc) further to end March 2008. This is 00% higher than the last comparable year 2006/07.

There are no overt legal risk implications as the Plan has been written in the context of the emergence of the new Unitary Authority. However the future use of the Town Hall is uncertain at this time so there is a risk the Plan will become outdated should a radical option be taken by the new Council.

There are no issues relating to this report which warrant any further clarification or approval from Durham County Council under the provisions of Local Government and Involvement in Health Act.

**Resource Implications**

There are no financial implications for 2008/09. The Plan sets out some short term financial requests for the next 12 - 24 months for clarity of future business planning.

**Timescale for Action**

The Plan will become effective immediately if approved.



<b>Associated Policies and Plans</b>
Gala Business Plan, Tourism Business Plan, Mayoral and Civic Business Plan, Environment and Leisure Business Plan, Property Services Business Plan.
<b>Supporting Documents</b>
Appendix One: Durham Town Hall Business Plan Appendix Two: Hire Charge Revision
<b>Background Papers</b>
None

# TOWN HALL

## BUSINESS PLAN

### 2008 - 2011

**Tracey Ingle, Head of Cultural Services**

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**Email: [ingle@durhamcity.gov.uk](mailto:ingle@durhamcity.gov.uk)**

**Mobile: 07879 608587**

## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Culture is a catalyst for change; for examination, communication and regeneration.

Cultural Services was established as a new Service in April 2005. Over the last three years we have worked together to generate and create many achievements; of which we are all rightly proud. There are of course many more challenges ahead. Some we know and can predict, others are less clear. One thing is clear that, working as a team with each member of our team working to their full potential we will strive to become an excellent Service.

Town Hall Business Plan is one of five written to reflect the wide ranging aspirations of Cultural Services. Each Business Plan illustrates how we will seek to reach our agreed goals. We note our strengths and weaknesses. We will use these to set a path to the future using challenging goals to use our opportunities and manage the threats.

This Business Plan sets out those challenges. Durham Town Hall within Cultural Services will work to achieve the stretching goals in the Action Plan.

### Executive Summary

Cities from Bilbao to Glasgow have recognised and embraced culture as a catalyst for change, and used cultural activity to re-energise people's lives. Durham may not be on a scale with either Bilbao or Glasgow but the principle is still the same – what do we want from our lives? How do we celebrate our society? How can we come together to share our experiences? How can our cities help us achieve this?

## 2. Mission

**To be a cherished, living, listed building, with facilities that enhance the reputation of the City of Durham, through its contributions to the heritage, culture and civic functions of the City.**

**History:** The Town Hall is a complex venue; it is a collection of historic buildings which host a wealth of cultural practices dating from 1350.

**Local Pride:** The Town Hall recognises its crucial role in the hearts and minds of local people, local businesses and visitors to the City leading up to and beyond the new Unitary Council. In developing and planning the future success of the Town Hall the implementation of continuous improvement and strong community links will create a comprehensive customer base.

**Local Tradition:** A synergy of working building, local history and ceremonial occasions make the Town Hall a hive of activity. It has an integral part in contributing to flourishing communities, a capital City and outstanding service are interwoven in the fabric of the Town Hall's ethos.

## 3. Aims

**The strategic objectives of the Town Hall are:**

- ◆ To maintain a seat of Council Governance and local democracy for the present City Council while looking towards a supporting role within the new Unitary Council's structure.
- ◆ To create a public space for use by local communities, partnerships and businesses for cultural activities to support the vitality of the City. The organisation's professional status should be reflected in its standards of customer care.
- ◆ To provide civic ceremonies in support of the Mayoral role and tradition
- ◆ To create an inviting cultural, artistic, performing and public meeting venue. This means offering complete accessibility both culturally and physically. The principle of equal opportunities must run through all of the organisation's work - its employment practice, its cultural activity, and its relationship with customers and users.
- ◆ To create a management structure to support the business development of the Town Hall facilities.
- ◆ As a seat of local historic governance the Town Hall will continue to promote local pride. Through appropriately developed and managed systems the retention of civic functions and tradition will be balanced with increased commercial usage. Services and activities will contribute to increased occupancy levels and maximise income, while contributing to the wider outcomes and shared priorities of the local government.

Durham Town Hall, like the Cathedral and Castle, is at the historic heart of the City. The Town Hall symbolises the hard won democratic freedoms of the citizens of the City, independence from Monastic, Bishopric and Aristocratic rule. It is an asset that has resonance and gives a continuity of local expression from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This cannot be underestimated in importance and gravitas.

## 4. Introduction

### 4.1. Location

1. The Town Hall occupies a prime location within the hub of Durham City's busy Market Place and is a focal point for residents, visitors and local businesses. Access to the major public transport hubs, Cathedral Bus as well as Short stay and overnight parking are within a short distance of the building.
2. The creation of an easily accessible new entrance to the Town Hall with automatic doors and lift facilities has increased access to public areas, while bringing the building up to Disability Discrimination Act requirements. The introduction of tasteful signage and exhibition space offers an excellent focus to promote both Town Hall and local initiatives from its customer facing, glass fronted reception area.
3. The Town Hall is building strong links and working with a variety of organisations to develop excellent communication and support networks for City Centre events. Durham City Vision, Durham Markets Company, Highways Department, Durham District Partnership LSP and Durham Arts Festival are a sample of the extensive network already in place.

### 4.2. Building history and development

1. Durham Town Hall was gifted to the citizens of the City in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century by Bishop Tunstall, later rebuilt by Bishop Cosin in mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. The original Hall occupied rooms where the current Guildhall is situated.
2. The Town Hall was extended to the rear in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to take account of growing business of local governance. The public and the Bowes Lyons paid for refurbishment of this area in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.
3. The whole building was re-façaded in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. A public subscription raised money to build the extension to the Hall. The neo-gothic perpendicular style Hall opened in 1852, reminiscent of Westminster Hall in retro-medieval style. Finally 20<sup>th</sup> century developments created the Supper Room and kitchen.

### 4.3. Contents, tangible and intangible assets

1. The Town Hall is a strong symbol of local democracy and self-rule. It is representative of the long evolution of City governance by its citizens that stretches from Bishop Pudsey's Charter of 1179, to the end of direct control by the Bishop Palatinate brought about by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, through to local government reorganisation in the 1970s and the present. The Hall has been at the heart of Civic tradition for hundreds of years. It has been the seat of the City's Mayor and Bodyguard since 1602 and the Guilds and 'Freemen' of the City have met and traded at the Guild Hall from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the present. This is an unbroken tie to local democracy that may be continued and is at the heart of its future function. The building history of the Hall, its collections and the living traditions of Council Chamber, Mayor and Freemen are the most obvious tangible examples of this continuity. To this can be added more

intangible aspects such as the sense of pride and affection local people have for the building.

2. The Town Hall is a grade II\* listed building that has little of the civic 'showiness' of many town halls or civic centres. It calmly yet authoritatively sits within the Market Place at the heart of City life whilst inside it is rich in architectural, historical and artistic detail. Such details and the building in general have been given a new lease of life with the recent refurbishment of the Hall.
3. Refurbishment has led to a re-assessment of the collections which range from civic ceremonial items, oil paintings, water colours, silver plate and metalwork belonging to the Freemen and civic gifts from local, national and international bodies. All these items were catalogued prior to refurbishment and in April 2008 all the oil paintings were photographed by the Public Catalogue Foundation prior to their publication as part of a county-wide catalogue in 2009. The re-hanging of paintings and exhibits within the Burlison Gallery, Crush Hall and Supper Room have re-vitalised parts of the Halls' collections including the Burlison Bequest of oil paintings. These spaces once again take their place alongside the Main Hall, Mayors Chamber and Guildhall.
4. It is important that the value of the collections is properly understood and communicated. Consequently the future care, interpretation and curatorial management of these artefacts form a core function of the future Town Hall. A 'Statement of Significance' will be produced that outlines the special civic, historical, artistic and architectural significance of the Town Hall and its collections. In addition the collection catalogue will be expanded upon in terms of its detail. This should include a re-assessment of the financial value of objects within the collection. Lastly it is important that the collections remain open to the public whenever possible and that their educational and cultural value is used to their full potential.
5. Historically the Mayor of Durham has been based in the Town Hall. This traditional, now honorary role brings with it the use of Mayor's Parlour and base for the 15 strong Mayoral Body Guard. Durham hosts the rite to the only Mayoral Body Guard outside London to bear arms. Embedded in the history of both the City and Town Hall the function of the Mayor brings with it increased interaction with the local community and formal civic ceremony.

#### **4.4. Recent Changes**

1. The Town Hall has functioned well since its expansion in 1852. Modern demands have been largely managed through subtle interventions. Even the larger post war extensions have been largely subsumed within the townscape and fabric. Modern demands for better access have required a higher level of intervention which has been mostly accommodated within the more modern core of the 19<sup>th</sup> century structure.
2. The retail/ office unit beneath the Members Room was brought back into Council control in 1999, with the buy back of the lease from Durham Markets Company. Relocation of the Tourist Information Service to new premises in Millennium Place in 2001 allowed a reconsideration of the use of the unit beneath. This led to the creation of a new entrance area/ exhibition space and, importantly, one that can accommodate temporary exhibitions reflecting the wider cultural life of the city. Guided tours have resumed following the re-opening of the Town Hall and these have been enhanced by the publication of a new guide book and the provision of lift access.

3. The Council assessed retention of all its assets within the Asset Management Working Group, and agreed to retain the Town Hall in 2006.
4. The Town Hall was transferred to Cultural Services in April 2007, including the four Janitorial staff employed to service the Town Hall. The new Town Hall Manager started work in May 2008. The Town Hall Manager will be responsible for attracting appropriate uses and developing income streams from increased use, sponsorship and grant aid. Further work is ongoing to add further support to assist in the promotion and marketing the Town Hall and manage the use of Market Place and Millennium Place.
5. At present Millennium Place and the Market Place are managed by the Tourism Co-ordinator while Town Hall bookings are booked via administrative support based within the Millennium complex. In order to create cohesion between the three public spaces the Town Hall Manager will take control of promoting and marketing the Town Hall and managing the use of Market Place and Millennium Place. This will be assisted by bringing them into a Town Hall based Support Officer's role.
6. Major works in 2007 were carried out to manage future development and modern use of the Town Hall. There has been a redesign of the kitchen area to allow a canteen function alongside a full food "regeneration" system. This will fascinate some larger catering functions. A hot food capacity of 120 covers has been created, and cold buffet capacity of 200 plus covers. In addition the bar function has been redesigned to allow a range of users to manage hospitality within the former supper room.
7. The introduction of a new reception area with gallery style wall furnishing and lift access has increased accessibility to upper floors. This has encouraged both tourists and local residents to view the exhibitions and Main Hall during opening hours. Increased building security in the form of CCTV coverage, security card access for employees to restricted areas and updated working practices have reduced the risk to both building and Town Hall based employees. Revised lone working procedures, working patterns, updated COSHH and risk assessment all add to revised management procedures for public safety.

## 5. Purpose

1. A review of the purpose of the Town Hall was carried out by the Members Town Hall Working Group in 2006. It established the primary purpose in 2008 to be a seat of civic governance. Local Government Review will readjust the primary function of the Town Hall as it is most probable that the intensive use of the building for democratic purposes will be removed. There are plans to manage this transition and to secure the civic traditions associated with the City's Mayor and Body Guard into the future. The Town Hall will be well placed to act as the future home for any continuation of Civic and Mayoral traditions, potentially as an option for local area partnerships or any future more local governance arrangements. This Business Plan sets out a structured management of the facility to allow the maximum flexibility for the future use of the Town Hall. However most importantly it sets out an aspiration to raise the commercial and public use of the building to minimise operating subsidy.
2. The function of the Town Hall will develop with the changes brought about by the Unitary Council. The Business Plan is written on the assumption it will function as:
  - A place for future local governance.
  - Part of the portfolio of Council run County Durham meeting conference facilities.
  - A unique cultural venue to hire for high quality events.
  - A Museum of local democracy
  - Meeting place for citizens of Durham
  - Venue for charitable events and fund raising activities.
3. There are a number of possible scenarios and business models. The three used to shape this business plan, not in any priority order, are:
  - Fully Commercial operation of the building with all rooms for rent for mainly commercial and business use. Whilst charity will be accommodated the focus will be on meeting the running costs of the building as a private space.
  - Used primarily for democratic purposes. The building will host public meetings to assist in the democratic engagement and processes of the relevant Councils.
  - As a prime historic assess the building moves to full Museum status and is used to promote the historic environment as one of Durham City's jewel buildings. The rooms are available for tours and educational workshops across the week.
4. The models are not mutually exclusive and it is envisaged one will have primacy with support from the others. At this time the democratic use of the Town Hall is favoured as this is the original function of the building and can be supported by other uses. Again citing the Cathedral and the Castle, these have a primary non-commercial purpose which is supported by a range of other uses that do not compromise the principle purpose.
5. The Action Plan can be used in the following 6 to 12 months regardless of the business model adopted. The major change will follow in 12 to 24 months once there is a more overt clarity of function.

## 6. Where are we Now?

### 6.1. Democratic Use

1. In order to balance the needs of the current democratic process against the need to facilitate greater use of the Town Hall at business peak times for income generating uses core democratic meetings have been condensed into Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This has released Monday and Friday as commercially saleable days.
2. The use of the Town Hall from a seat of District Council governance is expected to change to that of Town Council governance. Links to other cultural venues and facilities within Durham will provide the foundations for growth of the Town Hall as an active participant in City Centre events<sup>1</sup>.
3. During 2005-2006 111 meetings were held in the Town Hall by democratic services. In 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 meetings were split between the Gala Theatre and local communal halls while the Town Hall underwent extensive refurbishment. Now re-opened we anticipate 104 meetings in 2008-2009. For 2009 – 2010 we envisage a nominal number of Unitary Council meetings, aimed at local consultation. If the Town Hall retains the Mayoral function the number of meetings and receptions are estimated to be 60+ alongside 4 Freemen of Durham Meetings. This creates significant time for additional Town Council or similar meeting options, or commercial meeting spaces for daytime use<sup>2</sup>.

### 6.2. Maximising occupancy levels & usage

1. The introduction of a Town Hall Manager on site and their participation in creating effective networks with local community groups and businesses has given the Town Hall a more focused point of sale. Future Marketing strategy<sup>3</sup> will be built upon this early engagement with local businesses and stakeholders.
2. The Town Hall traditionally has three hire rates, Commercial, Standard and Charity. Having assessed City Centre competition, our Commercial rate was hindering our place in the market for conference and evening events. We have developed a flexible rate system based upon the time of week, time of day and advantageous rates for repeat business.<sup>4</sup>
3. By embracing a customer focused pricing scheme where the Standard and Commercial rates could vary while not dropping below the agreed charity rate; repeat business is encouraged. Delegating the setting of these rates to the Head of Cultural Services and Town Hall Manager is allowing development of a proactive approach to matching Town Hall prices with the market.
4. Work is underway to streamline the booking system to encourage repeat business and enhance the ability to make maximum use of the facilities.
5. By bringing administrative support onto the premises clients will be able to access bookings in a more coherent fashion, allowing them to view the premises and discuss their needs with staff familiar with the buildings strengths.

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<sup>1</sup> Action Plan Point 6

<sup>2</sup> Action Plan Point 6

<sup>3</sup> Action Plan Point 20

<sup>4</sup> Action Plan Point 1



### **6.3. Build effective business relationships**

1. Links with both existing and alternate suppliers are being forged. Where possible we use Council recognised and local suppliers to support efficiency in procurement and add to the LM3 factor. In addition it supports Durham as a Fair Trade City<sup>5</sup>.
2. There is work underway developing and maximising links <sup>6</sup>to other cultural assets within Durham to promote joint and mutually beneficial marketing. Building strong partnerships with the Gala Theatre, Durham University, ONE NE, Durham City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Durham Cathedral, County Durham Tourist Partnership, City of Durham Trust, ACE and Vision 2020 Events to enhance the Town Halls developing roll within the City's cultural offer.

### **6.4. Seek efficient ways of working**

1. Maximise the value of being a City Council facility by seeking efficient ways of working. The introduction and revision of working practices within the Town Hall is streamlining staffing and efficiency levels to create a more cost effective framework.

### **6.5. Catering**

1. Recent refurbishment of the building has improved the kitchen, added service areas available for hire. Up to 120 hot meals can now be serviced from the fully functional regeneration kitchen.
2. The provision of upgraded catering machinery and Fair Trade refreshments has raised the standards of refreshments provided for meetings and events. Supported by staff training <sup>7</sup>and amendments in presentation a consistent and professional service is available. All tea and coffee is now provided by the Town Hall including those served at charity refreshment events. This practical and proven way of working will be developed into a protocol.
3. There is not an agreed protocol to assist community and charitable <sup>8</sup>groups to hire the Town Hall. This has required risk assessment and consultation with a variety of charitable/community organisations wishing to use the Town Hall as a venue for their fundraising bookings. These will be preceded by a meeting with each group to discuss their requirements in detail. The introduction of an induction at the beginning of events will be followed up by monitoring of events by the Town Hall Manager.
4. There is now a fitted bar in the Small Hall. Refrigerated and free flow products can be booked. Striving towards a safer Durham the Town Hall has purchased a stock of Street Safe<sup>9</sup>, Police recommended polycarbonate drink-ware thus minimising the risks associated with glass drinking vessels and reducing breakages.
5. The Town Hall is working with recommended caterers to provide comprehensive menus for meetings and events.

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<sup>5</sup> Action Plan Point 14

<sup>6</sup> Action Plan Point 20

<sup>7</sup> Action Plan Point 14

<sup>8</sup> Action Plan Point 7

<sup>9</sup> Action Plan Point 11

## 6.6. Tours

1. Trial tours asking for feedback from local residents proved very popular and provided excellent advice and comments which we have taken onboard when putting formal tours in place. The use of specialist knowledge from a Local Historian has given the tours a very informed and in-depth insight into history of both the building and links to Durham County.
2. Formal behind the scenes tours have begun<sup>10</sup> across the summer period. Lasting 1 hour they cover the Mayor's Chamber, Guildhall, Burlison Gallery, Crush Hall, Main Hall and Small Hall. The use of an experienced guide is to be supported by the recruitment of members of the Mayor's Body Guard and trained local guides.
3. Work is under way to design a structured school group package which will cover a variety of areas within the National Curriculum for students in Years 3-9<sup>11</sup>. Pre-visit activities and the option to select from a variety of activities based around the Town Hall will enable schools to match topics to areas already being covered in class. (With assistance from a specialist Education advisor who has a wealth of knowledge regarding educational recommendations and a passion for the history of Durham Town Hall and who has already worked from the Town Hall with school groups at a recent Arts event). A trial of children's activities will take place across the summer in preparation for the roll out to Durham schools in the autumn term.
4. The Town Hall opened its doors to a visit from Care Home residents in June 2008. The 8 wheelchair strong group made use of the new easy access lift facilities to view the Main Hall, Crush Hall and Small Hall assisted by the Town Hall team. They passed on their appreciation to the team on departure and complimented the excellent new facilities.
5. By introducing a tour package for groups with varying levels of refreshments the Town Hall will encourage community groups to access the facilities and introduce them to the spaces available to hire. This will be done by word of mouth and building networks with key members of local community organizations.

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<sup>10</sup> Action Plan Point 18

<sup>11</sup> Action Plan Point 15

## 7. Management as a Facility

### 7.1. Functional Review

1. There has been an escalation of costs in the past, driven by unforeseen security, health and safety management requirements and opening requirements. This Plan alongside the physical changes to the Hall has taken these issues into account and, through the implementation on the Policy frameworks will manage the Town Hall in a planned and controlled manner to better align costs associated with corporate and secular use of the building. To facilitate the changes proposed below the previous year's expenditure will become the baseline of any future business change proposals and therefore seek to deliver a cost neutral solution.
2. Controls and monitoring is proposed within the performance management framework measured against business objectives to ensure unplanned costs can be identified and, where appropriate, remedial action taken to bring these back into control.

## 8. Assessment

A survey of Elected Members' views was undertaken by the Leader of the Council in 2007. These views on the future use of the Town Hall have been translated into a SWOT Analysis and an external assessment (PESTE). Some other Business Plans (Gala, Civic and Mayoral Function and Leisure Services SWOT's and PESTE's are also pertinent to the Town Hall and have been used to update the SWOT below:

### SWOT Analysis

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ A treasured heritage</li> <li>◆ Provision of a complete service by a dedicated staff</li> <li>◆ Good communication with stakeholders</li> <li>◆ Willing and helpful colleagues</li> <li>◆ Responsive to change</li> <li>◆ Flexibility of new structure</li> <li>◆ Central location</li> <li>◆ Range of internal spaces for different uses</li> <li>◆ Strong Civic and local pride</li> <li>◆ Tradition</li> <li>◆ Unique assets and artefacts</li> <li>◆ Unbroken role as Seat of Democracy</li> <li>◆ Cherished by staff and residents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Budget restrictions/Lack of resources</li> <li>◆ Lack of specialised knowledge</li> <li>◆ Lack of dedicated web pages on the civic function and use of IT technology</li> <li>◆ Lack of published/available information on the Town Hall and Civic function for visitors and posterity</li> <li>◆ Lack of risk assessments</li> <li>◆ Lack of customers services training for those staff coming into contact with public/guests/visitors</li> <li>◆ Lack of training for arrangements of events</li> <li>◆ Lack of community involvement</li> <li>◆ Lack of marketing and public relations strategy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To assist the Council with its corporate aims and objectives</li> <li>◆ Revenue generation</li> <li>◆ Review Town Hall operational times/schedule of events</li> <li>◆ To develop web pages covering the civic/civil function and increased use of IT</li> <li>◆ To produce dedicated information on the Town Hall and civic/civil function</li> <li>◆ To improve civic receptions and tours of the Town Hall – more professional approach.</li> <li>◆ PR section may assist with promotional material and strategy</li> <li>◆ Health and Safety Section will assist with Risk Assessments</li> <li>◆ Events co-ordination to be strengthened</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Unitary Status with loss of democratic meetings and use</li> <li>◆ Unique knowledge and dependence on key personnel</li> <li>◆ Value for Money Assessment</li> <li>◆ Bad publicity</li> <li>◆ Major non-budgeted expenditure</li> <li>◆ Competition</li> <li>◆ Low profile/low quality events may affect reputation</li> </ul>

**PEST Analysis**

<p><b>Political</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Terrorism</li> <li>◆ Legislative Changes</li> <li>◆ National Cultural Agenda</li> <li>◆ Unification of two tier Council</li> </ul>	<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Refurbishment/new purpose built Durham venues</li> <li>◆ Accessible</li> <li>◆ Some income generation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sociological</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Changing expectations of the public.</li> <li>◆ Lack of good transport links affecting access to centres by some of the community</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technological</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ e-business</li> <li>◆ New County based e-Tourism promotion and marketing.</li> </ul>

## 9. Stakeholders, Customers and Partners

The Council will engage with its key partners to establish the usage of the Town Hall facilities as a focal point for Durham City based activities.

Organisation	Objectives
Gala Theatre	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary marketing and use as venue
Durham University	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary events
ONE	To work in partnership to link to tourism and economic development projects such as CDTP and 2020 Vision
Durham County Council	To work in partnership to network with existing City centre venues and to deliver joint and/or complimentary events
Chamber of Commerce	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary events and economic development opportunities
Durham Cathedral	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary events
County Durham Tourism Partnership	To work in partnership to network with other cultural venues and to promote the Town Hall via existing structures
City of Durham Trust	To assist with promotion and interpretation and help build local civic pride/
ACE-NE	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary arts and cultural projects and events
Durham City Vision and the Events Team	To work in partnership to deliver joint and/or complimentary events

## 10. Future Management of Durham Town Hall

The following section sets out the future plans for the functional and business management of the Town Hall for the next 12 months. This takes into account the SWOT and Peste analysis above. The following sets out the aspirations for the next 24 to 36 months. These are then added to the Action Plan which will be used to manage the transition of the Town Hall and to assess success against targets and delivery of this Business Plan.

### 10.1. Facility management

#### 1.1.1. Risk Management

1. A portfolio of revised risk assessments<sup>12</sup> and working practises will be developed. These are being designed with the assistance of team members and rolled out in team meetings to effect buy in and as training items. Consultation with team members has been set up to draw together a business risk assessment of the Town Hall.
2. A Fire Risk Assessment of the building has been completed and will be updated as required. The use of a lockable chemical cupboard combined with updated COSHH and risk assessments is managing risk to the public, contractors and employees.

#### 1.1.2. Security

1. The Town Hall is a public building. There needs to be a balance between allowing full access and maximising the benefits of the investment in the Town Hall, against the risks of inappropriate behaviour. To accommodate these issues there is a new signage system in use to clearly mark areas that are available<sup>13</sup>. In addition a more active presence in the reception area is managed within the Janitors rota. This is particularly important for public meetings such as Cabinet and for our prestigious private bookings.

#### 1.1.3. Assets

1. A display case rota will be established to help tell the story of the Town Hall and the democratic development of Durham City. At present a display of Mayors of Durham has been used as a stop gap until a more targeted display is developed. The PowerPoint facilities in the reception area have been used to run a dvd of the Body Guards, images of Durham, before and after photographs of the renovation and a further display will be developed<sup>14</sup>.

#### 1.1.4. Waste Management Strategy

1. To ensure that the Town Hall is meeting its contributory requirements to sustainable management there will a waste management Policy<sup>15</sup> written. Full provision of opportunities for future recycling will be developed.

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<sup>12</sup> Action Plan Point 2

<sup>13</sup> Action Plan Point 1 & 2

<sup>14</sup> Action Plan Point 8

<sup>15</sup> Action Plan Point 13

2. Working with colleagues in Environment and Leisure Services there will be the provision of suitable information leaflets etc for members of the public and users of the building.

### 1.1.5. Building Maintenance and Management

1. Working closely with Property Services, Maintenance and the Health and Safety Team a regime of building maintenance and safe working practices is closely monitored ongoing process. The following high-level maintenance issues are short to medium term.

Item	Description	Cost
Roofing	<p>There are a series of recurring leaks in the Town Hall roofing during heavy rain. Repairs to the framework of the glass roof covering the Small Hall's glazed ceiling will involve the hire of a specialist company due to the complicated nature of access and working at heights.</p> <p>If not rectified there are the possibilities of damage to the refurbished oak flooring and the ongoing inconvenience of the leak being in the centre of the room during meetings.</p>	Short Term- £5,000
Gutters	<p>Annual maintenance of the Town Hall guttering must be completed in order to reduce water damage to both the Town Hall and Indoor Market.</p> <p>We have been quoted 2 box valleys monthly at the same time as the Market is done, Cost £40.00 + vat - £240.00 + vat</p>	Annual cleaning at heights £295.00 + vat
High Level Cleaning	<p>The Town Hall has undergone a dramatic transformation. To meet the very high standards and expectations of wedding and major function clientele there are some further areas of work to pursue. This includes a high level clean of our major space, the Large Hall taking place in the summer of 2008.</p>	One off cost: £600



## 10.2. Civic and democratic use

1. Up until the end of the financial year 2008-2009 the Town Hall will continue to provide a seat for Democratic and Civic ceremonies<sup>16</sup>. From April 2009 the building will be available to continue providing office space. This could be for any future local government requirement and any continuation of the Mayoral and Civic traditions. Steeped in civic history this working building provides a central venue readily equipped with a variety of meeting space suitable for formal occasions.
2. The promotion of the Town Hall as a suitable venue for large Council run events will be promoted within the City Council. The widening of networks taking place within Local Government Review will draw an increased audience for the use of Council properties.

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<sup>16</sup> Action Plan Point 9

## 10.3. Future Uses

### 10.3.1. Refreshment Events

1. There is a programme established to allow Charitable<sup>17</sup> use of the Town Hall on Saturdays as well as off peak options. These events will be structured and managed to ensure we offer “Fairtrade” products and clearly maintain our quality mark.
2. Charities will continue to have the opportunity to hire the Town Hall to run their own events or work in partnership with the Town Hall to reduce their overheads by using the venue to fundraise through stalls and raffles without having the overheads and staffing restraints of providing refreshments as well.
3. The introduction of Town Hall sales from this room will provide refreshments on sale to the public from the Small Hall will be supported by the use of agency staff. This will allow dedicated staff to cover 4 hour periods of service.

### 10.3.2. Function Bar and Refreshments

1. On reopening in 2008 the Town Hall refreshments were provided by the Gala Theatre for larger events. The Town Hall now provides all hot refreshments on site and by April 2009 will have in place the ability to provide its own bar cover for events<sup>18</sup>, bringing all provision of wet stock with the remit of the building.

### 10.3.3. Meeting Management

1. There are a number of spaces that can be rented for meeting and other uses within the Town Hall. Close liaison with Democratic Services will allow a more flexible programme to maximise the marketing opportunities whilst meeting our primary objective of democratic business. This has come into sharp relief with managing the programming of Tours. Post April 2009 in addition to the current rooms let (Large and Small Halls) the following rooms will be actively let Burlison Art Gallery, Mayors Chamber and Small meeting room. If the home of the Mayor lies elsewhere the Mayor’s Parlour may be let alongside the three office spaces on the upper floors. These decisions will be taken in the following 12 months.
2. Having already hosted a successful children’s book illustration exhibition the possibilities for the Burlison Gallery as an exhibition space have been highlighted. Further use of the Burlison Gallery as a meeting room and hospitality area will be included in the extended pricing structure. With excellent views of the Market Square combined with light airy atmosphere created by the exposure of hidden windows makes this an untapped gem worthy of greater use.
3. With the introduction of a regeneration, catering kitchen the Small Hall/Supper Room has been reduced in size but has improved the buildings ability to provide a high quality catering venue. 120 hot covers and more extensive cold buffet can now be stored and heated from this modern purpose built area.
4. The introduction of tea and coffee making facilities within the Town Hall kitchen allows us to meet a level of quality with regards to beverages while offering the product at a reduced rate to charity hirers who could then make their profit on the mark-up. Trial “Coffee Mornings”<sup>19</sup> are being monitored to ascertain how successful and cost effective they can be. Effective communication with the

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<sup>17</sup> Action Plan Point 7

<sup>18</sup> Action Plan Point 3

<sup>19</sup> Action Plan Point 3

charities prior to their event allows for monitoring and recommendations as to what would be suitable in the space provided.

5. Refreshments provided in the Small Hall are to be rolled out by the introduction of further agency staffing and community groups<sup>20</sup>. These will not encroach on the use by charity events. The ability to provide these services during key events within the Town Hall and City Centre will enhance the Town Halls involvement as a community asset.
6. Public access to the Crush and Main Hall during core hours will continue to raise public awareness of the Town Hall as a historic and cultural asset to the city while giving them a taste of what they could be viewing behind the scenes should they take up an organised tour.

#### 10.3.4. Hospitality

1. The following issues need resolution in the short to medium term to maximise the use of meeting spaces and catering options.

Item	Description	Cost
Linen	The cost laundering the linen owned by the Town Hall is outlined below. This is based on a cleaning only basis and any further linen required for special events would be arranged with the supplier directly.	Ongoing - £1970.00 per annum
Window Cleaning Contract	Within the cleaning provision cleaning of the windows had not previously been included. The introduction of the new glass fronted reception to the Town Hall and desire to raise the profile of the Town Hall as a venue and cultural asset raises the need to maintain the customer facing image of the building.	Ongoing - £1970 per annum

<sup>20</sup> Action Plan Point 4

Furniture	Following refurbishment the promotion of the Town Hall as a multi functional building the purchasing of new tables in keeping with the blonde wood finishing in the Small Hall would enhance saleability. The present tables are heavy, unwieldy and must be clothed during events to disguise their somewhat shabby state. If the Small Hall is to continue to be hired out for meetings and refreshments new collapsible tables, which could be easily stored are essential.	Short Term- £5,000
Furniture	Echoed in these requirements for the Small Hall are the needs of the Large Hall. The present tables are not collapsible and cannot be stored easily. During large functions where they are not required they are stored on top of each other at the end of the room. Because of their condition they look unsightly and reduce the floor space available for events. By purchasing new lighter weight collapsible tables they could be moved and stored with less risk of injury to the Town Hall Janitors. The tables could be used without cloths while creating a professional environment for functions.	Medium Term- £5,000

## 10.4. Marketing and promotion

### 10.4.1. Marketing

1. A full marketing Plan for the Town Hall will be developed<sup>21</sup> alongside the Business Plan. Town Hall Manager will promote the development and marketing of the Town Hall by working closely with the PR Manager and Head of Cultural Services to develop a marketing strategy. The Town Hall sits within the Business Plans of both the Press Relations and Tourist Information Sections. Within this will be the promotion of tours. Active marketing will be undertaken using traditional channels such as leaflets and posters, in the local press and on websites. Further relationships with local groups, schools and businesses will be developed to introduce more local communities to the Town Hall. This work is

<sup>21</sup> Action Plan Point 20

ongoing and it is expected that the numbers of visits will increase over the next 6 months.

2. A new signage system has been installed in the front windows. This has allowed the proper identification of opening times, activities within the building and the times of formal Tours. In addition parts of the display are used to promote Gala as well as other Leisure and Cultural events.
3. The introduction of new picture hanging systems has enhanced the new building reception area. The first exhibition consisting of images of Brass provided by Durham Amateur Photographic Society coincided with the 2008 Brass Festival. This glass- fronted location looks out into the Market Place offering a central showcase for City Centre events. Working in partnership with Durham City Arts it has already proved its potential as a central base for City based events.
4. Recent use of this space has already drawn interest from local artists to showcase their work. This will be closely monitored to exhibit a high standard of work reflecting local culture.
5. Improved coverage on the City Council's website to promote the building as a prominent City Centre venue for hire. Internal promotion via web- based networks will bring Durham's Town Hall within the portfolio of Council owned venues available for hire once Local Government Review takes effect. Post 2009 it is hoped to use the in-house expertise at the County to build a business focused, fit for purpose mini web-site for the Town Hall.
6. Distribution of documentation and promotional packages to perspective and existing customers will be streamlined. By inviting key individuals and groups to view the Town Hall a wider awareness of the building and its multi functional use will be promoted.
7. Close links with the PR department in the promotion of the Town Hall via radio and local coverage will maintain continuity and professionalism as part of the corporate promotion of Council venues and activities.<sup>22</sup>
8. As part of developing links to a healthy living agenda it is proposed to develop a series of themed walking tours. These will start at the Town Hall and encompass routes with historic resonance, themes from the paintings in the Town Hall or links to famous people and events in the City.<sup>23</sup>

#### **10.4.2. Data Management**

1. The present methods of recording usage in the Town Hall are limited to the charging records drawn from AGRESSO, a financial management system. Reports drawn from previous years have already identified the distorted booking figures these represent due to block bookings and exclusion of internal meetings.
2. With the introduction of a structured booking and recording system the ability to identify accurate usage will assist in the ongoing development of the marketing plan and reduce turn-round from initial call to confirmed booking.
3. The system would clarify internal as opposed to external bookings and allow for a breakdown of revenue from charity, standard and corporate rates. As the nature of the business evolves the Town Hall will be able to make adjustments and re-weight marketing opportunities accordingly.

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<sup>22</sup> Action Plan Point 12

<sup>23</sup> Action Plan Point 10

### 10.4.3. Hire Charges

1. Having assessed City Centre competition the Town Hall's Commercial rate is hindering our place in the market for conference and evening events. Competition such as the County Hotel, Durham Castle, University Buildings and Three Tunns all sell on flexible scale based around the time of year, day of the week and activities such as Miners Gala, Regatta and University Graduation events.
2. The Head of Cultural Services and Town Hall Manager will develop a more sophisticated hire policy to assist in the more business like marketing of the Town Hall. This will use peak and off peak hire charges as well as managing the distribution of democratic meetings.<sup>24</sup>

### 10.4.4. Tours

1. There is public access to the Main Hall at any time during normal working hours (subject to availability). Guided Tours will enable visitors to also see the Guildhall, Mayor's Chamber and Burlison Gallery with the support of a knowledgeable local guide. The commercial tours started in July 2008.
  - Tours on weekdays and weekends where availability can be guaranteed.
  - Admission charge of £2.50 per person. Children under 14 free, if accompanied by an adult.
  - Tickets to be on sale in advance from the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) and at the Town Hall at the time of the tour. A member of TIC staff to be available to sell tickets.
  - Merchandise - postcards, guidebooks, bookmarks etc. - to be made available for sale at the end of the tour.
2. More tours will be slotted into the Town Hall diary during late August and through into September. From there a regular programme of tours will be actively marketed across the working week and at weekends.<sup>25</sup>
3. The tours will be conducted initially by a local guide and a member of the tourism service. In the longer term it is proposed to recruit a team of guides, for which support is available from the Institute of Tourist Guiding to recruit and train guides to 'Level 2'.
4. In addition tours will also be offered to pre-booked groups, catering for a variety of audiences – history groups, architectural specialists, schools etc. They will be adapted to the needs of the group and charged accordingly. We have conducted tours and events for disabled groups, school children and over 60's clubs to date. There is growing interest, for example, in 'luxury' tours offered by cruise operators, which are currently being promoted by One NorthEast. To assist, members of the Mayor's bodyguard have expressed interest in being part of these specialist tours, explaining their role and the history of their weapons.
5. The promotion of Town Hall Tours has already begun with radio, Durham City News and flyer cover. Durham's Tourist Information team are working closely with the Town Hall to develop comprehensive, professional tours. At present they are running on Mondays and Saturdays throughout the summer with a view to creating a long-term structured pattern.

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<sup>24</sup> Action Plan Point 1

<sup>25</sup> Action Plan Point 18

6. Interest has already been expressed for group tours for local community groups. This will be built on by the production of promotional literature and pricing scheme to include specialist tours and catering options. By drawing together contact details for community groups they can be targeted on a more individual basis, drawing on the needs and interests of the group.

#### 10.4.5. Visitor Management

1. To assess the impact the proposed changes have there will be a visitor survey commissioned in the autumn of 2009. This will follow industry standard questioning to allow the comparison with other similar venues in the region and nationally.<sup>26</sup>
2. The aim will be to ensure the Town Hall retains its current role in hosting high quality cultural events in a historic and educational environment. To ensure that this is responsive to local change and challenge there will be an Events Management Strategy developed which will link with the emerging agenda for events management in the City and County.<sup>27</sup>
3. The following issues need resolution in the short to medium term to maximise the development of public Tours and further booking of the Town Hall spaces.

Item	Description	Cost
Recording	<p>In order to assess public use of the building statistics can be collected with the use of a People Counter. At present the only indicator of public use in the building is through formal bookings. As a public building a vast majority of visitors are part of formal tour groups visiting the city and individuals interested in viewing the historic Main Hall. The ability to provide evidence of the use of the building would allow the Town Hall to gauge seasonal fluctuation in visitor numbers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 x People Counter unit with memory stick</li> <li>• 1 x Kwik-Count Software with single site license</li> <li>• 1 x Downloading Station</li> <li>• 1 x Delivery</li> </ul>	Medium Term - £550.00

#### 10.4.6. Weddings and Civil Partnerships

1. Following recent coverage in the Durham City News increased interest in the use of the Town Hall as a wedding venue has been encouraging. Having already

<sup>26</sup> Action Plan Point 4

<sup>27</sup> Action Plan Point 17

secured bookings for both evening and all day hospitality for weddings this year the Town Hall is looking to develop marketing literature and extend services. This will take place in a series of stages. In order to provide an efficient wedding venue recommended suppliers for linen, table decorations, catering and refreshments, disco and bands will be drawn together in promotional literature and networks with suppliers improved.

2. Within the long to mid term vision of the Town Hall is exploring the possibilities of civil ceremonies on the premises. There is work underway to identify suitable rooms for the ceremonies to take place. The Guild Hall and Main Hall could provide the option for either an intimate or more lavish ceremony.
3. Premises are licensed in accordance with the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005. Licenses are issued in accordance with the guidelines issued by the General Registered Office. The ability to hold Civil Marriages and Partnerships will improve the saleability of the Town Hall for all day occasions<sup>28</sup>. Requests for the Town Hall as a venue for the ceremony as well as the supper and evening function have proved promising. The purchase of a licence covering 3 years is to be considered once the event side of the business is running smoothly.

#### 10.4.7. Wedding Licence

1.1.1. The Town Hall has already secured bookings for both evening and all day hospitality for weddings this year. This is an area we wish to develop. This should take place in a series of stages. In order to provide an efficient wedding venue, areas for consideration will be sourcing recommended suppliers for linen, table decorations, catering and refreshments, disco and bands.

1.1.2. Mid Term-£1300.00

#### 10.4.8. Staffing

1. A full review of the levels of staffing and management arrangements was undertaken in late 2007. This led to a Cabinet report with a precursor of this Management Plan being approved by Cabinet in 2008. The subsequent appointment of the Town Hall Manager has allowed a fuller iteration of the framework Business Plan, and developments in working practice and staff support which should ensure the Town Hall develops suitable resilience at a time of transition.<sup>29</sup>
2. The **Town Hall Manager** started work in May 2008. The Town Hall Manager will be responsible for attracting appropriate uses and developing income streams from increased use, sponsorship and grant aid. Further work is ongoing to add further support to assist in the promotion and marketing the Town Hall and manage the use of Market Place and Millennium Place.
3. A number of improvements to the catering and kitchen management arrangements have been implemented. There is now a regular weekly and monthly building systems check, up to date Fire Risk Assessment and a portfolio of building management documentation being developed.
4. **Town Hall Administrative** support is now located in the Town Hall to provide joint support for Leader and Town Hall developments. Working with the Town Hall Manager a refined booking structure will be developed. This will be

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<sup>28</sup> Action Plan Point 19

<sup>29</sup> Action Plan Point 2



monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Site visits and show-rounds will be coordinated between Administrator and Town Hall Manager.

5. The **Janitors** roles are the process of being clarified through management documentation and training<sup>30</sup>.
  - New contractual hours agreed based on a 7 day working week to cover Monday-Sunday.
  - Ongoing monitoring of overtime and rota system will maximise building coverage.
  - The introduction of weekly team meetings has provided a platform for team discussion, dissemination of information and in-house training. All team members are required to participate in and contribute to team meetings.
  - Promotion of knowledge sharing through team meetings is enabling the team to share their experience with colleagues by leading on documented training sessions.
  - The introduction of formal tours for individuals, groups and schools has raised the opportunity for team members to enhance their tour skills through a structured training programme. This is to include training from a qualified guides and introduction of historical script provided by local historians.
  - Ongoing development of Janitor's skill base and customer care skills.

## 11. Conclusion

1. The resources needed to carry out the detailed actions and aspirations detailed above are set out in the following budgets and subsequent Action Plan. There are proposed targets to allow proper assessment of performance against the aims of this Business Plan and Action Plan as well as a full risk assessment to manage the transitional period.
2. The requirement for capital funding and investment in both the building and business infrastructure does not form a specific budget requirement in Section 12. The option of bidding for these extra resources will be exercised at the discretion of the Unitary Authority. Where items are needed in the short term the aim will be to clear enough financial headroom in new income streams to re-invest into the business and purchase or lease these items as required. However a current recharge has been re-cycled to allow urgent start up costs such as marketing and basic equipment purchase to be pursued in 2009/10.

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<sup>30</sup> Action Plan Point 2

## 12. Budget

The proposed budget costs for Town Hall Services are set out below

2007-08 Base Budget	Budget Head	2008-09
		Base Budget
	<b>TOWN HALL - 0403</b>	
132,960	<b>Employee Related Expenses:-</b>	155,780
	<b>Premises Related Expenses:-</b>	
12,500	Repairs & Maintenance	12,950
8,651	Gas	10,100
7,724	Electric	8,500
22,176	Rates	22,840
5,901	Insurance	5,749
3,283	Water	3,860
-	Water Purity & Tank Maintenance	1,000
260	Hygiene Services	260
1,100	Licences	1,100
	<b>Transport Related Expenses:-</b>	
2,102	Travelling Expenses	2,418
	<b>Supplies and Services:-</b>	
1,190	Telephones	959
1,700	Floral Decorations	1,700
1,099	Postage	1,300
	Stock	
	Maintenance of Equipment	
	Equipment Hire	
	Marketing	
8,587	<b>Support Services:-</b>	7,487
18,820	Building Cleaning	19,248
16,410	Recharge from Leisure - Admin. of Municipal Buildings	16,410
<b>244,463</b>	<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>271,661</b>
	<b>Income:-</b>	
103,393	Recharge to Democratic (Members Accommodation)	116,334
44,834	Lettings	77,134
<b>148,227</b>		<b>193,468</b>
<b>96,236</b>	<b>Net Expenditure (excluding CFC's)</b>	<b>78,193</b>

24,790	<b>Capital Financing Costs</b>	31,364
<b>121,026</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>109,557</b>

## 12.1. Budgets and Forecasts

The proposed budget costs for the Town Hall across the next three years:

<b>Revenue Costs</b>	<b>2009/10 £</b>	<b>2010/11 £</b>	<b>2011/12 £</b>
<u>Full Year Operating Costs</u> Inflation included			
1. Direct Staffing Costs	163,569	171,747	180,335
2. Other Direct Staff			
3. Premises Relation Expenditure	75,005	77,657	84,667
4. Supplies and Services - Direct	51,031	50,434	51,908
5. Administration Costs			
6. Travel & Subsistence	2,660	2,926	3,218
<b>Revenue Costs (excl. finance charges)</b>	<b>292,264</b>	<b>302,765</b>	<b>320,129</b>
7. Recharge to other services	116,334	116,334	116,334
Capital Financing Charges	31,364	31,364	31,364
Leasing			
<b>Total Revenue Costs (less recharges to other services)</b>			
<b>Less:</b>			
8. Specific Government Grants			
9. Other Income (lettings)	50,000	60,000	70,000
<b>Net Revenue Costs</b>	<b>157,294</b>	<b>157,795</b>	<b>165,159</b>

### Notes

1 - 5% inflation used year on year

3 - Year on year 5% inflation on repairs/ maintenance, 20% inflation on energy. 3% rise on rates, 5% on water rates and purchase of Wedding Licence in 2009/10.

4 - Former management recharge recycled into business set up and running costs

6 - 10% added year on year

7 - Charge for members office accommodation will still be required

9 - Income figures reflect staged business start up and marketing with realistic year on year target

## 13. Risk Assessment

### KEY

Probability of happening	Impact (on the service)
1 – Low	1 – Low
2 – Medium	2 – Medium
3 - High	3 - High

Ref	Risk Description	Current Controls	Additional Controls/ Comments	Prob	Impact	Score
1	LGR – Impact on staffing levels and morale	Regular communication via Communication Matters and Team Briefings	Monitor ongoing progress	3	2	6
2	LGR – Impact upon Town Hall as a commercial facility	Flexibility in Town Hall Event Management Strategy	Monitor ongoing progress	3	3	9
3	Managing expectation of the facility	Appointment of Town Hall Manager  Events Management Strategy will manage balance of different usage	Redefine roles of support staff within Town Hall	2	2	4
4	Prolonged sickness absence of key staff impacting of staff morale and the ability to deliver service.	Internal policies and procedures are in place and adhere to Back to work interviews are undertaken... Monitoring is undertaken family friendly policies are in place.	Continue with current controls reinforce current policies.	1	1	1
5	Loss of key staff as there is no cover or support provided from elsewhere within the authority	Pool resources/skills with Cultural Services staff	Investigate the opportunity to provide job shadowing  Investigate the opportunity of secondment  Develop procedure notes for service delivery	1	3	3

Ref	Risk Description	Current Controls	Additional Controls/ Comments	Prob	Impact	Score
6	Not understanding the impact of Equalities (inc. DDA, Access to Services, Age Legislation)	Equalities training undertaken  Embed equalities in the day to day routine business	Complete Equalities Impact Assessments  Ensure new staff are equality trained  Review all documentation and what is legally required.  Circulate copies of Equalities Working Group Minutes for information.  Keep equality training up to date.	1	2	2
7	Competition from private sector	Pool resources/skills with Gala and Tourism to maximise collaborative opportunity  Good local knowledge and historical records Events Management Strategy identifies unique venue and facilities	Improve publicity  Stakeholder/Customer involvement	1	2	2
8	Lack of evidence for H&S claims	Fire checks have been undertaken  Internal H&S inspections carried out and complied with  Register of Inspections is kept  Accident Book and processes on site  First aiders on site		1	1	1

## 14. Performance Monitoring

1. Risk Assessments are complete. The following Section sets out our Targets for the next 12 months and will act as our Local Performance Indicators.
2. **Customer satisfaction survey** will be undertaken by a range of users of the building. A pro-forma based on similar information collected by Gala and or Tourism will be developed to allow cross checking of results.
3. There will be a system put in place **to measure the numbers of visitors** and tours undertaken in the Town Hall.
4. **Budget Control:** Monthly monitoring by Head of Cultural Services and Town Hall Manager. Aim to be within 10% variance within 3 quarters. Treasury Management Reports for the Authority on any arising predicted overspend.
5. To help calculate the following **Usage Targets** the following figures have been used.

Financial Period	Bookings	Revenue
2003-2004	204	£26,612.90
2004-2005	205	£39,458.25
2005-2006	220*	£31,371.00
2006-2007	240**	£43,080.00
2007-2008 (Building closed)		£6,161.00
2008-2009 Budget	400+	£77,134
2008-2009 Revised Target	323	£44,544

\* Figures estimated

\*\*figures estimated

6. To meet the current income targets based on a simple calculation of the number of events generating a comparable income, based on the 2004 – 5 figure to meet the Budget target of £77,134 the Town Hall will need to host 400 events. (This assumes each event will generate £192). We currently predict 232 based on the need to accommodate democratic meetings too.
7. It is planned that there will not be a complete loss of Democratic recharges in 2009 – 2010. This would give an unrealistic income target of £179,127. This would then require the number of paying events to rise to 932. This within 24 months of re-opening is not deliverable.
8. To calculate the target income figures against the volume and type of events the following table suggests that commercial events will need to be proactively sought to build the Town Hall's new business base. The numbers are skewed by the comparable number of charity events in 2006/2007 (this is the last comparable year for usage statistics) which do not attract higher levels of income, plus a number of free events offered in the year.

Events Targets and Income Predictions					
	2006-2007	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	Target	Target	Target	Target	Target
Individual Tours	0	30	50	60	80
Group Tours	0	3	10	12	14
School Groups	0	1	4	6	8
Internal Meetings	20	180	*100	*100	*100
Wedding Functions	1	3	8	10	20
Exhibitions	4	4	6	7	8
Commercial Use	3	55	60	70	100
External Meetings/functions	60	60	80	100	150
Charity Groups	40	10	15	15	15
Meetings as part of block bookings	7	7	8	9	9
Democratic Meetings	104	104	0	0	0
Total Events	303	521	413	466	581
Total Paying Events	175	232	303	353	465
Predicted income	** £33,600	£44,544	£58,176	£67,776	£89,280

\* Internal Meetings do not attract a re-charge at present. The cost of each meeting for staff/ refreshments is £6 - £10 per one hour meeting for 10 people. The future provision of this service is based on a re-charge option or budget allowance to accommodate this expenditure.

\*\* Actual Income was £31,371.

9. The targets above will be monitored to assess the success of the emerging uses of the Town Hall, alongside the processing of the targets in the Action Plan below.

## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Quality Public Services</b>					
<i>Providing quality services that are well managed and provide good value for money</i>					
<b>Service Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered</b>	<b>By Who? By When?</b>	<b>Business Plan Reference</b>	<b>Progress</b>
1 Revised charges and fees will ensure value for money is provided	To ensure fees and charges are competitive but reasonable	Hire Policy and streamlined booking system to be developed. Events target of 500 financial year 2008 / 2009	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Page 6	
2 Align staffing and resources to demand	To minimise the need for out of normal hours working and maximise the usage of the facilities	Staffing Review including provision of hospitality staffing to be undertaken	Head of Cultural Services / January 2009	Page 12	
		Operational Policy and Risk Assessments to be developed	Head of Cultural Services / January 2009	Page 18	
3 Create high quality Town Hall Services	To create a service standard for the delivery of Town Hall management and services	Training arranged for the Janitors	Head of Cultural Services / February 2009	Page 18	



## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

### Quality Public Services

*Providing services that meet the needs of our customers*

Service Strategic Aim	Objective	Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered	By Who? / By When?	Business Plan Reference	Progress
4 Meeting the needs of the customer/ visitor	To ensure the Town Hall facilities and usage is maximised	The Town Hall Manager will undertake a satisfaction survey with customers	Town Hall Manger / August 2009	Page 16 (to add)	
5 Visitor Recording	To measure use effectively and measure trends to help in future business planning	Installation of a People Counter @ £550	Town Hall Manager/ April 2009	Page 16	
6 Assess future for Mayor and Civic ceremonial uses.	To ensure future high visibility and authentic use of the Town Hall	Work with emerging Local Government structures to secure future of Civic Traditions.	Head of Legal Services/ April 2009	Page 6	

7 Promotion of the Town Hall for a range of charitable uses.	To ensure that the Town Hall continues its long tradition of local charitable support, within commercial limits	Undertake Risk Assessments and discuss requirements.	Town Hall Manager/ December 2008	Pages 7 & 12	
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## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Quality Public Services</b>					
<i>Ensuring services are accessible to all</i>					
<b>Service Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered</b>	<b>By Who? By When?</b>	<b>Business Plan Reference</b>	<b>Progress</b>
8 To maximise the use of the range of available facilities	To direct resources and maximise the use of available facilities	Review the opening hours policy for the Town Hall	Head of Cultural Services / April 2008	Policy review complete	
		Events Management Strategy to be developed	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Page 12	
9 Assess future usage patterns	Provision of Information systems	Provision of physical signage and assistance to ensure clarity of use.	Town Hall Manager/ September 2008	Page 14	
	Assess impact of the reduction of 104 democratic meetings on income targets and revise based on commercial take up of space.	Ongoing assessment of impact of demise of City Council and usage of facility by the Unitary/ Town Council	Head of Cultural Services/ December 2008 – April 2008	Page 12	

## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

### Flourishing Communities

#### *Improving the health and wellbeing of our communities*

Service Strategic Aim	Objective	Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered	By Who? By When?	Business Plan Reference	Progress
10 The Town Hall staff will signpost visitors to guided walks within the City	Encourage walking participation	The Town Hall staff will signpost visitors to guided walks within the City	All Town Hall Staff / February 2009	Page 14	
11 Engage in the Street Safe Partnership with Durham Constabulary	Provision of safe drinking ware to assist in City Centre safety	Provision of Polycarbonate drink-ware options	Town Hall Manager/ September 2008	Page 7	

## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

### Flourishing Communities

*Developing Communities that are active, inclusive and safe*

Service Strategic Aim	Objective	Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered	By Who? By When?	Business Plan Reference	Progress
12 Creating a high quality City centre venue for promoting local achievements via exhibitions, presentations and events	To create opportunity to promote locally produced fair, arts and crafts	Events Management Strategy to be developed to include reference to quality exhibitions, presentations and events.	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Page 14	

## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Flourishing Communities</b>						
<i>Developing communities that are environmentally sensitive</i>						
Service Strategic Aim	Objective	Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered	By Who? / By When?	Business Plan Reference	Progress	
13 The Town Hall will encourage customers to recycle waste	Educate visitors in cleaner greener principles	Town Hall waste policy to be developed / April 2009	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Page 14		
14 Set out procurement practices to ensure local suppliers are used.	To support the local economy by LM£ factors and local investment policy. Also to support City Fair Trade status.	Develop sourcing agreements and engage in Council's efficiency saving practices on procurement.	Town Hall Manager/ April 2009	Page 7		

**City of Durham Council – Town Hall  
Action Plan 2008 - 2009**

**Flourishing Communities**

*Creating learning opportunities for all*

<b>Service Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered</b>	<b>By Who? By When?</b>	<b>Business Plan Reference</b>	<b>Progress</b>
15 The Town Hall will host informed guided tours for schools and colleges throughout the District	To raise the profile and awareness of the heritage of the City	Informed guided and quality guided tours to be introduced	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Pages 8 & 16	

## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Capital City</b>					
<i>Protecting, developing, conservation and promoting the City's rich heritage</i>					
<b>Service Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered</b>	<b>By Who? By When?</b>	<b>Business Plan Reference</b>	<b>Progress</b>
16 Destination management will be introduced	To signpost visitors and customers to view the historic artefacts within the Town Hall	Liaison with TIC/Visitors Centre	Town Hall Manager / February 2009	Pages 8 & 16	



## City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Capital City</b>					
<i>Developing Durham as a vibrant City for culture, recreation and tourism</i>					
<b>Service Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered</b>	<b>By Who? By When?</b>	<b>Business Plan Reference</b>	<b>Progress</b>
17 The Town Hall will host quality cultural events in an historic and educational environment	To focus customers and visitors on Durham's Vibrant City status	Events Management Strategy to be developed	Town Hall Manager / April 2009	Page 16	
18 Support local people and visitors understanding of the Town Hall.	High Quality Tours will assist in interpreting the building and its history.	Tours system and management to be introduced.	THM/ Tourism Manager/ September 2008	Page 8	

# City of Durham Council – Town Hall Action Plan 2008 - 2009

<b>Capital City</b>					
<i>Creating an environment for investment and growth to enhance and sustain the local economy</i>					
Service Strategic Aim	Objective	Key Issues / Actions / Milestones to be delivered	By Who? / By When?	Business Plan Reference	Progress
<p>19 The Town Hall will offer an alternative venue for local usage The Town Hall will offer an alternative venue for local usage</p>	<p>To promote local facilities and venues for local people to use To promote local facilities and venues for local people to use</p>	<p>The Town Hall will apply for licensed premises for civil marriage and civil partnership registration</p> <p>Events Management Strategy to be developed</p>	<p>Town Hall Manager / April 2009</p> <p>Town Hall Manager / April 2009</p>	<p>Page 17</p>	
<p>20 Marketing of the Town Hall as a commercially available venue will be undertaken</p>	<p>A new Marketing Plan will be developed to shape future business improvement decisions</p>	<p>Marketing Strategy to be Written./ Commissioned</p>	<p>Head of Cultural Services/ Town Hall Manager/ December 2008</p>	<p>Page 14</p>	

===== END =====

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**TOWN HALL HIRE POLICY**

1. All letting arrangements shall be under the control of the Head of Cultural Services.
2. Only exceptionally shall free use of the Main Hall, Lantern Room or Kitchen shall be agreed and only with the sanction of the Council Leader and Vice-Chair of Cabinet in consultation with the Executive Director.
3. All hirers are required to pay the Council's fixed scale of charges in full upon demand (without prejudice to any right to apply for a refund of such charges or any part thereof). The Head of Cultural Services reserves the right to ask for a non returnable deposit to secure the booking and a kitchen cleaning bond returnable at the end of the hire period so long as cleanliness standards are met.
4. Where a booking is cancelled by the hirer and the period of notice given of the cancellation is 28 days or less, then the whole of the booking fee will be forfeit (Minute 1454 (iii), 13th December 1982). The Town Hall is licensed for the consumption of alcohol and performance of live music, if however further licenses are required then the appropriate License Fee must be paid by the hirer.
5. Any alcohol consumed on the premises must be purchased from the Council.
6. All hirers who request the use of Bar facilities must hire the Lantern Room and may be required to pay any appropriate License Fee.
7. Hirers must hire the Lantern Room whenever they wish to use the kitchen and the kitchen must be used whenever refreshments or meals are served.
8. The Council cannot accept any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any property belonging to the hirer or to a third party whilst it is in the Town Hall. Hirers leaving property unattended and/or overnight (the later to be pre-arranged) do so entirely at their own risk.
9. The hirers are responsible for providing stewards. For a dance or ball the minimum is four and they must be on duty throughout the dance or ball. When the dance or ball is open to the public on a Saturday, two extra stewards in the paid employment of the hirers must be provided. For a private party the minimum is two. Duties include control of admission; checking that exits are not obstructed in the event of an emergency; and general supervision of conduct of patrons in the building.
10. Hirers shall not use or permit the rooms to be used for the performance in public of any dramatic musical or other work in which copyright exists or for the delivery in public of any lecture in which copyright subsists without the

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**TOWN HALL HIRE POLICY**

consent of the owner of the said copyright, nor shall they in any other manner infringe any subsisting copyright. Hirers shall indemnify the Council against all sums of money which the Council may have to pay be reason of any infringement of copyright occurring during periods of hire.

Where music in any form comprises part of the event a form of return (obtainable from the Head of Cultural Services) showing particulars of musical items performed as required by the Performing Rights Society, shall be completed and signed and returned to the Head of Cultural Services within seven days of the performance thereof.

11. It is a condition of letting that no advertisements may be displayed on the **exterior** of the building without the express consent of the Head of Cultural Services. The Town Hall Staff are empowered to remove any unsuitable notices posted **within** the building. Hirers are also reminded that formal consent from the Local Planning Authority may be necessary for any advertisements/notices relating to events/functions taking place in the Town Hall, which the hirer or others may wish to display, except within a building, the Town Hall steps, or on a public notice board. Should any **external** advertising be intended, hirers are, therefore, requested to contact the Head of Planning Services, 17 Claypath, Durham (Telephone 3018801) in order that details can be discussed and agreed before such advertising takes place.
12. No driving or fixing of nails, screws or bolts into the floors or paneling or other parts of any of the rooms: no hanging of any items from any part of the internal finishes i.e. banners, pictures, balloons etc; nor any alterations in the electric, gas or other fittings, seats, tables, platforms, or otherwise is allowed.
13. In case any damage other than by accidental fire, shall be done to the rooms, to the gas, electric or other fittings, seats, tables, platforms, pictures or paintings therein, during the occupancy by any hirer by himself/ herself or by their guests or any other person, the amount of damage (to be assessed by the Head of Cultural Services in consultation with the Director of Finance) and charges for Estimates that need to be obtained from specialist restorers/contractors shall be forthwith paid by the hirer and, in addition, the Head of Cultural Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Cabinet shall be entitled, at their discretion, to cancel any subsequent letting or lettings to that hirer or such person or persons believed by the Council to be responsible for any damage.
14. To comply with the Electricity at Work Act 1989 all items of electrical equipment brought onto the Council's premises from outside agencies and hires must have a current test certificate. Copies of test certificates for each item of electrical equipment must be forwarded to the Town Hall Manager at

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the Town Hall prior to the hire period. The Council will not allow the use of uncertified electrical apparatus on the premises.

The hirers must on no account undertake any works or alterations to the fixed electrical installation of the building.

15. No firearms, explosives, chemicals or other materials likely to cause concussion, fumes or damage in or to the rooms, or to the pictures, paintings or window therein, will be allowed to be used therein.

NOTES

1. The Main Hall measures 70 feet (21 Meters) by 36 feet (11 Meters) and, with or without the Lantern Room, will be let for approved purpose.
2. The Lantern Room measures 30 feet (9 Meters) by 35 feet (10 Meters) adjacent to which is a kitchen /preparation room and a bar.
3. The Lantern Room communicates with the Main Hall.

IMPORTANT

The maximum number of persons allowed to use the premises at one time shall be: -

**(a) Separate use (i.e. only one hall in use at one time)**

Lantern Room-	100
Main Hall -	160

**Maximum Seating Capacity (separate Use)**

Lantern Room	-	60
Main hall	-	160

**(b) Joint Use (i.e. both halls in use at one time)**

Lantern Room/Main hall 260  
(Lantern Room not to exceed 60)

**Maximum seating capacity (Joint Use)**

Lantern Room -	60
Main Hall -	200

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## Hire Charges Monday - Saturday

### Main Hall & Lantern Room

Commercial Hire	Standard Hire	Charity Hire
Day hire (9am-5pm) £840 - £735	Day hire (9am-5pm) £462-£404	Day hire (9am-5pm) £384
Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £630- £577	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £346.50 - £317	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £288
Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £105 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £57.75 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £48.00 per hour

### Main Hall

Commercial Hire	Standard Hire	Charity Hire
Day hire (9am-5pm) £630 - £551	Day hire (9am-5pm) £462 - £413.70	Day hire (9am-5pm) £344
Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £420 - £380	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £346.50 - £322	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £258
Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £78.75 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £48.30 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £43.00per hour

### Lantern Room

Commercial Hire	Standard Hire	Charity Hire
Day hire (9am-5pm) £420	Day hire (9am-5pm) £277.20	Day hire (9am-5pm) £240
Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £315	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £207.90	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £180
Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £52.50 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £34.65 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £30.00per hour

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**Burlison Gallery**

<b>Commercial Hire</b>	<b>Standard Hire</b>	<b>Charity Hire</b>
Day hire (9am-5pm) £420	Day hire (9am-5pm) £277.20	Day hire (9am-5pm) £240
Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £315	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £207.90	Evening hire (6pm-12pm) £180
Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £52.50 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £34.65 per hour	Hourly Rate (Minimum 3 hours) £30.00per hour

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**NOTES**

There is an opportunity to hire blocks of time at a reduced rate. The reduction in charges will be at the discretion of the Head of Cultural Services or the Town Hall Manager.

No free use will be given without following the agreed Policy giving the Leader final discretion.

Rates outlined above take into consideration the cost involved in opening and staffing the building for evening and weekend functions.

The discounted block rates at Standard Rate will allow appropriate Friday and Saturday bookings for the venue for Weddings and Civil Ceremonies in the Main Hall and Lantern Room. This will increase in popularity for the months of July and August Bank Holiday Mondays with greater use for all day events. Early booking is advised.

The reduction in Commercial Rate will be used to promote the use of the facilities for repeat business.

There will be an option to negotiate drinks packages and use of in house bar facilities.

There will be an option of a discount of 8% to commercial rate block bookings of 3 or more individual events based on the hourly rate. This loyalty bonus will reflect your role as one of our core clients.

During off peak time, the sale of rooms at a discounted rate will be no lower than the agreed charity rate.

<b>To April 2009</b>	
<b>Peak Times</b>	<b>Off Peak Times</b>
Friday/Saturday evenings Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday daytime and evening	All day Monday Friday daytime
<b>From April 2009</b>	
<b>Peak Times</b>	<b>Off Peak Times</b>



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Friday/Saturday evenings  <i>Spring and Summer Bank Holiday Sunday</i>	Monday-Thursday daytime and evening  <i>Mid July- Early September Early January</i>
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The charges relate only to the use of rooms and associated equipment. Rooms and equipment must be left in the same condition as found. Adequate time must be booked to include preparation and removal time i.e. from the time entering the building to the time leaving the building.

When equipment is left unattended overnight and/or during the day, a charge equivalent to 3 hours at the standard rate will apply for each day and each night. The council accepts no liability whatsoever for any items left and hirers do so entirely at their own risk.

**PLEASE NOTE**

- i) The Lantern Room must also be hired when the bar/kitchen is required.
- ii) The charges relate to hire for Mondays – Saturdays.
- iii) If the Kitchen is hired a refundable deposit of £200.00 is payable in advance.
- iv) Hire charge for bar facilities £50.(To cover set up)

Statutory Authority for Making Charge:  
Section 145 (2) Local Government Act 1972  
Section 19 (2) Local Government ( Miscellaneous Provisions ) Act 1976

*Revised September 2008*

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## Agenda Item 5(d)

STATUS PUBLIC

<b>Portfolio Member/Director/Head of Service</b> Cllr Reynolds / Head of Community Services	<b>Portfolio</b> Leader
<b>Subject</b> Lease requests from Community Groups	<b>Date</b> 15 October 2008
	<b>Forward Plan</b> No
<b>Contact Officer</b> Lee Kirby, Community Development Co-ordinator Tel 301 8898, email: lkirby@durhamcity.gov.uk	<b>Previous Minutes</b> None
<b>Purpose of Report</b> To consider the range of lease issues being brought to the attention of the Community Development section from local community groups.	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<p>With the advent of LGR, the Council now needs consent under the Business as Usual protocol in respect of any disposal of land. This report summarises the requests that have been received by the Community Development section from local community groups that the Council grant them an interest in land it owns.</p> <p>The Community Development Section works as a middleman between community groups and Council departments to bring details of requested lease arrangements to the notice of relevant departments who would be called on for the expertise to draft these leases. The following groups are currently seeking leases for the areas identified. The leases are being sought by the various bodies to allow funding applications to be pursued. Tenure is required by funders to demonstrate that there is a level of support and sustainability for schemes:-</p> <p><b>Hedley Hill Terrace Play Area</b>          Waterhouses Community Association is looking to refurbish the play area and needs to arrange a lease with the City Council for the land. A lease of over 10 years would be preferable to enable them to secure funding. Once the lease is secured the maintenance arrangements need to be confirmed and funding applications can be progressed.</p> <p><b>Richmond Road, Newton Hall</b>          Newton Hall Playground Action Group is requesting a lease for land identified for a play area. A lease of over 10 years would be preferable in terms of funding applications.</p> <p><b>Brasside Play Area, Rowan Drive</b>          A lease is required for Brasside Play Area Group for land identified for a play area. A lease of over 10 years would be preferable in terms of funding applications. The group would then have to make arrangements to cover maintenance etc.</p> <p><b>West Rainton, The Crescent Play Area</b>          The West Rainton and Leamside Community Partnership is requesting a lease on a 25 year basis if possible, in order to secure external funding towards the play area scheme. Funding opportunities will be investigated once planning permission is received.</p> <p><b>Brandon Welfare Park</b>          A lease is requested by the Friends of Brandon Park. Initial enquiries have been made with the City Council's Legal Services to make contact with CISWO to see whether the works</p>	

proposed for the park are acceptable to them. It is essential that CISWO support the proposals in order for the project to progress and to enable funding to be secured.

**Addison Park**

A lease is requested by the Friends Of Addison Park. Advice has been given by legal services regarding covenants on this area of land. No problems have been identified with the works proposed but the group is applying for a lease in order to gain funding for future project work.

**Quarrington Hill Play Area Project (land at Church Street)**

Quarrington Hill Village Partnership is ideally seeking a 10 year lease. A draft lease has been developed by legal services and the group is considering this at present. The group wishes to negotiate the lease but not activate it until appropriate funding is in place. Fundraising has commenced, however, the group intends to note in applications that a lease is in preparation and no problems are foreseen.

**ParkHill Community Centre**

Parkhill Residents Group has recently completed a project to develop a play area. The second phase of the scheme is for a community building and the group is requesting a lease as this will be required for funding and maintenance issues. A lease of 10 years is ideally sought.

**Shincliffe Recreation Ground**

Shincliffe Community Association is requesting a lease of at least a 5 year period to enable the redevelopment of the recreation ground/play areas, and to enable funding to be secured.

**Sherburn Recreation Area**

Sherburn OAK is requesting a lease of at least a 5 year period to support the development of a play area and to secure funding.

**Coxhoe Bowling Green**

Coxhoe Bowling Club is requesting a lease for a 5 year period.

For each of the above, it is proposed that the lease be granted for the term requested at a commencing rent of £50.00 per annum with provision for rent review at the end of every 5<sup>th</sup> year in line with Retail Prices Index where the lease exceeds five years. The leases would be on a non-repairing basis.

### **Portfolio Member Recommendations or Items Requiring a Cabinet Decision**

That members approve leases of the areas of land specified within the report to the relevant groups upon the terms specified above, subject to approval being granted by the County Council in accordance with the Business as Usual Protocol.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

To enable the progression of the community projects and to allow funding applications to be pursued. The Council will be acting as an enabler by assisting communities in providing facilities in their localities for the benefit of local people. A number of the schemes are associated with the provision of play areas and this will greatly assist in the achievement of the Government's five desirable outcomes from the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. The project will contribute to the Community Plan and improve the quality of life for local people. The project will contribute to the Corporate Plan's key strategic aim of developing Flourishing Communities.

### **Alternative Options To Be Considered**

Not to approve the lease requests. This would leave the community groups in an uncertain position and with limited opportunities for securing funding for the various projects.

### **Consultation**

All of the projects have been subject to consultation with the local communities and are well supported.

### **LGR Implications**

The issues set in out in this report do not fall within the general consent agreed between the Council and Durham County Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008 and consequently the specific consent of the County Council will be required prior to the Council being able to progress these issues. A business as usual application will be submitted following the decision from this meeting.

### **Financial, Legal and Risk Implications**

The proposed schemes all have long term estimated useful lives. If the Community Groups choose to surrender their leases and gift any equipment upon the land to the new unitary authority, that authority would remain responsible for the maintenance, replacement (as appropriate) or major repair / renovation of the facilities. Such decisions would need to be made by the appropriate authority when the need arose and the cost of the same balanced between the priorities of the authority and community needs. Alternatively, the lease and equipment could, with the consent of the Council, be assigned to another authority, such as a Parish Council. This is not considered to be an issue that should prevent the leases from being implemented or gaining appropriate consent from Durham County Council.

As the leases are proposed on a non-repairing basis, the authority would retain the responsibility for the repairs and maintenance once the lease is granted. This would include any equipment placed on the land. A number of the schemes are associated with the provision of play areas and, should the lease be surrendered and the equipment gifted to the Council, there is currently no specific provision in the Council's budget for the replacement of play equipment should it become obsolete or beyond reasonable repair in the future. It would however be a condition of the deed of gift that the Council be entitled to repair and maintain the land and any equipment on it as it saw fit, which may include removing equipment which the Council considers dangerous, or that it is not able to maintain. The City Council's annual capital programme traditionally included sums for provision of general play / leisure equipment, allocated on a priority needs basis. Such sums, if retained within

the capital programmes of the new authority, could be available to replace equipment in the future if required. Ongoing revenue costs (inspection and routine maintenance) can be accommodated from within existing revenue budgets.

Any reputation risks associated with the community groups' selection of contractors, will be minimal as City Council officers will be involved in the ongoing monitoring of the schemes. Minimal financial risks are associated with the collection of the rent due under the lease arrangements. A major risk identified is a reputational one, in the event that the Council fails to deliver on its long-standing regeneration and community based commitments, if it is not seen to support these community based activities.

The lease can only be granted to formally constituted groups or individuals, who will be responsible for the abiding by the terms of the lease and ensuring that any activities they carry out on the land are in accordance with their legal duties. The Council should not be liable in the event that the groups or individuals breach these duties.

**Resource Implications**

The recommendations within this report can be fulfilled from within existing officer and financial resources

**Timescale for Action**

Once approval is received from both the City Council and County Council, arrangements will be made to negotiate the leases and for the groups to proceed with funding applications

**Associated Policies and Plans**

None

**Supporting Documents**

None

**Background Papers**

None

# Agenda Item 6(a)

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

#### SCRUTINY OF THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY

##### 1. Background

- 1.1 As the new Allocations Policy, which was introduced in August, 2007, was a need based Policy in contrast to the previous date-order system, it was felt that the new Policy should be scrutinised after having been in operation for six months, to allow the effects on all parties involved to be assessed.

##### 2. Actions

- 2.1 Copies of the Allocations Policy and housing application form were circulated to Members and the Council's Housing Manager attended the Panel's meetings in June and July, 2008, to give Members an overview of the new Allocations Policy, details of why it had been introduced and explained how it operated.
- 2.2 The Strategic Older Persons Manager had also attended the July meeting to answer questions on how the medical need aspects of the Policy were dealt with, and how these impacted on an applicants options for housing.

##### 3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The new Housing Allocations Policy was introduced in August, 2007, to ensure that the Council's Policy was compliant with current legislation, codes of practice and best practice.
- 3.2 The new Policy is based on the principle of reasonable preference as defined in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002), and its introduction was timed to coincide with the introduction of the new housing management computer system. The new Policy is based on a band system and allocates properties to applicants based on their need, rather than the amount of time they had been on the waiting list as had happened previously.
- 3.3 All applicants on the waiting list at the time of the introduction of the new Policy were invited to re-apply and transitional arrangements were put in place to reflect the time they had spent on the waiting list.
- 3.4 Since the Policy was introduced in August, 2007, 3308 applications have been made and 3049 of them are currently live. There are approximately 3000 applicants on the list, a housing stock of around 6000 properties and 490 properties were re-let last year. Approximately 80 properties are in the turnover process and over the last two years, re-let times have been reduced from 73 days to 40 days.
- 3.5 Applicants are assessed on the basis of need and allocated to one of five bands, A – E, with and A being for those in most urgent need.
- 3.6 To date, 3% of applicants have been allocated to band A, 15% to band B, 20% to band C, 22% to band D and 40% to Band E.

- 3.7 An allocation to band E does not mean that an applicant will not be offered a property, but this is dependant on the demand for an area, the type and size of property required and the number of applicants who are in higher bands. Housing Options Officers also assist applicants in looking for other housing solutions such as housing association properties and private accommodation.
- 3.8 As properties become available, the Housing Management System produces a shortlist of eligible applicants for a particular home. This is based upon the information from the application form which is input into the system. The list of eligible applicants produced is considered by a Housing Officer before the property is offered.
- 3.9 Applicants have a right of appeal, prescribed in law, against certain decisions such as having their application to be added to the housing list disallowed, or being removed from the list other than at their own request.
- 3.10 There is also an opportunity for applicants to appeal the decision to allocate them to a particular band. Appeals are made in writing although there is no specific form for doing so. Were a form introduced for all appeals, this could actually cause further delays, but it may be possible to devise a form, but continue to accept written appeals depending on the preference of the applicant.
- 3.11 These appeals are considered by the Senior Housing Officer and of 170 appeals to date, about one third resulted in a change of band, although in some of these cases, the applicants circumstances have changed since the original decision. Details of the reason are recorded on the individual application form, but are not analysed overall.
- 3.12 There is some backlog in dealing with appeals due to the volume of work involved.
- 3.13 The housing application form also asks detailed questions relating to any disabilities applicants may have. Where this is the case, the Council's Strategic Older Persons Manager, qualified occupational therapist, reviews the application form and medical need is taken into account when allocating an applicant to a band. In some cases, further information is needed before a decision can be reached, and in these cases, the applicants could be telephoned, a home visit could be arranged, or further details could be requested from their GP.
- 3.14 In October, 2007, the Strategic Older Persons Manager had been faced with a backlog of about 300 applicants awaiting assessment. This had been caused by the introduction of the new Policy, and the retirement of the previous postholder and delay before a permanent appointment was made.
- 3.15 Additional admin support has been provided, and together with more efficient ways of working being introduced, this figure has now been dramatically reduced.
- 3.16 On average, 10-12 applications are received per week which require assessment of medical needs, and now that admin support is in place, this is a manageable figure considering the Strategic Older Persons Manager's other duties and responsibilities such as the aids and adaptations service.
- 3.17 Each District in the County has an allocations policy which was based on Government guidance, although there are some differences in the banding criteria.
- 3.18 Choice-based lettings are due to be introduced next year and work is underway to produce a new allocations policy which will be effective County-wide, and during this process, there is a need to minimise disruption to applicants wherever possible.



**4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 That where bandings are changed on appeal, the reasons for this be recorded and, the application form be amended should patterns emerge.
- 4.2 That a simple and optional form requesting an appeal be drafted, and that this form be sent out to applicants if requested.
- 4.3 That extra/sufficient officer time be provided for dealing with appeals against bandings in a timely manner and in line with the needs of the Service.
- 4.4 That the reports and recommendations be passed to the new Unitary Authority in the context of the overarching Allocations Policy and Choice Based Lettings Policy.
- 4.5 That where any future changes in Policy occur, the need to minimise disruption for applicants wherever possible be taken into consideration.

Community Services Scrutiny Panel  
September 2008

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## Agenda Item 6(b)

### **Economic Scrutiny Panel**

#### **Review of Scrutiny of Tourism**

##### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Economic Scrutiny Panel carried out the original scrutiny of Tourism between September 2006 and January 2007.
- 1.2 The Panel were concerned that they had not received feedback on the recommendations that had been adopted by Cabinet June 2007.
- 1.3 Therefore the emphasis of the review was to focus on the recommendations and ascertain their impact.

##### **2. Findings**

- 2.1 The Panel decided that they would invite the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture, the Head of Cultural Services, the 2020 Vision Regeneration Manager, the Tourism and Conference Officer and the Events Co-ordinator to attend panel meetings.
- 2.2 The Panel were advised that information boards were used at the Park and Ride and on the buses. Issues regarding the lack of information available at the Railway Station were being investigated. Members were concerned with transport in and out of the city, there are a lack of trains stopping at Durham and were concerned that bus timetables were not adapted for large scale events.
- 2.3 It is planned to move the coach drop off point from the Market Place Steps to Walkergate opposite the bottom of Millennium Place steps and lift. This will be easier for visitors and they will be able to use the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) for maps of the city, places to visit etc.
- 2.4 Members had enquired whether it would be possible to divert the Cathedral bus or the Park and Ride buses to places of interest, but were informed that it was unlikely that the buses would be able to divert their routes.
- 2.5 Members were advised that the City had a good relationship with partners and the World Heritage site pulls all the partners together. There was joined up working with partners, this was particularly good knowing of events that partners had planned.
- 2.6 The Panel were advised that Durham City Vision were working on online information of events. The TIC and City Info Centres would be able to advise visitors and residents of events.
- 2.7 There were concerns of the numbers of empty shop units in the City and the imminent closure of Waitrose in the Gates. The Head of Cultural Services advised that retail experience in the City should match the heritage experience.
- 2.8 A Town Hall Manager was now in place and the Panel was advised that tours of the Town Hall would take place; a souvenir facility would not be available in the Town Hall, if patrons wished to purchase souvenirs this could be done at the TIC.

- 2.9 The new Events team had had a positive affect on attracting funding for events. Funding has been secured from The Arts Council and Culture 10. Positive feedback is being received from funders who are very interested in supporting Durham Mystery Plays.
- 2.10 It was suggested by Members that the Park and Ride should review its operating hours during Summer months to include Sundays and later into the evenings.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the New Unitary Authority review the operating hours of the park and ride during the Summer months to include Sundays and to extend the cut off period to later in the evening.
- 3.2 That the work of the 2020 Vision, Tourism and Events teams be commended to the New Unitary Authority asking that they continue with the good work that has been established.
- 3.3 That the Events, Tourism and 2020 Vision teams are congratulated on their efforts.

## Agenda Item 6(c)

### REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

#### SCRUTINY TOPIC – SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT POLICY & CARBON EMISSIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S FLEET OF VEHICLES

##### 1. BACKGROUND

Further to the Panel's Report on the topic of Climate Change, Members put forward suggestions for two specific areas that they wished to be considered as further topics, those being specifically the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy and the Carbon Emissions from the Council's Fleet of Vehicles.

##### 2. AIMS

It was the remit of the Panel to consider briefing papers prepared by the relevant Officers and to question those Officers at a meeting of the Panel to gain further insight. Members wished to assist Officers from the in improving in these areas if possible, and if not, to help ensure the good practise undertaken by the City of Durham Council was continued by the new Unitary Authority post April 2008.

##### 3. ACTIONS

The Panel invited witnesses from Cabinet, Strategic Services and Property Services to attend a meeting to outline the Council's current position in relation to the two matters under consideration. Accordingly, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Director of Strategic Services and the Council's Transport/Depot Manager attended a meeting of the Panel in May 2008 to answer Members' queries.

##### 3.1 Sustainable Procurement Policy

The main driver in developing a Sustainable Procurement Policy was the 2005 Sustainable Development Strategy set out by Central Government which aimed to have the United Kingdom being amongst the leaders in the European Union in relation to sustainable procurement by 2009. Many other policies and strategies followed on from this initial Strategy and an aspect of the City of Durham response was to produce its Procurement Strategy 2007-2010. It was noted that the direction given from Central Government was always influenced heavily from the Private Sector. Indeed Sir Neville Simms, a leading private sector proponent of sustainability was asked to head up the Government's Sustainable Procurement Taskforce.

"Sustainability" does not purely refer to environmental concerns, but rather encompasses those concerns alongside economic, social and commercial issues. A balance between these elements must be achieved in order to secure any truly sustainable resource or system. Accordingly, a "whole-life" approach must be taken, rather than a simple view only encompassing the "best" initial cost or perceived environmental benefit. This whole-life approach fits with the Council's Corporate Policy of "Working for a cleaner and greener local environment" and is reflected within work relating to the Local Strategic Partnership and Community Plans.

### **3.2 Carbon Emissions from the Council's Fleet of Vehicles**

The City of Durham obtained useful data relating to the carbon emissions from the Council's fleet of vehicles from an audit of the Transport Section. This audit was carried out in conjunction the Energy Saving Trust who provided 2½ days consultation, free of charge.

## **4. OUTCOMES**

### **4.1 Sustainable Procurement Policy**

The tendering process at the City of Durham contains within it a set of criteria relating to sustainability. Harmonisation across the North-East in relation to these criteria, amongst others, has led to Contracts being much more uniform across Authorities, enabling Companies to focus on achieving higher standards of Tenders, rather than wasting resources drafting many forms of Tender to match varying stipulations.

The City of Durham, within its Sustainable Development Policy, encourages local companies in efforts to minimise their impact on Climate Change. The Council has also helped in achieving a "Fair-Trade" status for the City and the Council sources from Fair-Trade Suppliers wherever possible.

By utilising electronic procurement and by working with other Local Authorities in the "Durham Virtual Procurement Partnership", efficiencies have been made. The Council also has a role in providing advice to small and medium sized enterprises in informing them how they themselves can become more efficient and translate this into a positive reduction in any negative impact on the environment.

Through using the "Local Multiplier 3", a tool for calculating local, regional and national impacts of Local Authority spending, it has been possible for the Council to perform a benchmarking process that will enable meaningful measurement of progress in the future. With approximately 33% of the Council's total spend in 2006 / 2007 being spend with local Suppliers, i.e. a payment address within the City of Durham; and approximately 58% of the total spend being made within the North-East area, there is a clear demonstration of commitment to supporting the local economy.

Where appropriate, the Council utilises the North East Purchasing Organisation and Office of Government Commerce methods of securing Contracts. This not only helps ensure value for money to the Council, but also offers sustainable solutions that could be utilised a local level. The City of Durham has adopted Durham County Council's Temporary Agency Workers Contracts, which ensures that the level of equality given to those workers providing a service for the Council is the same as if they worked for the Council itself.

### **4.2 Carbon Emissions from the Council's Fleet of Vehicles**

Wherever possible, Council vehicles have been fitted with Continuous Regeneration Traps (CRT) in order to re-burn exhaust gases in order to reduce particulate size, in turn leading to improved figures relating to emissions. Unfortunately, some of the smaller fleet vehicles cannot utilise this technology as the system requires an engine temperature over 90°C.

A reduction in emissions of 30 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> has been achieved by using a 5% blend of bio-diesel. The bio-diesel is secured via an Office of Government Commerce contract which helps ensure that the bio-diesel is obtained from sustainable sources.

Vehicle drivers within the City Council have access to training that can help to teach them efficient driving techniques to help give improved performance in relation to emissions and fuel economy.

Review and monitoring are crucial and the Council's Transport/Depot Manager regularly attends meetings of the Council's Transport Group where many issues relating to efficiencies are brought forward and developed.

The majority of the Council's fleet of vehicles are on average 9 years old. This figure is slightly skewed by the inclusion of older agricultural vehicles that are only used periodically and that would be impractical to replace on a regular basis. Accordingly, the average replacement age for the majority of fleet vehicles is broadly comparable with the national average.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel gained an insight into the work that has been undertaken by City of Durham Officers and appreciate that this work was not undertaken in isolation, but rather through discussions with other Local Authorities and Partner Organisations. Through these joint working relationships a robust and practical set of policies have been drafted and adopted.

Therefore the following recommendations are made by the Panel:-

1. The Panel endorse the work undertaken by the City of Durham Council in relation to both Sustainable Procurement (as set out in its Procurement Strategy 2007-2010) and in relation to minimising carbon emissions from the Council's fleet of vehicles. Accordingly, the Panel urge the new Durham Unitary Authority to adopt a similar approach in relation to both of these areas and would consider the work undertaken by the City of Durham via the appropriate Unitary Authority Workstreams.
2. The Panel note that in November 2007 the Cabinet had agreed that, in the event of a Transitional and new Unitary Authority being established, to urge those Authorities to develop a programme to maintain or increase the proportion of local spend. Accordingly, the Panel would also wish to encourage the new Durham Unitary Authority to adopt this course of action.

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# Agenda Item 6(d)

## REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

### SCRUTINY TOPIC – REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

#### 1. BACKGROUND

The topic of Neighbourhood Wardens was originally looked at by the Panel in late 2004 and in light of the Local Government Reorganisation within County Durham and suggestions from Scrutiny Members the topic was tabled for review by the Panel.

#### 2. AIMS

It was the remit of the Panel to consider a briefing paper prepared by the relevant Officers and to question those Officers at a meeting of the Panel to gain further insight. Members wished to assist in helping Officers from the City of Durham Council in improve services within this area if possible, and if not, to help ensure the good practise undertaken by the City of Durham Council was continued by the new Unitary Authority post April 2008.

#### 3. ACTIONS

The Panel invited witnesses from Environment & Leisure Services Department to attend a meeting to outline the Council's current position in relation Neighbourhood Wardens. Accordingly, the Technical Support Manager and the Senior Neighbourhood Warden attended a meeting of the Panel in June 2008 to speak to Members.

##### 3.1 Focus

The primary focus of the City of Durham Neighbourhood Warden Scheme is that of environmental enforcement and education together with associated low level anti-social behaviour. The Wardens work in close partnership with other responsible organisations such as the Police.

##### 3.2 Staffing and Training

Initially, the City of Durham scheme had 3 Neighbourhood Wardens, but this has now increased to 6 to provide a Warden for each operational area of the District. In addition, the post of Senior Neighbourhood Warden was created to provide a front line supervisory / co-ordinating role and to ensure consistency of service / implementation of policy across the District.

Neighbourhood Wardens are accredited under the Durham Constabulary Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. Accreditation gives certain additional powers granted by the Chief Constable. These include the right to request a name and address from a person in order to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, and the power to confiscate alcohol from those under the age of 18 and tobacco products from those under the age of 16.

The City Council invested in the Police "Airwaves" radio communication system and this enables many incidents to be dealt with quickly as there is a constant, reliable connection between Neighbourhood Wardens and the Police.

Neighbourhood Wardens have undertaken joint training in conjunction with the Police, on topics such as problem solving and information gathering / evidence collection.

### **3.3 Branding and Communication**

Neighbourhood Wardens have established themselves as a "brand" and are easily identifiable out in the District by their distinctive Smart cars. Residents recognise the practicality of using the Neighbourhood Wardens as a mobile "on-stop-shop" for many issues.

To further enhance working together, the Neighbourhood Wardens and other frontline Council services meet with the Police on a fortnightly basis and together areas of concern are identified so that resources are targeted effectively. Neighbourhood Wardens also attend the Crime and Disorder Partnership meetings, Neighbourhood Forum meetings, Beat Officer surgeries and Parish Council meetings in order to keep up to speed with, and feedback on, local issues.

Neighbourhood Wardens also attend schools within the District to help educate young people on issues relating to the environment / taking pride in their community. This is considered an important role within the Wardens job remit.

## **4. OUTCOMES**

### **4.1 In Practise**

By working closely with the Street Scene Team Leaders for their area, Neighbourhood Wardens are able to get positive action on issues so that problems are resolved quickly and efficiently.

Many successful campaigns have been conducted by the Neighbourhood Wardens including campaigns to reduce littering (including chewing gum), in preventing graffiti, Streetsafe Initiatives, reducing incidents of dog fouling, and in helping to bring about the provision of skatepark facilities in several areas of the District in conjunction with the Durham Skate and Bike Partnership (Durham Police, City of Durham and Investors in Children).

Currently there are 6 Neighbourhood Wardens and a Senior Neighbourhood Warden. However there is no additional provision to cover for holidays, long-term sickness or maternity leave. In such circumstances the Senior Neighbourhood Warden, with assistance from the rest of the team, provides cover. However this does, at times, severely stretch the resources of the Service. This is evidenced by the experience of elected Members who, in working with their Neighbourhood Wardens, perceive an increase in the workload of the Wardens. Neighbourhood Wardens can receive a high volume of calls and queries direct as they have mobile phone provided by the City Council. Also, in preparing to move to Unitary Local Government in April 2009, further additional work may be required of the service.

Members agreed that, whilst perhaps ideally there should be two Wardens per operational area, any recommendation by Members to appoint additional Neighbourhood Wardens, or to provide assistance from other City of Durham staff, could prove difficult to carry out as spending during the transitional period leading up to the new Unitary Authority is limited by the agreed "Transitional Plan" and the usual budgetary constraints.

#### **4.2 Future Model for Durham**

Officers from the Neighbourhood Warden service feel that evidence gathered to date shows that the methods currently being employed by the current Neighbourhood Warden Scheme are highly effective in dealing with environmental education and enforcement; and associated low level anti-social behaviour issues (Higher levels of anti-social behaviour / crime being more effectively dealt with by the Police.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel gained insight into the work that has been undertaken by City of Durham Neighbourhood Wardens and the progress the service has made since its inception in 2003.

Therefore the following recommendations are made by the Panel:-

1. The Panel recognises the many achievements of the City of Durham's Neighbourhood Warden service and recommends that the City of Durham take action to strengthen and maintain the frontline services within the City of Durham's operational areas, in particular the Neighbourhood Wardens and Street Scene Team Leaders. The Panel also acknowledges that the visible success in the City of Durham district can be attributed to a focus on tackling issues primarily through environmental enforcement and education, carried out by well trained and highly motivated Officers.
2. The Panel urges the new Durham Unitary Authority to maintain the high level of service provision achieved in this area and continue to strengthen the service in the future.

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## Agenda Item 8(a)

**STATUS PUBLIC**

<b>Report to</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date</b>	15 October 2008
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Elizabeth Hall, 301 8596
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Elizabeth Hall, 301 8596
<b>Subject</b>	Local Authority Housing Report of Audit Commission – Strategic Housing Services of the City of Durham Council

### Purpose

To inform Cabinet of the findings of the Housing Inspectorate in relation to Housing Services.

### Recommendations

That the report be noted

### Information

The Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate has completed its inspection of the Council's Strategic Housing Services. It published its report on 14 August 2008. This report is available on the Audit Commission's website.

The Audit Commission found that the strategic housing services provided by the City Council are 'fair' but have uncertain prospects for improvements. The Audit Commission found 'that the Council had been highly effective at delivering affordable housing'. It identified that the Council had clear policies setting out affordable housing quotes which are being met and that a highly effective Public Private Partnership is delivering affordable housing and low cost home ownership to improve villages surrounding the city. It noted that this generates over £100M for investment in council services and community development initiatives.

The Audit Commission also found that strengths included that:

- the stock condition in social and private sector housing is understood and informs strategic housing priorities
- there is a strong corporate approach to delivering value for money and efficiency targets are being exceeded
- there are a range of successful homelessness prevention initiatives in place

As in all reports, the Audit Commission identified weaknesses, and made recommendations to address these. These recommendations included:

- improving customer services, particularly response times to enquiries and monitoring of performance in this area
- providing better arrangements to meet the housing needs of local people, including more comprehensive needs data and improved access to information about services
- providing better access to housing solutions for homeless and other vulnerable households

As Members are aware, the Council has invested heavily in both its customer services and housing services in recent years. The Audit Commission recognised in its report the benefits and improvements this investment has already delivered. These include 97% of all queries being resolved at the first point of contact and improvements in call handling arrangements, with customer satisfaction levels of over 90%, and an effective service through its public reception points. Turning to housing services, the Audit Commission noted the above average improvements in performance in the last year, with 64% of housing performance indicators improving. The Council did have plans for further investments, as outlined in its Medium Term Financial Plan and Medium Term Capital Programme. However, it is not able to progress these because of its demise in March 2009. The Audit Commission did acknowledge that the plans to introduce a unitary authority are impacting on the Council's ability to improve, but commented that the Council was taking positive steps to influence the development of the unitary authority to ensure the interests of the district are represented.

**Elizabeth Hall**

**Director of Strategic Services**

**Date:** 5 September 2008

## Agenda Item 8(b)

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date</b>	15 October 2008
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Executive Director Tel: 0191 3018867 email: dmarrs@durhamcity.gov.uk
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Kay Laidlaw – Legal & Complaints Officer Tel: 0191 3018876 email: klaidlaw@durhamcity.gov.uk
<b>Subject</b>	Local Government Ombudsman Cases

### Purpose

For Members' Information, I attach at Appendix A, schedule of successful defences of complaints referred to the Commission for Local Administration in England

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### Recommendations

That the report be noted.

Signature **D Marrs**

TITLE Executive Director

Date: 23 September 2008

City of Durham

CABINET

15 October 2008

Report of the Executive Director - For Information

Schedule of Successful Defences of Complaints Referred to the Commission for Local Administration in England

<u>L.O. Case Ref. No.</u>	<u>Summary of the Nature of the Complaint</u>	<u>Local Ombudsman's Findings/Decision</u>
08 007 094	<p>The summary of the complaint relates to the council's allocations policy for its social housing stock. The complainant first applied for housing in 1992 and was informed then that should specify a particular street. Since then the allocations policy has been modified on three occasions. The complainant was offered two properties in the area and were rejected</p>	<p>The ombudsman comments that a reasonable warning and explanation about how the original system worked was given to the complainant and that due to the amount of time the complainant had been on the housing list this was taken into account to safeguard the position and the application was amended to ensure shortlisting for those properties which were eligible.</p> <p>Reason for termination: No or insufficient evidence of maladministration</p>