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Robert Hope Acting Chief Executive

3rd March 2009

Dear Councillor,

I hereby give you Notice that a Meeting of the **POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, CROOK** on **WEDNESDAY 11th MARCH 2009** at **6.00 P.M.**

AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for absence
2. To consider the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Committee held on 17th December 2008 and the Meeting of the Committee held on 21st January 2009, as true records. Copies attached
3. Declarations Of Interest

Members are invited to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest in matters appearing on the agenda and the nature of their interest.

Members should use either of the following declarations:

Personal Interest – to be used where a Member will be remaining and participating on the debate and any vote:

I have a personal interest in agenda item (...) regarding the report on (...) because I am (...)

Personal and Prejudicial Interest – to be used where a Member will be withdrawing from the room for that item:

I have a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item (...) regarding the report on (...) because I am (...)

Officers are also invited to declare any interest in any matters appearing on the agenda.

NOTE: Members are requested to complete the enclosed declarations form and, after declaring interests verbally, to

hand the form in to the Committee Administrator.

4. To consider the 3rd quarter results for National Indicators and Local Performance Indicators. 1 - 23
5. To consider an update regarding the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. 24 - 27
6. To consider a request from Tow Law Community Centre for a donation from the Community Fund. 28 - 29
7. To consider the Coundon Leeholme Post Office business plan. 30 - 55
8. To consider an application for use of section 106 monies. 56 - 57
9. To consider the extension of the grounds maintenance contract. 58 - 60
10. To consider the award of costs in relation to appeal against refusal of planning permission for Barratt Newcastle Limited. 61 - 62
11. To consider a request to dispose of land.* 63 - 82
12. To consider a request for early release of pension.* 83 - 84
13. To consider early retirement/voluntary redundancy applications.* 85 - 87
14. To consider such other items of business which, by reason of special circumstances so specified, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

*It is likely that items 11, 12 and 13 will be taken in the closed part of the meeting in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006.

Yours faithfully



Acting Chief Executive

Members of this Committee: Councillors Mrs Bolam, Buckham, Mrs Burn, Ferguson*, Gale, Grogan, Harrison, Hayton, Henry, Kay, Kingston, Murphy, Perkins, Stonehouse, Taylor, Mrs Todd*and Zair.

*ex-officio, non-voting capacity.

Chair: Councillor Harrison

Deputy Chair: Councillor Zair

TO: All other Members of the Council for information
Management Team

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM

NAME AND DATE OF COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	NATURE OF INTEREST AND REASONS	PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE



POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2009

Report of the Acting Chief Executive

3RD QUARTER RESULTS FOR NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

purpose of the report

1. To report the 3rd quarter results for National Indicators and Local Performance Indicators.

background

2. In April 2008 the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) were replaced with 198 National Indicators (NIs). 63 National Indicators are reported at District level as well as 24 Local Performance Indicators, Annex A contains a list of the indicators that are available for Quarter 3.
3. Issues remain around collection of some of the performance information for National Indicators. This is for the following reasons:
 - Source data is unavailable for several indicators,
 - Audit Commission definitions are still being developed and defined in association with regulatory bodies,
 - Long lead time for the collection of information by partner organisations (e.g. Crime),
 - Standard and consistent processes for collection being agreed across the LGR workstreams,
 - 18 indicators are collected by the biennial Place Survey. The result of these will be available in Quarter 4 for County Durham.
4. These issues are not specific to Wear Valley but are experienced across the whole of the Country. It is, therefore, at this stage, not possible to provide any analysis or evaluation of our current performance using comparative data such as national quartiles.
5. The performance results in this report are likely to change once these issues are resolved and more indicators are available. Annex B contains a list of the indicators that are not available for Quarter 3.

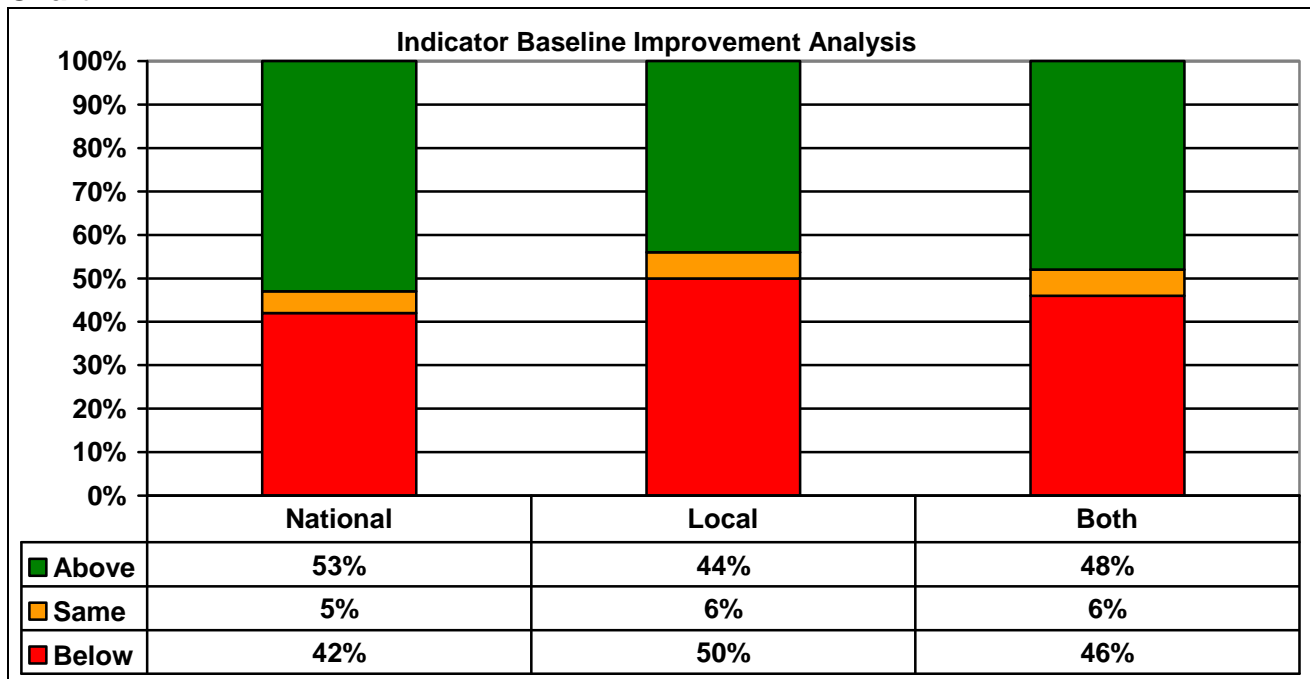
unverified indicators

6. All waste indicators (NI191, NI192 and NI193) remain unverified until confirmed by WasteDataFlow, usually 4 months after the period end.

improvement on baseline analysis

7. The baseline is set from previous performance where a defined calculation was available.
8. Where possible a baseline has been established for National and Local Indicators, the following is a summary of the performance against these baselines:
 - 17 (49%) indicators are Above Baseline
 - 2 (6%) indicators are the Same as the Baseline
 - 16 (46%) indicators are Below Baseline

Chart 1



Annex C shows tables splitting 'Baseline Improvement' by department

Annex D shows charts splitting 'Baseline Improvement' by department

9. Of the 16 indicators that are performing below the baseline, 8 are National Indicators and 8 are Local Performance Indicators. These indicators are listed below with a reason for the shortfall and a brief summary of the plan to improve the indicator.

National Indicators

Indicator	Reason for Shortfall	Action Plan
NI179 – Value for Money,	Local Government	Maintain awareness of

Efficiency Gains	Reorganisation (LGR) has diverted attention and resources from this area	need for efficiency gains and highlight this goal for Vesting Day
NI154 – Net Additional Homes	The fall in additional homes is due to the current economic climate	The performance of this indicator is mainly dependant on the number of new build completions
NI155 - Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	The commencement of Developments with affordable housing allocated to them are not within the control of the LPA	The performance of this indicator is mainly dependant on the number of new development with affordable housing attached
NI157b – Processing of Minor planning applications	Reduction in performance for minor applications is due to officers making a determined effort to determine a significant numbers of 'old' applications	
NI157c – Processing of Other planning applications	This category largely comprises householder applications and the Section consistently manages to achieve the 2008/09 target of deciding 80% of applications within 8 weeks	
NI156 – Number of Households living in temporary Accommodation	A higher demand for social housing has lead to longer waiting lists and a back log of the system	Ongoing liaison with Dale & Valley Homes to move tenants to more secure tenure
NI192 - Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	There has been an increase of 1.78% between quarter 1 and quarter 3 in the level of recycling. It is anticipated this indicator will surpass it's the previous years result at year end	
NI193 - Percentage of Municipal Waste Land Filled	The National Indicator Guidance states the use of 2 decimal places resulting in a shortfall of 0.01%	No action necessary

Local Performance Indicators

Indicator	Reason for Shortfall	Action Plan
LC1 (ex BV076c) – Fraud Investigations	Three out of five members of the team have been on long term sick leave during this year and a further member of staff has taken employment in another department	Assistance has been received from Easington BC throughout the year
LC2 (ex BV076d) – Prosecutions and Sanctions		Agency employees are now in place. Investigation and sanction numbers should improve in quarter 4
LOD10 (ex BV079a) – Accuracy of Benefit	Below last years performance at present,	It will still be possible to achieve the 2008/09 year

Calculations	although quarter 3 does show an improvement on quarter 2	end target if no errors found on last quarter
LOD3 (ex BV010) – Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected	Performance down 0.51% on last year due to changes in legislation regarding empty property changes and economic climate.	Work with property owners and leaseholders to collect remaining NNDR for 2008/09
LOD6 (ex BV066a) – Percentage of rent collected	There has been a decrease in rent collected due to an increased void loss	A Performance Improvement Team has been established with the objective of reviewing and revising the void process to reduce the length of time properties are void thus decreasing the amount of rent lost
LOD9 (ex BV211b) - Proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs to HRA dwellings compared to non-urgent repairs expenditure to HRA dwellings	Dale and Valley Homes have been completing high value element of emergency jobs at the time rather than later on separate job	Completing high value elements of emergency jobs offers a better service to customer
LP1 (ex BV212) – Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	Since the 31st March 2008 the responsive repairs and void maintenance works has been carried out by Gentoo. There has been some embedding issues with many properties requiring extra work such as new kitchens and bathrooms to meet the lettable standard	The Responsive Repairs and Voids Manager has worked closely with Gentoo who have now supplied additional labour. A Performance Improvement Team has been established with the objective of reviewing and revising the void process to reduce the length of time properties are void
LEN3 (ex BV086) – Cost of Household Waste Collection	Higher fuel costs (approximately 33%) in quarters 1 and 2	Fuel costs have begun to decline, this is reflected in the quarter on quarter reduction in costs

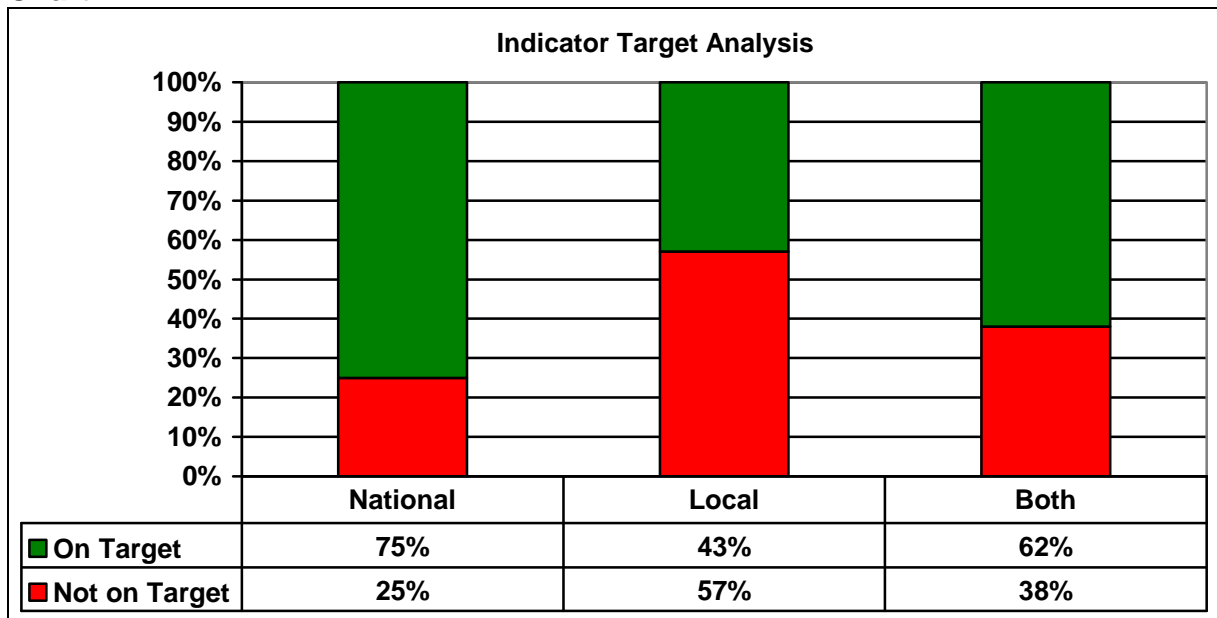
target analysis

10. Targets come from the Government or from our Services when we set our targets based on previous performance. Where previous performance is not available we have used the Quarter 1 result (e.g. NI184) as the basis to form the target.

11. Where possible targets have been set for National Indicators (NI) and Local Performance Indicators (LPI), the following is a summary of the performance against these targets:

- 21 (62%) of NIs and LPIs are on target
- 13 (38%) of NIs and LPIs are not on target

Chart 2



Annex E shows tables splitting 'Performance against Target' by department
 Annex F shows charts splitting 'Performance against Target' by department

12. Of the 13 indicators that are performing below the target, 5 are National Indicators and 8 are Local Performance Indicators. . These indicators are listed below with a reason for the shortfall and a brief summary of the plan to improve the indicator.

National Indicators

Indicator	Reason for Shortfall	Action Plan
NI160 – Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services	The National Indicator Guidance states the use of 2 decimal places resulting in a shortfall of 0.09%	No action necessary as the target has been achieved when the result is rounded up The next survey is due to be carried out in November 2011

NI179 – Value for Money, Efficiency Gains	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has diverted attention and resources from this area	Maintain awareness of need for efficiency gains and highlight this goal for Vesting Day
NI181 – Average number of days taken to process new and changes to housing and council tax benefit entitlement	It is unlikely that the target for the year will be achieved due to the staff vacancies being carried as a result of LGR and the increase in workload due to the current economic situation	
NI184 – Percentage of food establishments which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	This indicator is a snapshot at a certain point in time The programme of inspections in Quarter 3 saw the same number of businesses that were 'Broadly Compliant' as in quarter 2	Moneys received from the Food Standards Agency to deliver workshops and one-to-one training to businesses that are none compliant The performance trend projects this indicator to finish on target
NI196 - Improvement in street and environmental cleanliness (fly tipping)	The target of 'Grade 1 - very effective' will require additional resources for fly tipping service in the district	Current arrangements/budget will maintain a 'Grade 2 - effective' for dealing with fly tipping

Local Performance Indicators

Indicator	Reason for Shortfall	Action Plan
LC1 (ex BV076c) – Fraud Investigations	Three out of five members of the team have been on long term sick during this year and a further member of staff has just taken employment in another department	Assistance has been received from Easington BC throughout the year
LC2 (ex BV076d) – Prosecutions and Sanctions		Agency employees are now in place. Investigation and sanction numbers should improve in quarter 4
LOD10 (ex BV079a) – Accuracy of Benefit Calculations	Below last years performance at present, although quarter 3 does show an improvement on quarter 2	It is still possible to achieve the 2008/09 year end target if no errors found on last quarter
LOD6 (ex BV066a) – Percentage of rent collected	There has been a decrease in rent collected due to an increased void loss	A Performance Improvement Team has been established with the objective of reviewing and revising the void process to reduce the length of time properties are void thus

		decreasing the amount of rent lost
LOD8 (ex BV211a) - Percentage planned repairs compared to responsive repairs	Actual quarter 3 performance is 76% and shows progress towards the 2008/09 year end target of 80%. The improvement over the year is due to the Decent Homes Programme	Progress with the Decent Homes Programme in order to meet the 2008/09 year end target
LP1 (ex BV212) – Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	Since the 31st March 2008 the responsive repairs and void maintenance works has been carried out by Gentoo. There have been some embedding issues with many properties requiring extra work such as new kitchens and bathrooms to meet the lettable standard	The Responsive Repairs and Voids Manager has worked closely with Gentoo who have now supplied additional labour. A Performance Improvement Team has been established with the objective of reviewing and revising the void process to reduce the length of time properties are void
LEN1 (ex BV063) - The average SAP rating of local authority-owned dwellings, (Scale 1 - 120)	<p>The performance is dependent upon the specific energy efficiency projects outlined in the capital works programme for Dale & Valley homes along with a managed insulation programme. Successful, alternative energy projects have also added to this</p> <p>The performance of this indicator is improving and it should meet the 2008/09 year end target by the end of quarter 4</p>	
LEN3 (ex BV086) – Cost of Household Waste Collection	Higher fuel costs (approximately 33%) in quarters 1 and 2	Fuel costs have begun to decline, this is reflected in the quarter on quarter reduction in costs

2008/09 projection

13. The projections made are based on like for like indicators across quarters 1 – 3. They do not include those indicators that are collected annually at the end of quarter 4.
14. 54% of indicators are either the ‘Same’ or ‘Above’ their baselines. It is expected this proportion will increase to 75% based on the projected trend from quarter 1 to quarter 3.
15. 62% on indicators are ‘On Target’. It is expected this proportion will increase to 74% based on the projected trend from quarter 1 to quarter 3.

conclusion

16. It is clear from the current performance and the projected outturns that the realignment of priorities from BVPIs to the new national performance framework (NIs) has thus far been successful. 74% of NIs are predicted to meet or exceed their target; this is compared to 53% meeting or exceeding their target in 2007/08. Despite staffing issues relating to LGR performance, has continued to improve under the new NIs.

RECOMMENDED

- i) That Members note the content of the report.

Officer responsible for the report

Robert Hope
Acting Chief Executive

Author of the report

Dave Parkin
Performance Officer
Ext 204


NI Ref	PI description	Performance								
		Good Performance	2007/08 Year End (Baseline)	2008/09					Improved since 07/08 year end	Target
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	To Date at Quarter 3			

Communities

National Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
NI156	Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (Baseline - 2004)	↓	9	16	14	12	12	☹	15
NI191	Residual household waste per household (This indicator remains unverified until confirmed by WasteDataFlow)	↓	818	181	179	165	525	☺	733
NI192	Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting (This indicator is unverified until confirmed by WasteDataFlow)	↑	23.68%	21.58%	22.50%	23.36%	22.46%	☹	20.50%
NI193	Percentage of Municipal Waste Land Filled (This indicator remains unverified until confirmed by WasteDataFlow)	↓	77.53%	78.42%	77.50%	76.64%	77.54%	☹	79.50%
NI195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (litter)	↓	5%	N/A	5%	0%	3%	☺	4%
NI195b	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (detritus)	↓	7%	N/A	5%	2%	3%	☺	4%
NI195c	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	↓	0%	N/A	0%	0%	0%	☺	0%
NI195d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (fly posting)	↓	0%	N/A	0%	0%	0%	☺	0%
NI196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - fly tipping	↓	3	2	2	2	2	☺	1
Local Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
LEN1 (ex BV063)	The average SAP rating of local authority-owned dwellings	↑	66.2	N/A	N/A	66.8	66.8	☺	67.2
LEN3 (ex BV086)	Cost of household waste collection per household	↓	£54.46	£14.45	£14.36	£14.11	£42.93	☹	£53.73
LH1 (ex BV213)	Number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local housing authority's housing advice service(s) and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation	↑	0.64	0.33	0.46	0.56	1.35	☺	0.72








NI Ref	PI description	Performance									
		Good Performance	2007/08 Year End (Baseline)	2008/09						Improved since 07/08 year end	Target
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	To Date at Quarter 3				

Corporate Development Unit

National Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
NI014	Avoidable contact: The proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer	↓	N/A	N/A	N/A	16.6%	16.6%	-	TBC
Local Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
LOD1 (ex BV002a)	The level of equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability	↓	1	2	2	2	2		2

NI Ref	PI description	Performance								
		Good Performance	2007/08 Year End (Baseline)	2008/09					Improved since 07/08 year end	Target
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	To Date at Quarter 3			

Dale and Valley Homes

National Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
NI158	% non-decent council homes	↓	37.6%	33.7%	31.0%	24.2%	24.2%		25.2%
NI160	Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services	↑	76.00%	N/A	N/A	79.91%	79.91%		80.00%
Local Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
LOD6 (EX BV066a)	Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owed on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings.	↑	98.51%	98.91%	97.89%	96.66%	97.86%		98.90%
LOD7 (ex BV066b)	The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants	↓	2.81%	2.36%	2.45%	2.46%	2.42%		2.75%
LOD8 (ex BV211a)	The proportion of planned repairs and maintenance expenditure on HRA dwellings compared to responsive maintenance expenditure on HRA dwellings.	↑	69%	68%	74%	76%	73%		80%
LOD9 (ex BV211b)	Proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs to HRA dwellings compared to non-urgent repairs expenditure to HRA dwellings.	↓	3%	2%	1%	7%	4%		4%
LP1 (ex BV212)	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	↓	22.11	26.34	26.32	37.11	29.80		24.00

NI Ref	PI description	Performance								
		Good Performance	2007/08 Year End (Baseline)	2008/09					Improved since 07/08 year end	Target
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	To Date at Quarter 3			

Environment & Regeneration

National Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available

NI154	Net additional homes provided	↑	581	100	56	65	221	☹	270
NI155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	↑	20	6	0	0	6	☹	TBC
NI157a	Processing of planning applications - Major	↑	69.44%	75.00%	83.33%	66.67%	76.92%	☺	60%
NI157b	Processing of planning applications - Minor	↑	82.53%	69.84%	75.51%	76.92%	74.01%	☹	65%
NI157c	Processing of planning applications - Other	↑	89.95%	86.82%	89.42%	87.36%	87.81%	☹	80%
NI184	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	↑	N/A	77%	72%	72%	72%	-	75%
NI187(i)	Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low or high energy efficiency rating	↓	N/A	N/A	N/A	6%	6%	-	TBC
NI187(ii)	Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a high energy efficiency rating	↑	N/A	N/A	N/A	33%	33%	-	TBC
NI188	Planning to adapt to climate change	↑	0	0	0	2	2	☺	1

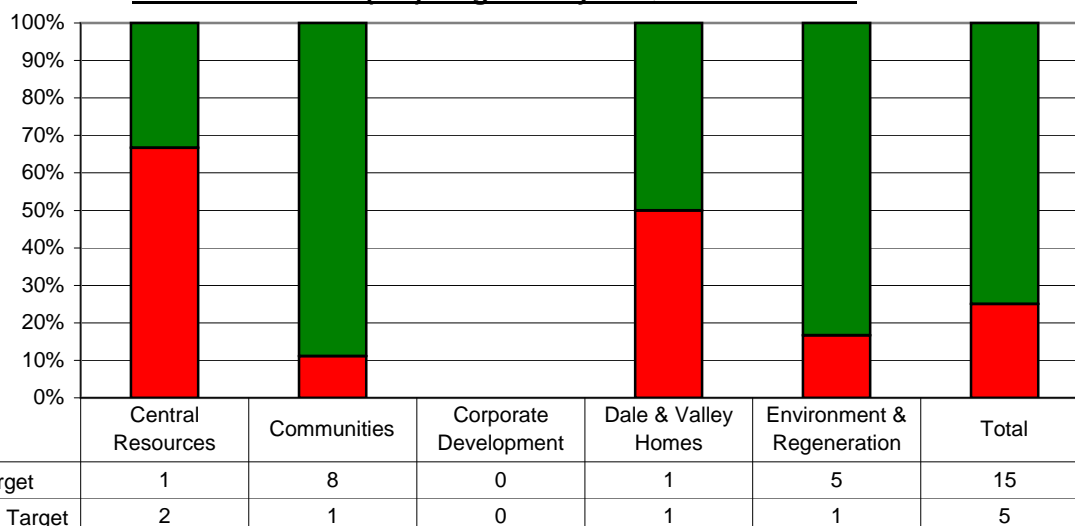
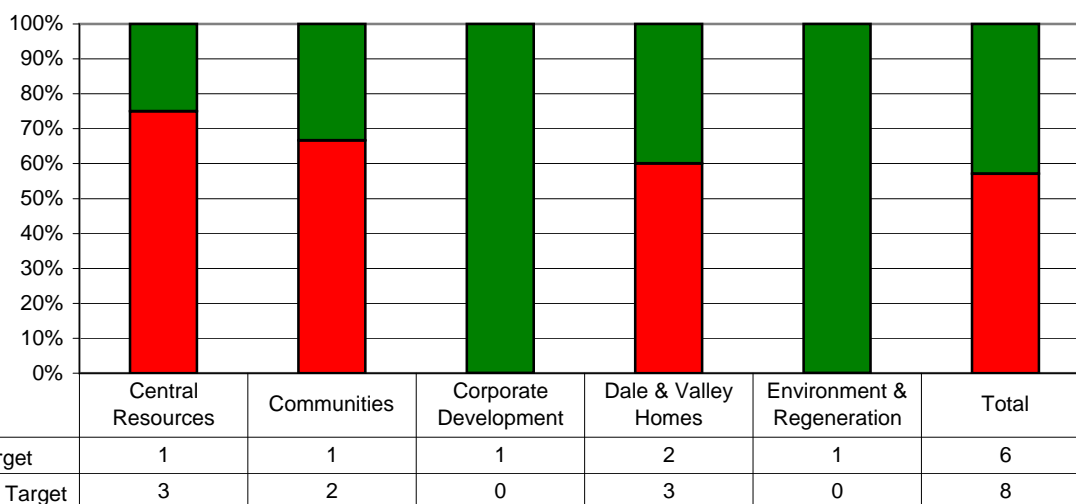
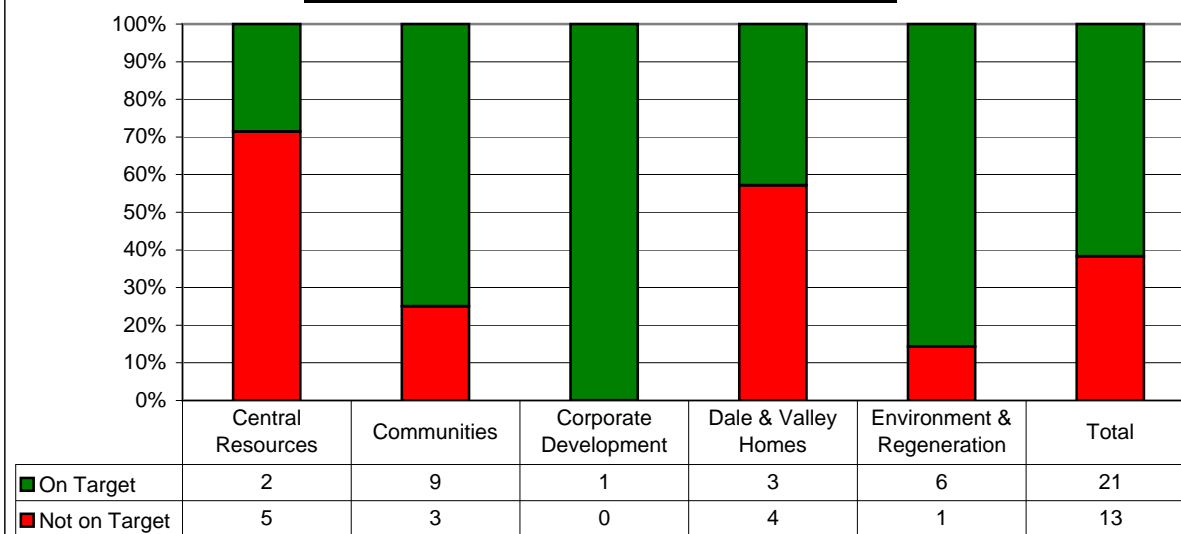
Local Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available

LP2 (ex BV106)	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.	↑	83.25%	83.00%	80.36%	87.50%	83.77%	☺	65.00%
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NI Ref	PI description	Performance							
		Good Performance	2007/08 Year End (Baseline)	2008/09					
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	To Date at Quarter 3	Improved since 07/08 year end	Target

Resources

National Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
NI179	Value for money - total net value of on-going cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008-09 financial year	↑	£413,000	N/A	£351,000	£351,000	£351,000	☹	£381,000
NI180	Changes of circumstances which affect customers' Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit entitlements within the year	↑	N/A	9.8	216.8	392.8	625.5	-	771.1
NI181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	↓	11.0	12.5	10.5	10.2	11.0	☹	10.0
Local Indicators where Quarter 3 data are available									
LC1 (ex BV076c)	The Number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) fraud investigations carried out by the local authority per 1,000 caseload	↑	77.29	11.44	13.55	10.53	35.51	☹	80
LC2 (ex BV076d)	The Number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) prosecutions and sanctions, per year, per 1,000 caseload in the Local Authority Area	↑	8.38	0.23	1.26	2.04	3.56	☹	8.5
LOD10 (ex BV079a)	The percentage of cases within a random sample for which the Authority's calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) is found to be correct.	↑	99.20%	98.67%	98.67%	98.75%	98.70%	☹	99.00%
LOD2 (Ex BV009)	the Percentage of council tax collected by the authority in the year	↑	99.44%	30.51%	29.34%	28.88%	88.98%	😊	99.30%
LOD3 (ex BV010)	Percentage of non domestic rates collected	↑	99.72%	32.60%	28.64%	27.60%	89.66%	☹	99.20%
LOD5 (ex BV156)	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for, and accessible to, disabled people	↑	42.11%	42.11%	42.11%	42.11%	42.11%	☹	42.11%

National Indicator (NIs) Target Analysis Quarter 3 2008/09**Local Performance Indicators (LPis) Target Analysis Quarter 3 2008/09****NIs and LPis Target Analysis Quarter 3 2008/09**



POLICY & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2009

Report of the Acting Chief Executive

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 – UPDATE REPORT

purpose of the report

1. To report on the Council's activities undertaken under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 over the period from April 2007 to February 2009.

background

2. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 requires that authorities who are entitled to undertake "directed surveillance" and the use of "covert human intelligence sources" (CHIS), have a formal policy for managing these activities.
3. The Council endorsed a policy and procedure for compliance with the RIPA legislation at its meeting held on 30th October 2002 (Minute No. 465 refers). A copy of the RIPA policy is available from the A/D for Legal and Administration.
4. The Council's RIPA policy requires that the RIPA Monitoring Officer present an annual report to the Management Team and the Policy and Strategic Development Committee summarising all surveillance activities undertaken by the Council. This report is designed to comply with that requirement.

surveillance activities undertaken since the previous report in April 2007 in accordance with RIPA policy

5. There have been three applications made for authority to undertake directed surveillance.
6. Details of the applications are held on file by the A/D for Legal and Administration.

7. No requests have been received for CHIS applications.

conclusion

8. The Council has undertaken activities under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 since agreeing its policy and procedures in 2002.
9. The arrangements for ensuring that the Council complies with the Act appear to be working well.
10. In accordance with the interim report responding to the Commissioners' Audit the working group will be reviewing the working procedures to comply with those actions identified. (Annex G)

- RECOMMENDED**
1. That the Committee note the activities undertaken by the Council in respect of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

background papers:

1. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
2. Policy and Strategic Development Committee Report October 2002.

Officer responsible for the report

Anna Barker
A/D Legal & Administration
Ext. 310

Author of the report

Su Barker
Administrator
Ext. 317

AUDIT IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Ref	Recommendation	Action	Officer	Date for Completion
1	The Monitoring Officer should ensure that Wear Valley District Council respond correctly to the recommendations of the Chief Surveillance Commissioner and keep up to date with developments in the relevant legislation for covert legislation.	Monitoring Officer and RIPA Policy Officer will monitor legislative and regulatory developments.	Monitoring Officer/Policy Officer	Ongoing
2	<p>The Council should re-visit recommendations 1 to 3 of the 2003 inspection</p> <p>A. Applicants for Directed Surveillance should fully describe the proportionality of the intended surveillance, assess and document any collateral intrusion and provide an action plan to minimise it.</p> <p>B. Authorising Officers should provide a comprehensive authorisation statement to include where known, the subject(s) of the surveillance, the precise location, the type of surveillance and equipment to be deployed and any parameters set.</p> <p>C. Regular reviews of Directed Surveillance authorisations should be carried out by the Authorising Officer in accordance with paragraphs 4.21 and 4.22 of the Covert Surveillance Code of Practice.</p>	<p>The procedures have been revised to stress that applicants must address proportionality, collateral intrusion, and develop an action plan before proceeding.</p> <p>Training Scheduled for Investigative Officers and Authorising Officers</p> <p>Forms to be revised to require comprehensive authorisation statement.</p> <p>Reviews will be scheduled for each authorisation.</p>	<p>Policy and Partnership Manager</p> <p>Head of Public Protection/Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Policy and Partnership Manager</p> <p>Authorising Officers</p>	<p>Done November 2007</p> <p>Done 29 November and early December</p> <p>Done 22 November</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

AUDIT IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Annex G

		The revised policy and procedures will be submitted to the Policy and Strategic Development Committee for approval.	Monitoring Officer/Policy and Partnership Manager	Ongoing
Ref	Recommendation	Action	Officer	Date for Completion
3	There should be a review of training needs and training provided for all relevant personnel	Training has been scheduled for Investigative Officers and Authorising Officers, Reduced the number of Authorising Officers in line with reduced number of Authorisation	Monitoring Officer, Head of Public Protection	Done November and early December



WEAR
VALLEY
DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2009

Report of the Chief Financial Officer

**APPLICATION FOR A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE COMMUNITY FUND FROM TOW
LAW COMMUNITY CENTRE**

purpose of the report

1. To allow Members to consider a request from Tow Law Community Centre for a donation from the Community Fund.

background

2. Tow Law Community Centre is an association which benefits the local community and is regularly used on a Monday to Friday as a drop in/call centre from 9 am – 9 pm. The Centre is equipped as a computer training suite; supports two youth clubs, SureStart, WeightWatchers, and is a base for the community nurses and the Town Clerk.

proposal

3. To comply with health and safety access requirements, structural alterations are required to the roof, internal walls and lighting to allow essential boiler servicing to be undertaken. This servicing must be undertaken to comply with health and safety regulations. Ongoing maintenance costs are met from the Community Association's own budgets.
4. The total cost of the structural alterations is £8,225. The association are seeking funding of £3,000 from the Community Fund as £5,225 has already been approved from Section 106 monies.

financial implications

5. There are sufficient monies in the Community Fund to meet this request. If all the requests included in this Committee are approved the Fund will be fully spent for the 2008/09 financial year.

conclusion

6. Members instructions are requested.

Officer responsible for the report

Alan Cooper
Chief Financial Officer
Ext 361

Author of the report

Alan Cooper
Chief Financial Officer
Ext 361



POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2009

Report of the Acting Chief Executive
COUNDON LEEHOLME POST OFFICE BUSINESS PLAN

purpose of the report

1. To present the Coundon and Leeholme Partnership's business plan to support their request to fund the work needed to relocate and re-open the post office in the Partnership's building.

background

2. The Post Office in Coundon has closed because of the ill health of the postmaster. The Coundon post office has been closed since February and the Leeholme Post Office had picked up the customers from that location.
3. At the 1 October 2008 Policy and Strategic Development Committee Meeting, the Committee approved a £25,000 grant to the Coundon and Leeholme Partnership pending the receipt of a robust, viable, and detailed business plan.

proposal

4. The Coundon and Leeholme Partnership were asked to provide a business plan outlining how they would spend the grant and sustain the new business.
5. The start up costs, which were presented with the original report are attached in Annex H.
6. The proposed business plan is attached in Annex I.

considerations

7. The service will be provided by the Partnership and they will arrange a rota of volunteers to run the post office. They have contacted the Post Office to negotiate an operating system that does not require an organisational structure based upon having a postmaster.
8. In many parts of Wear Valley, the sub-post office is an important community facility as well as a commercial business. The post office provides a vital interface between local residents and external services.

analysis

9. The Partnership has presented a business plan to meet the Committee's request for further information.
10. As mentioned in the previous report, Essex County Council (ECC) has developed a model for supporting post offices that can be used to help Members understand the business plan.
11. The ECC guidelines suggest that for this type of 'community funding' to work effectively, a number of different services will be required to be available. ECC criteria include:
 - the lack of availability of the essential services that are considered to be at risk from either the closure or non-existence of an immediate Post Office service (both Post Office products/services and retail and other services, such as access to information)

Although there are Post Office services available in Shildon and Bishop Auckland, the Coundon residents have to travel for their post services and incur. The Coundon post office will serve the community directly and will cover other areas such as Dene Valley

 - potential customer demand

The business plan contains the customer demand statistics. There appears to be sufficient customer demand based upon the volume of traffic in the closed post offices. Moreover, the Partnership has surveyed its community and business to ascertain customer demand.

 - supporting the needs of vulnerable groups

The Partnership supports a number of elderly and vulnerable people who will rely on this service.

 - availability of premises/Retailer-Partner and associated business plan

The Partnership has a premises and it is waiting for the Council's funding.
12. Members will note that the ECC's criteria require a business plan, an awareness of what vulnerable groups are affected, and a lack of services provided elsewhere. The Coundon and Leeholme business plan meets these criteria and demonstrates an awareness of the vulnerable groups that are affected and the services that are provided elsewhere.

financial implications

13. The request is for £25000 as a one off payment to support start up costs, purchase necessary equipment, and modify the existing structure.
14. The partnership states that the previous Post Office in Coundon generated £22, 675 per annum and they believe this amount will be generated by the reopened Post Office. The attached spreadsheet shows the predicted cashflow from the post office. (Seen Annex J)

value for money

15. The post office may provide services to the vulnerable and the elderly and will support a local community centre in providing additional services to an area which has a need for local service provision. In effect, the £25000 will allow the Community Centre to meet the needs of its communities and undertake a business that generated £22,675 per annum.

option appraisal.

16. The Council spends £25,000 for this post office. The upside is that service is provided to some elderly and vulnerable groups. A service point is created in Coundon and an important community resource is returned to the Coundon area. At the same time a viable business is reopened in Coundon.

conclusion

17. Coundon and Leeholme want to move the post office that was closed due to ill health into their partnership office. They want the Council to commit £25000 to them for initial start up costs and to purchase equipment required by the Post Office. The Partnership has presented a business case to support their request.
18. The business case as presented suggests that the Partnership is aware of its customers, the current market for its services, and it has a staffing structure to support the work required.
19. The business plan appears to present the post office is a viable business, supports a significant number of elderly and vulnerable people, and does not draw business from other post offices so it could be considered more favourably.

RECOMMENDED

1. That Members approve the request for £25,000 to the Coundon and Leeholme Partnership based upon the attached business plan.

Officer responsible for the report

Robert M. Hope
Chief Executive
Ext 306

Author of the report

Dr. Lawrence Serewicz
Policy and Partnership Manager
Ext. 311

Coundon Post Office - Start up costs

Expenditure Details	PO	CLCP
Alarm System		2400.00
PO Safe (1)		1783.00
Horizon System (2)		1600
Electrical Works-		2450.00
Telephone Line		106.37
Security Works		1800.00
Fortress screens (2)		6350.00
pedestals (2)		1300.00
Scales	electronic	610.18
Planning		335.00
Date Stamps (2)		122.20
CCTV		800.00
Signage external		750.00
Display Equipment		600.00
Licence Fee		6660.85
Computers		1500.00
Costs	0.00	29167.60
VAT		5104.33
Total Costs	0.00	34271.93
 Summary:		
Total Start up costs		£29,167.60
Post Office Contrib		£1,273.00
CLCP Contrib		£3,250.00
 Total Funds Required		 £24,644.50
VAT		£4,312.79

See attached document

Annex B

See attached spreadsheet



Business Plan

for

Coundon Post office

Dated: 20th February 2009

Created by: Avril Hamilton

**Support by: Anne-Marie Beardsley
The Enterprise Agency**

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INTRODUCTION

This business plan outlines the Coundon & Leeholme Community Partnership's (CLCP) plans to set up a sub post office in its premises situated at 13 Tees Walk, Coundon in the Wear Valley District. It proposes that a capital investment of £28,957 is required to successfully launch this service to the community.

Overview of Coundon & Leeholme Community Partnership

CLCP was established in 1999 to tackle the levels of deprivation in the neighbouring rural villages of Coundon and Leeholme. The villages were categorised within the IMD as being the 5th most deprived wards in County Durham and in the top 5% of the most deprived wards nationally.

In 2001 Coundon and Leeholme was awarded Settlement Renewal Initiative (SRI) status. This status enabled a number of key regeneration projects to be initiated and the regeneration of the villages to be kick started. In August 2004 the Partnership registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

The prime objects of the Partnership are to sustain regeneration activity in the villages and environs through economic, social and environmental fabric renewal and to educate its residents through the provision of training and education, including training skills relevant to securing employment.

The Partnership is driven by a philosophy of inclusion and continuous regeneration. It drives the local agenda by bringing together those with a vested interest in building a successful neighbourhood for its residents and for future generations. It is therefore geared to listening to the needs of the community, its businesses and voluntary organisations.

Following a recent refurbishment programme, the premises at Tees Walk provides a high quality fully accessible community facility which offers a wide range of services and activities to meet the needs and aspirations of local people. Access to community transport, accredited training courses, debt advice, enterprise coaching, community kitchen and UK On line centre, meeting and seminar space to name but a few.

The goals of the Partnership are to increase the level and breadth of services currently provided in the area and to tackle the causes of deprivation

Introduction to the proposed project – sub Post office

This business plan focuses on the setting up of a sub post office within the CLCP center based at 13 Tees Walk, Coundon.

The Coundon sub post office closed in February 2008 due to the owner's wish to retire. It should be pointed out that the Coundon Post Office was not and is not part of the Post Office Network Change Programme.

The closure of the Post Office left a gap in Coundon of a vital service which had formally provided both a social and economical service to the community of the area. The gap was significantly widened by the Network Change Programme which subsequently closed the Leeholme post office which was the nearest sub post office to Coundon.

Residents had expressed concerns about the post office's closure and requested that CLCP explore the possibility of re-opening a post office in the village. To ascertain the amount of support for the re-opening of the post office a community survey was commissioned. (see Market Research analysis).

The survey clearly demonstrated that the closure of Coundon post office had had a considerable negative impact on the community and local businesses. The partnership consider that re-opening the post office will alleviate the negative impact on residents, lead to job creation, provide a social focus for the community, and improve community access and participation in the core activities of the community centre.

The process of negotiating the opening of the post office and gathering essential information to complete the business plan has proved long and difficult in a climate of rapid change within Post Office Ltd. As it is some time since the original Post Office provision closed, Post Office Ltd has changed the status of the proposed office to reflect this. Therefore, the post office will operate on a part time basis (19 hours per week).

Post Office Ltd fully support CLCP's plan to set up the sub post office in the Centre at Tees Walk Coundon.

Vision of the Project

- To contribute to CLCP vision to create a vibrant and sustainable community
- To give back to the community a valuable resource namely it's own Post Office
- To create employment
- To relieve poverty & social exclusion

- To support local businesses

Social Impact

- Vulnerable members of the community will have local access to basic post office services
- Restore a level of independence to residents who have to rely on the goodwill of others to access services at other post offices.
- Reduce the risk of attack for those supporting the less mobile residents by collecting several pensions at once from Bishop Auckland post office.
- Saving of time and expense for residents and local businesses

Environmental Impact

To lessen our environmental footprint we will take the following actions;

- Always use low energy light bulbs
- Re-cycle paper, plastic and appropriate wastage from the project
- Actively promote energy saving and re-cycling projects

Keys to success

Through the survey we have clearly identified this community's need and support for a post office facility based within the CLCP centre at 13 Tees Walk Coundon.

We believe that our keys to success include:-

- a long standing reputation locally for providing high quality, customer focused facilities and services
- the success of other services aimed at the local community and businesses
- staff who are all appropriately trained and committed to providing a high quality service to the community
- a management committee dedicated to realising its vision of creating a vibrant and sustainable community.
- The support of the community and local businesses

Highlights

The Partnership brings together residents of the villages, with representatives of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, which either work within or provide services within the area. This approach brings together a vast range of skills and expertise in such fields as project development, business acumen, financial savvy and knowledge of employment law and personnel management. It also creates the potential to tap into the wider resources of the partner organisations.

The management and staff have worked together for a number of years and have a diverse range of skills and expertise relevant to supporting short and long term projects and enterprises.

The Organisation

Legal Structure

Coundon & Leeholme Community Partnership (CLCP) was registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in August 2004.

The Company is established on a 'not for profit' basis which means that the income and property of the Company is applied solely towards the promotion of its objects. The post office will be part of the portfolio of products run by the partnership.

Organisational Structure

The structure of the organisation deliberately sets out to ensure the appropriate level of accountability. The Membership is made up of local residents, businesses, statutory and voluntary organisations, membership is defined as:-

1. Individuals who live or work in the areas of benefit and subscribe to the Company's object are full members.
2. Any body, corporate or incorporate which shares the objects of the Company will have Partner Membership without voting rights
3. Individuals under the age of 18 years and living in the area of benefit will be Youth Members without voting rights.

.The membership meet bi-monthly to receive reports from the Management Committee and staff in relation to finance, project development and funding, health and safety, training, community news etc. Members are invited to contribute to the formation of policies, direction, strategic and operational planning of the organization.

Management Committee/Directors

The Management Committee (Directors) is responsible, on behalf of its Members for managing the organisation and ensuring that the Company trades within its objectives. The Committee reports to the full membership

The Management Committee currently consists of six local residents who bring a diverse range of knowledge and skills to the organisation. The Management Committee has the flexibility of meeting when required but not less than bi-monthly prior to the full partnership meeting. All members of the Management Committee are volunteers.

Management Team

The Partnership Manager has been with the organisation since the inception of the SRI programme in 2002, guiding it through its various stages of development and success. The Manager who previously had fourteen years in the field of Co-operative business development and training is responsible for all aspects of day to day operations including finance and budget control, line management of all other personnel, the day to day management of the building, the development and delivery of new services, the development and implementation of policies and procedures. The Manager accountable to the Management Committee and required to produce regular reports and updates on all aspects of the Partnership's operation. Directors with the appropriate skills and knowledge provide mentoring and support in areas such as personnel, employment law and Health & Safety.

Management Team Gaps

Health and Safety consultant has been commissioned to provide advice, training and guidance. An accountant is commissioned to prepare Annual Accounts. Durham Constabulary provide advice on prevention of crime. The Partnership's policy is to develop the skills of members, management, staff and volunteers whenever appropriate for the success of the organisation. The Manager and admin staff will receive specific training from Post Office Ltd, the Treasurer will also sit in on the training to assist her role in carrying out a monthly check on PO accounts. Additional expertise will be **identified** as and when required.

Staffing General

The Manager is supported by:-

- 2 part time administrators
- 1 part time PO counter assistant
- 1 relief PO counter assistant
- 2 part time driver (community transport)
- 3 casual drivers “ “
- 1 volunteer driver “ “
- 1 part time cleaner

Staffing the Post Office.

It is traditional with the setting up of sub post offices that the 'license holder' is an individual who takes on the role of 'postmaster/postmistress' and shoulders all responsibility for any fraud or misdemeanor which may occur. The remuneration from Post Office Ltd for a part time post office service operating in band 7 (14-19hrs per week) plus a small amount of sales from other products will not be sufficient for the Partnership to offer a salary which will attract an individual willing to take full responsibility. It has been necessary to develop a strategy to devolve the overall responsibility for the Post Office to the Management Committee whilst still complying with the Post Office regulations and reducing the risk of fraud.

Existing administrative staff have long established their commitment and trustworthiness, therefore, they will be employed to cover the 'face to face' operation of the Post Office and provide cover in the case of holiday/sickness relief. Post Office staff will be accountable to the Partnership Manager.

The Manager will support the Post Office staff in checking and recording daily Post Office takings to minimize errors or opportunity for fraud. The Treasurer will carry out an independent monthly check of cash records. In the unlikely event of error or fraud the Management Committee will carry out an independent investigation and underwrite any discrepancy which may occur.

The Manager, counter staff and the Treasurer will receive training from Post Office Ltd.

Operations

CLCP has put all the necessary policies and procedures in place to cover all aspects of its operation. Policies and procedures are reviewed on an annual basis, whilst retaining the flexibility to develop new policies and procedures as and when required to accommodate new ventures.

Policies and Procedures

The organisation has all the relevant policies and procedures in place. All staff have contracts of Employment outlining terms and conditions. All staff and volunteers have open access to all policy documents. Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated on a regular basis:-

Terms & Conditions of Employment
Recruitment & Selection Policy
Induction Procedure
Lone Working Policy

Young Workers Policy
Disciplinary Procedure
Grievance Procedure
Stress Management Policy
Drugs & Alcohol Policy
HIV/Aids
Violence Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Disability Discrimination Policy
Health & Safety
Fire & Evacuation Procedure
Asbestos Management
Complaints Procedure
Hire Policy
Drivers Handbook
Child Protection Policy
ICT Policy

Monitoring and Evaluation

All CLCP projects and services are monitored and the data collated is evaluated against preset criteria. The organisation is experienced in providing regular reports to a diverse range of organisations and funding bodies including One North East, ERDF, NRF & Single Programme, Additional data is collected to assist internal evaluation of projects and services. Customer surveys are carried out to highlight any problems and determine new trends.

CLCP will adhere to specific Post Office Monitoring and evaluation criteria. In addition Post Office takings will be monitored on a daily and monthly basis.

Quality

The organisation expects to implement Investors In People in the next twelve months

Products (Goods & Services)

Portfolio of Products

Initially the post office will offer the following goods and services

- ✚ Stamps and parcel post and letters
- ✚ Bill payments
- ✚ Postal Orders
- ✚ Pension and benefit payments
- ✚ Phone top-ups
- ✚ Personal banking
- ✚ Insurance
- ✚ Foreign currency (pre-ordered)

As well as the above services the outlet will also offer a range of goods and services including the following:

- ✚ Confectionary
- ✚ Dry cleaning (drop off)
- ✚ Greeting cards
- ✚ Stationery

Future Products

It is important that the community is consulted on what further goods and services they require before introducing new lines. Therefore it will be the policy of the organisation to have a consultation period before expanding into new lines. Ian Carlton (PO Field Change Advisor) has advised that Post Office Ltd will be sympathetic to reopening the Post Office in the centre, he has also given guidance help and advice on remuneration, payments, potential products which can be offered and advice on how to complete the Post Office business plan. At this point it appears that Post Office Ltd will view our application favourably should we apply for a license.

The Market

Trends in the Market

Present market trends have shown that a large majority of small post offices are under threat of closure or have been recently closed. This is due to lack of customers and non viability. The most successful post offices do offer a wide range of products and services including passport checks, car tax and currency. They also have a thriving retail side to the business which compensates for any fall in post office related business.

Trends also show that rural post offices can be run successfully if they are integrated into an existing facility within the community. In essence these new hybrid post offices offer a reduced service in terms of availability but at least they are still available to the community.

Competitors

After market research we have identified following competitors

Competitor	Strength	Weakness	Market position
Sainsbury's, based at Coundon	Local branch based in Coundon Sell a wide range of confectionary Sell greetings cards Have an ATM machine Open until 11.00 pm Sell stationery and postage stamps	Greetings cards are expensive Do not offer a parcel service Do not offer a cash/banking service Do not offer benefit payments	Mid market
Jazz's based at Leeholme	Locally based Is a Costcutter brand Sells a wide variety of goods including tools and DIY Sells greeting cards and stationery Sells postage stamps	Situated 1 mile away from Coundon Visually looks very cluttered Can be expensive Is known as an established business in the area	Low market
Post Office Ltd	Nationally known brand Has an Internet presence which sells postage franking	Mass closure of small outlets	All markets
Bishop Auckland post office	Main branch post office Has a passport check, car tax and foreign currency service	It is situated 6 miles from Coundon. Queues are often long Has four positions yet usually only operates two positions	All markets

Market Growth

We recognise that there is only a small opportunity for grow within this business. We will endeavor to market and promote all services and products but realistically we expect no more that a 20% growth across the product range within our first year of trading

Market Needs

Through market research we have identified that EBay sellers would use our services on a regular basis if we provided a specialist fast track parcel service.

(Appendix 1 – community survey)

Promotion

- Internet – CLCP is having a website designed for Coundon & Leeholme Community Centre, this will promote the post office as well as other services on offer
- Word of mouth referrals and personal recommendations
- Leaflets
- Brochure
- Bar mats
- Key rings
- Goody bags
- Pens
- Giant paper clips
- Mouse mats
- Special offers for EBay sellers
- Open Day event
- Free features
- Television

Customers

We perceive that we will have three main core customers, they are as follows:-

Local businesses – after carrying out a telephone consultation with a range of local businesses) Seven businesses informed us that they would do all of their business banking with us. Other businesses said that they would use us for a range of services and products including postage and money changing

(Appendix 2 - business survey)

General public – would use us for a range of all of our products and services
(Appendix 1 – Community Survey)

EBay sellers – we will attract local sellers by offering a fast track parcel service

Financials

This section of the business plan sets out to demonstrate that although the Post Office will realistically have limited scope for growth it will be financially viable.

Pricing Strategy

CLCP will have no control over the pricing of Post Office products and services. It is important that additional products such as sweets, stationary and greetings cards are reasonable quality at an affordable price. Regular review of the range of additional products will take place to ensure financial viability is achieved.

Financing/Funding Strategy

CLCP will invest £2600 towards the initial start up costs. The partnership has applied for and acquired agreement in principle for £28957.41 from Wear Valley District Council to cover initial capital costs. CLCP will provide long term support to the project in terms management and accommodation costs. Advertising and promotion will be minimal as these will be incorporated into the general advertising and promotion of the organization.

Projected Cash Flow

NB: Please see electronic attachment

Profit and Loss

NB: Please see electronic attachment

Financial Assumptions

The financial assumptions made are as follows:-

- Wear Valley District Council will approve Capital Grant
- the customers identified in our survey will use the service
- sales will yield an average 30% mark up
- in 8 months PO remuneration will increase by 20%
- sales will follow a seasonal trend

Notes to Finance

Post Office Ltd has set its remuneration level at Band 7 for an office operating 19 hours per week. However, there is the potential to increase that income by 20% in the first year as the service attracts the return of customers to the Coundon Post Office.

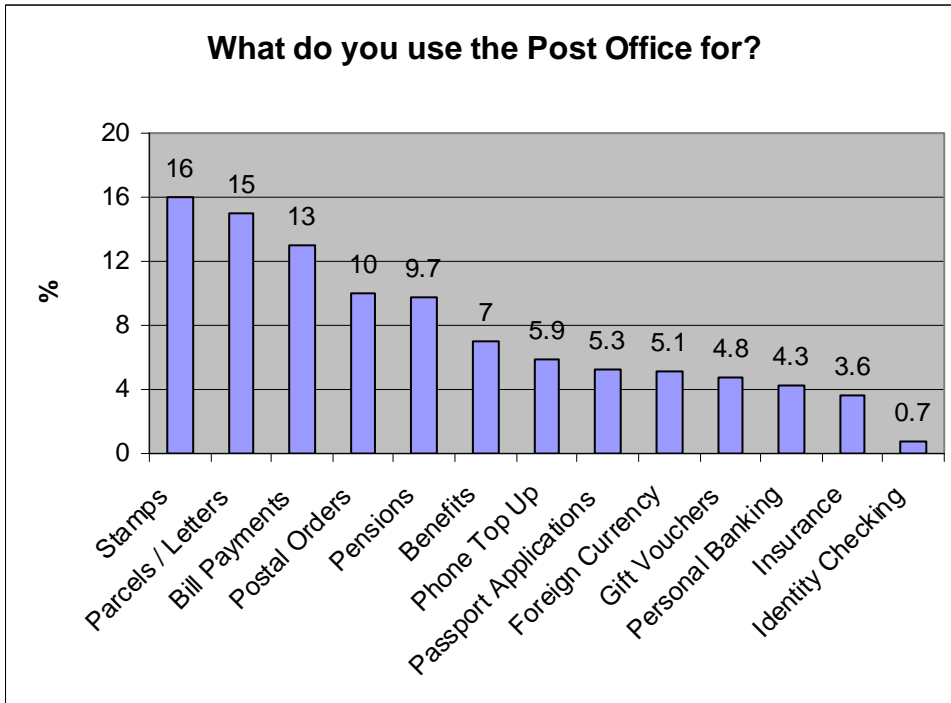
A realistic approach has been taken in projecting the income and expenditure for the Post Office project. The project has to be put into perspective with regard to its potential to generate income, the scope for growth is limited in real business terms but it is necessary to understand that the most important factor is that the project is viable enough to at least break even.

Telephone costs and insurance of cash stock is the responsibility of Post Office Ltd. The premises at 13 Tees Walk are being transferred to the ownership of the Partnership and CLCP is in receipt of Discretionary rate relief. Promotion and advertising will be incorporated into the organisation's overall promotions budget.

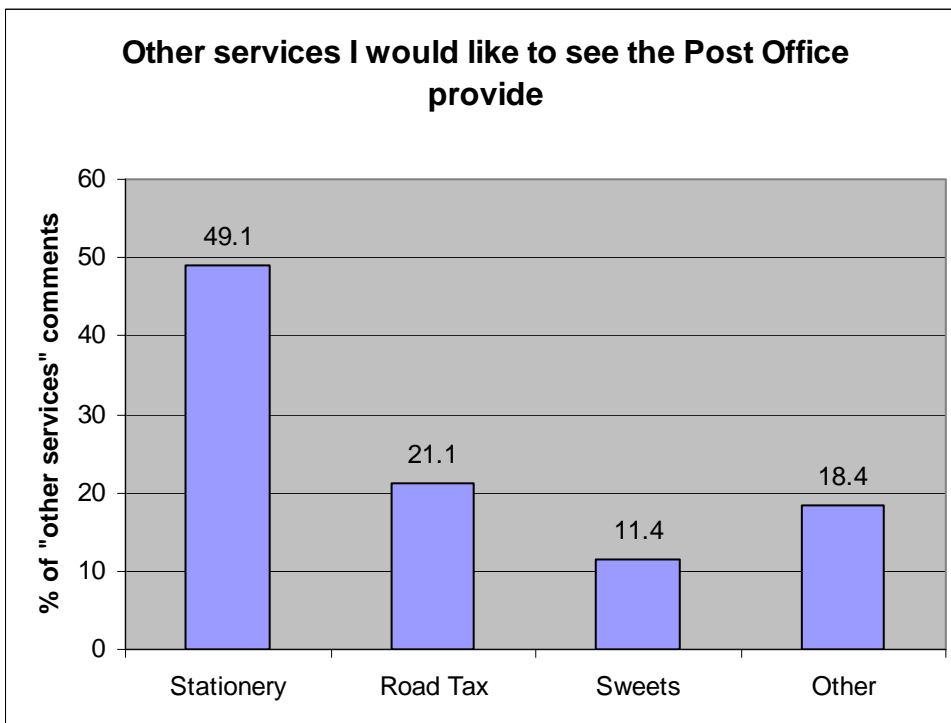
Appendix 1

244 questionnaires analysed

97.5% respondents would use a Post Office in the Tees Walk Centre in Coundon



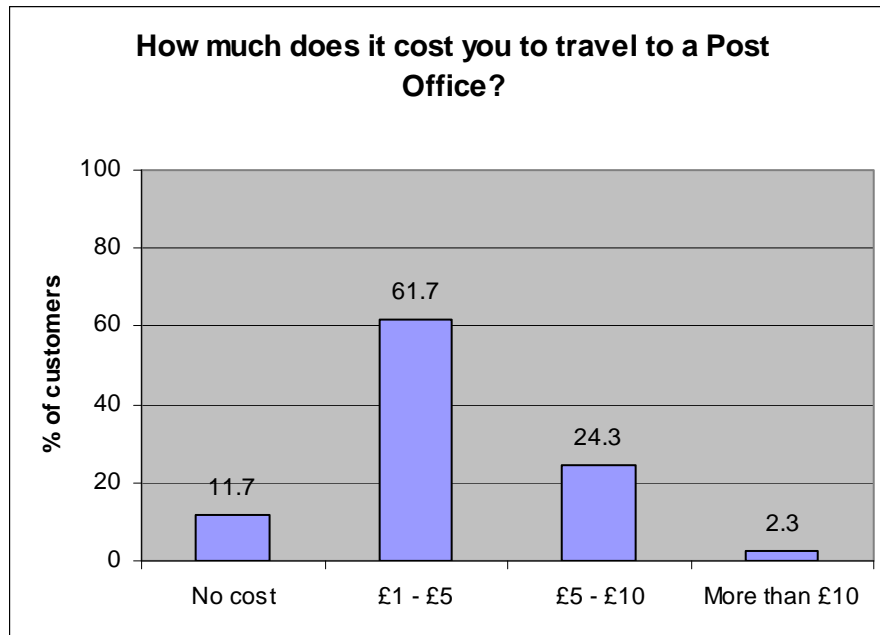
Total questions answered about the Post Office = 1264 (questionnaire)



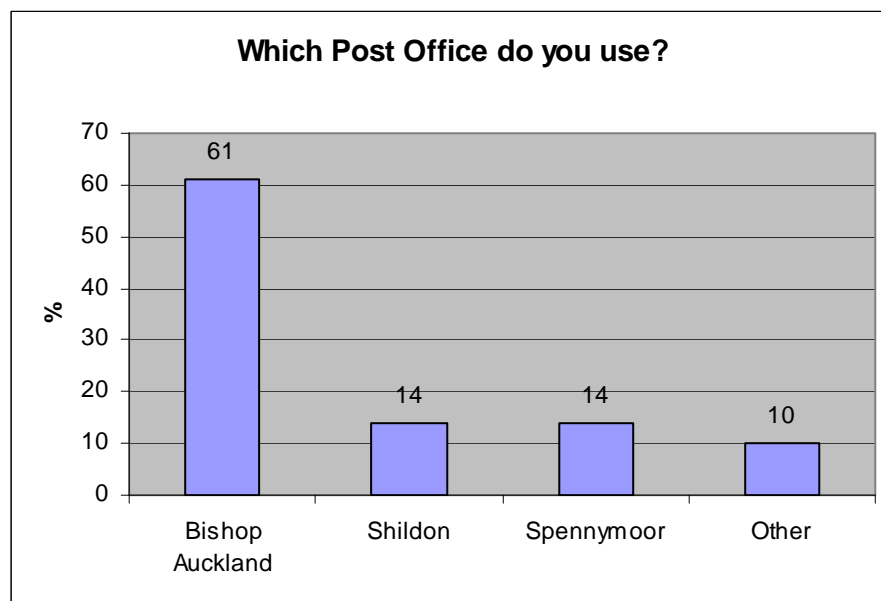
Total responses = 114

“Stationery” includes greetings cards, magazines, books.

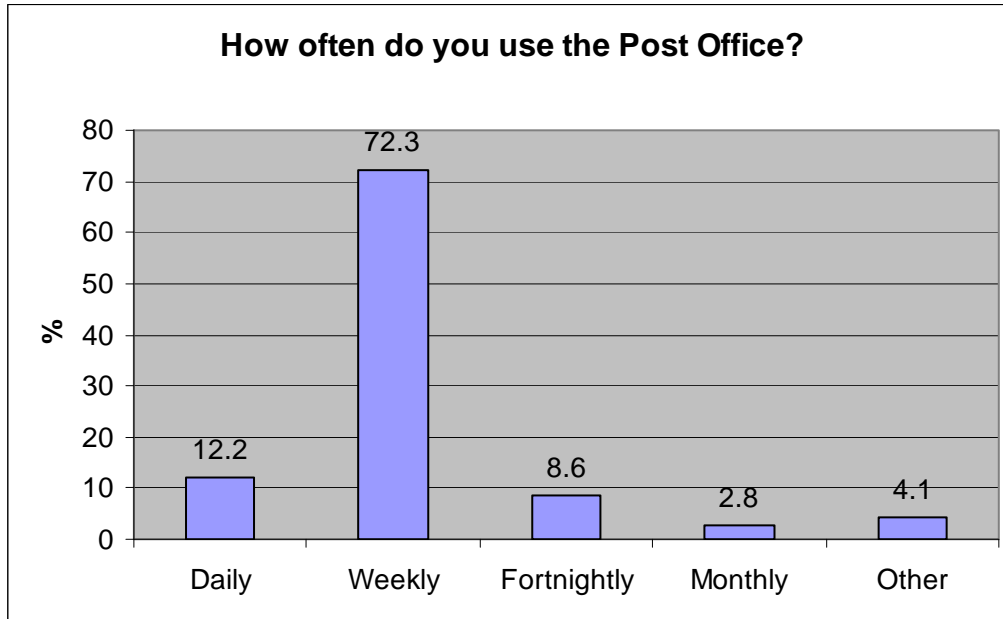
“Other” = groceries. TV licence, savings stamps, gifts, lottery, local information



Total responses = 230



Total responses = 288



Total responses = 258

Community Survey for the proposed re-opening of the Coundon and Leeholme Post Office

A community survey took place on Wednesday the 3rd of December 2008 at Coundon and Leeholme Community Centre. The survey was undertaken by using a set questionnaire to ascertain the present interest of the community in the potential re-opening of the local Coundon based Post Office.

The survey was organised to coincide with the open day of the centre, further questionnaires were completed on the day of the Christmas Fayre and by community based groups over a three to four week period.

It has been estimated that the total amount of people who live in the catchment area of the proposed post office is approximately 2400. This figure has been based on the population of Coundon and surrounding areas. The total amount of questionnaires completed was 244 which are 10% of the local community.

The results of the survey are as follows:

- ✚ 97.5% stated that they would use a post office in the Tees Walk Centre in Coundon
- ✚ When asked why they would use the post office those questioned said that they used it for the following: 16% stamps, 15% parcels and letters, 13% bill payments, 10% postal orders, 9.7% pensions, 7% benefit payments, 5.9% phone top ups, 5.3% passport applications, 5.1% foreign currency, 4.8% gift vouchers, 4.3% personal banking, 3.6% insurance, 0.7% identity checking.
- ✚ The services that the community wanted to see in the post office were;
 - 49.1% - Stationery
 - 21.1% - Road Tax
 - 11.4% - Confectionery
 - 18.4% - Other
- ✚ When asked how often they would use the post office, 72.3% said weekly, 12.2% said daily, 8.6% fortnightly, 2.8% monthly and 4.1% other
- ✚ 61% are presently using Bishop Auckland post office, 14% Shildon post office, 14% Spennymoor post office and 10% other
- ✚ The cost of visiting a post office varied dramatically with 2.3% stating that it cost more than £10 to travel to a post office, 61% between £1.00 - £5.00, 24.3% £5.00 -£10.00 and 11.7% no cost at all

Conclusion

The results of this survey show that those questioned are overwhelmingly in favour of the re-opening of the post office at Coundon. The majority of people, 61%, have to travel to Bishop Auckland to use a post office; apart from the inconvenience there is generally a financial cost for travel, this is especially significant to the residents of an area that has been designated as an area of deprivation. The survey also highlighted that 72.3% of people questioned used the post office on a weekly basis and would therefore benefit both from a convenience and financial basis if the post office re-opened.

When asked 'What do you use a post office for?' respondents provided an eclectic list of 13 separate products and services that they presently use/purchase from their local post office. This information will be of especial importance for marketing purposes.

Appendix 2

Businesses In Coundon & Leeholme

Business	Would use Post Office	Telephone No.	Would use Post Office for
DAF Timber	Yes	450582	Banking and Stamps
Motor Tek	Yes	603603	Road Tax, Stamps
Waltons Windows	Yes	602184	Business banking
Crusty Loaf	Yes	602075	Business banking
St Joseph's RCVA School	Yes	602608	Banking Dinner money
Sophisticut	No	607309	Uses Shildon
Decorators	Yes	608144	Stamps only not business
Kurlisees	No	459449	
Chemist	Yes	603447	Monthly Prescriptions
CN Transport	Yes	664500	Definitely use for business banking
LPC	Yes	608270	Business, stationary and stamps
JSB Travel	No Response	458099	No Repsonse
Kembles	Yes	450909	Business Recorded Police Delivery
Park Head Hotel	Yes	661727	Business Banking
Durham Ox	Yes	604033	Stamps, stationary, etc
Miners Arms		606341	
Three Tunns	No Response	604453	No Response
Coundon Club	Yes		Uses Spennymoor at the moment
Conservative Club	No	603107	
Leeholme Club	Yes	604473	Stamps, mailing, change, etc
The Top House	No Response	601705	No Response
Coral Bookmakers	Yes		Business Banking
Thompson Floor Screeding	Yes	07985 591550	Business, stamps, mailing etc.
Hercules Security	Yes	458794	Stamps, mailing. Stationary etc.
Aztec Stone & Reclamations	Yes	664446	Business Banking, stationary etc.

PROJECTED CASH FLOW		BUSINESS NAME: Coundon Sub Post Office						
Not VAT registered		YEAR ENDED: Apr-10						
	Pre-start	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MONTH		MAY	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
INCOME								
sales		100.00	120.00	120.00	150.00	150.00	170.00	240.00
PO Renumeration		525.00	525.00	525.00	525.00	525.00	525.00	525.00
Start-up Grant	28957.00							
start-up cost - own investment	2100.00							
Other income	500.00							
A. TOTAL INCOME	31557.00	625.00	645.00	645.00	675.00	675.00	695.00	765.00
EXPENDITURE								
Materials cash								
Materials credit		70.00	84.00	84.00	105.00	105.00	105.00	168.00
Rent and rates								
Heat, Light and Power		10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Wages and PAYE		519.00	519.00	519.00	765.00	519.00	519.00	519.00
Bank charges/interest								
Insurance		12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Vehicle expense (Fuel etc.)								
Travel (Fares, hotels)								
Postage and carriage		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Printing and stationery		10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Professional Fees								
Repairs and renewals								
Telephone								
Advertising								
Leasing charges								
Hire purchase charges								
Loan repayments								
Capital Expenditure - Assets	31057.00							
Personal Drawings								
Self employed NI								
Other								
B. TOTAL EXPENDITURE	31057.00	626.00	640.00	640.00	907.00	661.00	661.00	724.00
NET CASH FLOW (A - B)	500.00	-1.00	5.00	5.00	-232.00	14.00	34.00	41.00
BALANCE B/F		500.00	499.00	504.00	509.00	277.00	291.00	325.00
CLOSING BALANCE	500.00	499.00	504.00	509.00	277.00	291.00	325.00	366.00

8	9	10	11	12	Totals
Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	
240.00	100.00	100.00	150.00	150.00	1790.00
525.00	630.00	630.00	630.00	630.00	6720.00
					28957.00
					2100.00
					500.00
765.00	730.00	730.00	780.00	780.00	40067.00
168.00	70.00	70.00	105.00	105.00	1239.00
10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	120.00
519.00	519.00	519.00	765.00	519.00	6720.00
12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	144.00
5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	60.00
10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	120.00
					31057.00
724.00	626.00	626.00	907.00	661.00	39460.00
41.00	104.00	104.00	-127.00	119.00	
366.00	407.00	511.00	615.00	488.00	607.00
407.00	511.00	615.00	488.00	607.00	

PROJECTED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

NAME	Coundon Sub Post Office
YEAR ENDED	Apr-10

Cost of Sales	1239.00	Sales	1790.00
Gross Profit	551.00		
Total	1790.00	Total	1790.00

Rent and rates		Gross Profit	551.00
Heat, Light and Power	120.00	Other Receipts	2600.00
Wages and salaries gross	6720.00		28957.00
Bank charges/interest			
Insurance	144.00		
Vehicle expense (Fuel etc.)			
Travel (Fares, hotels)			
Postage and carriage	60.00		
Printing and stationery	120.00		
Professional Fees			
Repairs and renewals			
Telephone			
Advertising			
Leasing charges			
Hire purchase interest			
Depreciation on assets	7764.25		
Loan interest			
Total	14928.25		
Net Profit	17179.75		
Total	32108.00	Total	32108.00



WEAR
VALLEY
DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 March 2009

Report of the Chief Financial Officer
APPLICATION FOR USE OF SECTION 106 MONIES

purpose of the report

1. To consider the award of section 106 monies to Howden-le-Wear Community Partnership Group based in Howden-le-Wear for the purchase, improvement and upkeep of Jubilee Park.

background

2. The Council approved a protocol in August 2007 to administer requests for the application of funds received from section 106 agreements. Section 106 funds are received by developers under a legal agreement as part of the planning process.
3. There are specific conditions attached to the use of these funds in the legal agreement between the developer and the Council. These usually stipulate that the funds only be used for certain purposes and for the benefits of residents within the vicinity of the development.

details of application

4. Howden-le-Wear Community Partnership Group has applied to become legal owners of Jubilee Park with further improvements planned to be delivered via Groundwork West Durham and Darlington. A Total of £66,968 has been requested, this comprises of £40,000 to become the legal owners of the park; £21,000 for the planned improvements to the park; and £5,968 for the general upkeep and sustainability of the park.
5. There is presently £66,968 available in section 106 monies for the Howden-le-Wear ward. It is considered this is an appropriate use of the section 106 fund.

financial implications

6. The award sought is £66,968. This would be funded from section 106 monies held by the Council for use within the Howden-le-Wear ward. There would be no additional direct revenue costs borne by the Council as a result of this award.

legal implications

7. The Group is not yet a formally constituted Association and therefore the Council would not be in a position to hand over monies until it is either a formally constituted Association with powers to hold land or has the requisite legal personality to do so. The recommendation has therefore been made subject to this fundamental issue.
8. For information Members should be aware that the Council is, through the offices of the District Valuer, currently negotiating a purchase price for the freehold of the land in order to facilitate the Partnership's aspirations.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Members note the information set out in paragraph 14; and
2. Members approve, in principle, the award of £66,968 to Howden-le-Wear Community Partnership Group for the purposes detailed in the report but subject to the Partnership being formally constituted with appropriate land holding powers or establishing the necessary legal personality.

Officer responsible for the report

Alan Cooper
Chief Financial Officer
Ext 361

Authors of the report

Alan Cooper
Chief Financial Officer
Ext 361



POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2008

Report of the Strategic Director for the Community
EXTENSION OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

purpose of the report

- 1 To request Committee's approval to extend the current Grounds Maintenance contract from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

background

- 2 Committee will be aware that the current grounds maintenance contract is delivered by Sones Landscaping Limited. Sones have been successfully undertaken the service since early 1990 following compulsory competitive tendering.
- 3 The current arrangement is built on a partnership arrangement that has been nationally recognised by both APSE (the Association of Public Sector Excellence) and the Audit Commission.
- 4 This arrangement was extended by one year by Community Services Committee in January 2008, to expire on 31 March 2009. This was to enable a new contract to be drawn up for start on 1 April 2009. This decision has now been effected by the result of the local government review.

opportunities

- 5 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Secretary of State may require the Council to seek written consent on non capital contracts over the value of £100,000. The current contract is worth approximately £870,000 per year and, as such, it is necessary to consult with the new Durham County Council in respect of this contract.
- 6 The new authority commences on 1 April 2009 and it will be tasked with reviewing all services delivered across the new County area. In order that this review can be carried out during 2009/10, it will be necessary for this Council to extend the current arrangement with Sones Landscaping Limited for one year.

proposals

- 7 It is proposed that to enable the new authority to establish countywide arrangements, a contract with Sones Landscaping Limited be approved, with any new contractual arrangements ending on 1 April 2010.
- 8 The County Council is supportive of the proposal that this Council extend the current arrangements with Sones Landscaping Limited for one year.
- 9 The contract extension will then be managed and overseen by the new County Council. This will enable the Council to establish common standards of quality, cost and performance across all previous district council areas.

legal implications

- 10 The value of the proposed extension exceeds the European Union procurement threshold of £144,371 over which it is recommended that the service is subject to competition. However, the new authority will review this service and other contracts during the next financial year to ensure both compliance with contract and value for money requirements.

human resource implications

- 11 The proposed extension can be delivered within existing resources.

financial implications

- 12 The forthcoming year's budget for grounds maintenance is based on the current costs of the Sones Landscaping contract. The value of this contract is estimated at £870,000 for the financial year 2008/09.
- 13 Sones Landscaping Limited also currently undertake similar works within the Derwentside District Council area. Sones recognise efficiency savings can be generated by a single client approach. In addition, further savings will be achieved by sharing facilities, resources and the like. These savings will form part of the overall efficiency savings anticipated to be achieved by the new authority.

other implications

- 14 There are no other equality and diversity, IT, crime and disorder implications arising out of this report.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 That committee approve the proposed extension of the current Grounds Maintenance Contract between Wear Valley District Council and Sones Landscaping Limited until 31 March 2010.

Officer responsible for the report

David Milburn

Acting Strategic Director for the Community

Ext 368

Author of the report

POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2009

Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Regeneration

AWARD OF COSTS IN RELATION TO APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LAND AT KEEN REPLICAS, CATKIN WAY, BISHOP AUCKLAND FOR BARRATT NEWCASTLE LIMITED.

introduction

1. On 29th April – 1st May 2008 a public inquiry was held to consider an appeal by Barratt Newcastle Limited against the refusal of planning permission for residential development on land at Keen Replicas, Catkin Way, Bishop Auckland.
2. On 1st August 2008 the Inspector allowed the appeal. The Inspector concluded the proposed development would not adversely affect employment opportunities in the district through the loss of the site for employment purposes. He considered that the provision of affordable housing on the site was a material consideration of considerable weight in favour of the proposal.
3. The Inspector also allowed an application from Barratt Newcastle Limited for the partial award of costs in respect of refusal reasons 2 and 3 (relating to the effect of noise on future occupants of the proposed development from nearby industrial premises and the adequacy of the proposed access arrangements). These were matters of detail, for which the Council had no further evidence from Environmental Health or the highway authority on which to support its reasons for refusal. As a result the Council could not pursue the noise and highway concerns and made the appellant aware of this before the inquiry began. The appellant had employed expert witnesses to address these concerns, who had attended the inquiry and therefore incurred unnecessary costs. In this respect the Inspector concluded the Council had acted unreasonably.

costs

4. The Solicitors acting for Barratt Newcastle Limited have submitted a claim for £38,142.57 (ex VAT). In support of the claim details of the hours worked and invoices have been submitted to the Council which have been checked by officers and have been found to be in order.

reserves

5. The Chief Financial Officer has informed me that the unbudgeted expenditure can be financed from the Council's reserves.

RECOMMENDATION: that the claim of £38,142.57 (ex VAT) be agreed.

Background documents: Inspector's decision letter dated 1st August 2008, submissions by Walker Morris Solicitors on behalf of Barratt Newcastle Limited.

Officer responsible for the report

Robert Hope
Strategic Director for Environment and
Regeneration
Ext 264

Author of the report

David Townsend, Head of Planning &
Building Control, Ext 270
