

# CABINET

Thursday, 24 November 2005

10.00 a.m.

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

# AGENDA and REPORTS

## AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To notify the Chairman of any items that appear in the agenda in which you may have an interest.

**3. MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005. (Pages 1 - 4)

### OTHER REPORTS

#### HOUSING PORTFOLIO

**4. HOMELESSNESS AND THE ALLOCATION OF HOUSING**

Joint report of Director of Neighbourhood Services and Director of Housing. (Pages 5 - 12)

#### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

**5. CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT 2005/06 - POSITION TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2005**

Report of Director of Resources. (Pages 13 - 20)

**6. REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT 2005/06 - POSITION TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2005**

Report of Director of Resources. (Pages 21 - 36)

#### MINUTES

**7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2**

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005. (Pages 37 - 40)

**8. AREA FORUMS**

To consider the minutes of the following meetings:

(a) Area 1 Forum - 24th October 2005 (Pages 41 - 46)

(b) Area 2 Forum - 1st November 2005 (Pages 47 - 52)

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

The following item is not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972. As such it is envisaged that an appropriate resolution will be passed at the meeting to exclude the press and public.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO**

### **9. ICT MANAGEMENT JOINT CONSULTATION WITH WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Joint report of Director of Resources and Chief Executive Officer. (Pages 53 - 56)

### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Lead Members are requested to inform the Chief Executive Officer or the Head of Democratic Services of any items they might wish to raise under this heading by no later than 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting. This will enable the Officers in consultation with the Chairman to determine whether consideration of the matter by the Cabinet is appropriate.

N. Vaulks  
Chief Executive Officer

Council Offices  
SPENNYMOOR  
16<sup>th</sup> November 2005

Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman)

Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson, M. Iveson, D.A. Newell, K. Noble, J. Robinson J.P and W. Waters

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#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection in relation to this Agenda and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, on Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240 [ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk)

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# Item 3

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Thursday,  
10 November 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and  
  
Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson,  
D.A. Newell, J. Robinson J.P and W. Waters

**In Attendance:** Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby, A. Gray,  
Mrs. J. Gray, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin, M.T.B. Jones, B. Meek,  
J.P. Moran, G. Morgan, A. Smith and T. Ward

**Apologies:** Councillors M. Iveson and K. Noble

**CAB.80/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members had no interests to declare.

**CAB.81/05 MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**CAB.82/05 LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH INITIATIVE (LEG1)**  
The Leader of the Council presented a report regarding the above initiative that had been introduced by the Government to further support District Councils in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to stimulate increased entrepreneurial activity in disadvantaged areas. (For copy see file of Minutes)

It was noted that LEG1 was a competitive fund in that 88 local authorities had been invited to bid for funding of up to £10m per district to be spent over a period of up to 10 years. Thirty awards would be made. Ten each financial year over the following three years.

It was reported that Sedgfield Borough, Easington, Wear Valley and Derwentside District Councils had agreed to work together to develop a single bid covering all four areas as guidance from the Government Office for the North East had indicated that an individual bid would stand much less chance of success.

**RESOLVED :** *That the report be received and further reports be submitted to Cabinet regarding the preparation of the final bid.*

**CAB.83/05 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPUTATION PROJECT**

The Lead Member for Welfare and Communications presented a report seeking support for the Local Government Association's and the IDeA's Local Government Reputation project as well as commitment to achieving the project's core actions. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that the Local Government Reputation Project was part of the Local Government Association's forward-looking agenda to improve the reputations and standing of Councils, which had grown out of the findings of MORI research, commissioned by the Association. The research showed that to enhance their reputations, Councils must change the public's perceptions of their services from negative to positive.

As part of the project, the Local Government Association had pledged to develop a media reputation project at national level that would promote good news stories about the work of Councils.

By registering support for the project, the Council must ensure that the core actions detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report, relating to communication and street-scene services were effectively carried out.

The Local Government Association would monitor the progress of those Councils that had registered their support.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the Council registers support for the project.*
  - 2. That the Performance Improvement Group monitors the implementation of the core actions of the initiative and associated activities.*

**CAB.84/05 PROPOSED CORPORATE BRAND IDENTITY**

The Lead Member for Welfare and Communication presented a report, which proposed changes to the Council's existing logo as part of a Corporate Brand Identity and the introduction of a Brand Control Guide. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that research suggested that a clear brand identity reinforced the way Councils communicated with stakeholders in terms of raising the awareness of the services provided and their community leadership role. The Local Government Association believed that local authorities with a strong corporate brand identity would receive improved satisfaction from the public.

The design of the proposed Corporate Brand Identity represented the key ambitions as set out in the Council's Community Strategy, which underpinned the Corporate Plan. It included a logo, a range of colours, typography, a writing style and photography.

The logo, shown in Appendix 1, focused on the name Sedgefield Borough Council, which was the most powerful element of the Corporate Brand Identity. Two examples of the logo had been included for Members to agree their preferred option.

It was noted that extensive consultation regarding the re-branding had been undertaken and the concept and content of the brand proposal was appealing to public, staff and elected member groups.

Details of the resource implications were set out in paragraph 8 and Appendix 3 of the report.

- RECOMMENDED :**
1. *That the Council approves the new Corporate Brand Identity and its use from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006.*
  2. *That a Brand Control Guide be prepared by the Corporate Communication Task Group to provide a clear statement of how the brand identity will be used to provide consistency and the promotion of one corporate logo for all Council services.*
  3. *That in 2005/06 the expenditure of £39,240 be met from contingencies and that appropriate provision be made in 2006/07 budget to meet the balance of the costs.*

**CAB.85/05      OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2005. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED :**      *That the report be received.*

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**      *That in accordance with Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12a of the Act.*

**CAB.86/05 REVISED STAFFING PROPOSALS - TECHNICAL SERVICES SECTION**

The Lead Member for Environment presented a report setting out proposals for minor adjustments to the establishment of Neighbourhood Services Department. (For copy see file of Minutes).

*RESOLVED : That the recommendations detailed in the report be adopted.*

**Published on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005.**

**These minutes contain no key decisions and will be implemented immediately**

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

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# Item 4

## REPORT TO CABINET

24<sup>th</sup> November 2005

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

### Housing

#### HOMELESSNESS AND THE ALLOCATION OF HOUSING

##### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assess all homeless applications made to it under the provisions of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, which was amended by the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002. The Council must assess all applicants to determine if they meet the 5 “legal” tests for assessing whether a homeless applicant is owed a main duty under the provisions of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Once a homeless applicant is accepted they become a qualifying person under the provisions of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 which govern the allocation of Council housing stock, the housing register or waiting list. There is therefore no difference between a person who accesses the housing register through making a general needs application or a homeless application, other than the number of points they are awarded to ensure they are given suitable priority to access settled suitable accommodation.
- 1.2 The Council has had concerns about the increasing numbers of homeless applications being made over the last 5 years; this upward trend is common with the majority of Councils in County Durham and the North East Region. The Government published its national homelessness strategy in March 2005 - *Sustainable Communities; settled homes; changing lives*, this builds on a number of other policy documents and seeks to address the increasing levels of homelessness through a number of actions but two of its key themes are preventing homelessness and supporting vulnerable households. The Council’s Housing Advice and Homelessness Service has already started to re-engineer its services to focus on the prevention agenda and this has had some early impact on reducing the number of homeless applications to the Council.
- 1.3 To sustain this reduction in homeless applications there is a need to adjust the operation of the housing register by changing the number of points awarded to homeless applicants. Any changes to the points awarded to homeless applicants must comply with the requirements of the revised Code of Guidance on the Allocation of Accommodation issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in November 2002.
- 1.4 This report provides background on the reasons that a change in the points awarded to homeless applications is required, the recommended level of points to be awarded to homeless applicants and a process to review the effect of the implementation of the changes.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The changes to the allocations policy in relation to homeless applicants are approved from end January 2006.
2. That a further report on the impact of the changes to the points awarded to Homeless Applicants on both homeless and general needs applicants is presented 6 months after the implementation of the changes.

### 3.1 **INCREASED LEVELS OF HOMELESS IN SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH**

- 3.1.1 The Council has a statutory duty placed upon it to assess all homeless applications made to it under the provisions of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, which was amended by the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002. The Council must assess all applicants to determine if they meet the 5 “legal” tests for assessing whether a homeless applicant is owed a main duty under the provisions of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. The Council has had concerns about the increasing numbers of homeless applications being made over the last 5 years; this upward trend is in common with the majority of Councils in County Durham and the North East Region. The rate of increase in homeless acceptances in the North East has been 6 times that of the rest of England. Table 1 below shows the increase in homeless applicants over the last 6 years for Sedgefield Borough.

**Table 1 Homeless Applications and Acceptances 1999/00 – 2004/5**

	1999/00	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5
<b>Homeless applications</b>	410	472	373	312	608	822
<b>Acceptance</b>	140	215	210	218	342	441
<b>Percentage</b>	34.15%	45.55%	56.30%	69.55%	56.25%	53.6%

Whilst the rates of acceptances have on average remained between 50 – 55%, the increase in total number of homeless applicants has resulted in a significant impact on the housing register, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2 Total Council lettings and numbers let to homeless households**

	2001/2002	2004/2005
<b>Total lettings</b>	1339	925
<b>Homeless Households</b>	210	441
<b>Percentage of lettings</b>	15.5%	47.5%

3.1.2 The reasons for the increase in homeless applications is complex but relates to the following main factors:-

- Changes introduced extending the priority need categories in the Homelessness Act 2002.
- Our success in advertising and promoting our homeless service.
- The reducing availability of social rented housing due to the impact of Right to Buy on stock numbers.
- An increase in the number of household formulations.
- The significant increase in private sector house prices.

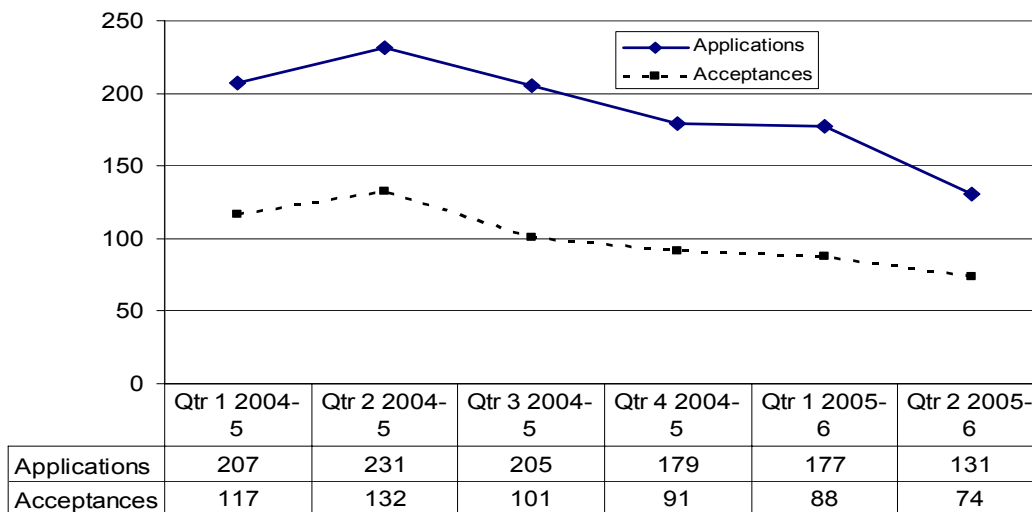
This has resulted in the housing register in terms of general needs housing being effectively “capped” by homeless applicants with only limited numbers of letting being made from general needs applicants. The current level of high points awarded to homeless applicants (4000) was originally a means of ensuring that applicants received sufficient priority to be re housed as soon as practicable. However, with the increased number of homeless cases this now has the perverse affect of contributing to the problem as effectively any general needs applicant must access these additional points to have any opportunity of obtaining an offer of accommodation.

## 3.2 **THE PREVENTION AGENDA**

3.2.1 The Government published its national homelessness strategy in March 2005 - *Sustainable Communities; settled homes; changing lives*, this seeks to address the increasing levels of homelessness through a number of actions but two of its key themes are preventing homelessness and supporting vulnerable households. The Council working through the County Durham and Districts Supporting People Partnership and the establishment of the Integrated Teams for Vulnerable Adults has made significant progress in the area of support for vulnerable households, prior to the publication of this document.

3.2.2 There was a recognition that the Councils Homelessness Service needed to be reengineered to reflect the new prevention agenda, therefore a service review was undertaken and an action plan produced with its implementation beginning in April 2005. The Housing Advice and Homelessness Service is focusing on homelessness prevention and tenancy support issues. The implementation of the prevention agenda is also supported by a number of new Best Value Performance Indicators introduced by the Government from April 2005 focusing on this service area. The implementation of the action plans has had some early success with a 35% reduction in the number of homeless applicants in the first two quarters of 2005/6 compared with 2004/5, as shown in the graph overleaf.

**Homeless Applications and Acceptances**



### 3.3 **HOMELESSNESS AND ALLOCATION POLICY**

3.3.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) issued in November 2002 a revised Code of Guidance on the Allocation of Accommodation. This document sets out in broad terms how local housing authorities should frame their allocations policy for housing. The guidance requires that the Council should give **“reasonable preference”** to certain groups of applicants including homeless applicants accepted for assistance and further **“additional preference”** to certain sub groups i.e. homeless applicants at the risk of violence. The current level of high points awarded to homeless applicants (4000) was originally a means of ensuring that applicants received sufficient priority to be re housed as soon as practicable. This is significantly higher than the number of points that any other applicant can achieve this therefore represents **“outright preference”** rather than reasonable preference as described in the Code of Guidance. Without changing the number of points allocated to homeless applicants their remains a strong incentive to apply as homeless, the housing register will remain “capped” by this group of applicants and the impact of the prevention work currently being undertaken may be undermined

3.3.2 Officers of Neighbourhood Services and the Housing Departments have looked at the options to change the current points system to ensure that homeless applicants are given reasonable preference and that for other applicants there exists a realistic opportunity to obtain an offer of housing. The proposed changes are set out in Table 3 and are based on an analysis of the current housing register.

**Table 3 Reasonable Preference Homelessness Points**

<b>Category of applicant</b>	<b>Current number of points awarded</b>	<b>Recommended number of points</b>
<b>Homeless applicants in temporary accommodation</b>	4000	100
<b>Family</b>	4000	40
<b>Couple/single person</b>	4000	35

The implementation of these new points totals will ensure that homeless applicants will be in the top 10 – 15% of housing applicants and will receive an offer with in a reasonable timescale. More points are awarded to those applicants in temporary accommodation due to the need to re house this client group more quickly than those applicants, for example, living in with family or friends. This is also linked to a range of Best Value Performance Indicators on the use tempaory accommodation. The other applicants who receive a lower number of points are those homeless applicants commonly defined as “homeless at home” i.e. living in with family or friends with no security of tenure.

In addition to being awarded these “homelessness” points the applicants would also be awarded their normal general needs points. Those applicants requiring additional preference due to for example violence or the threats of violence would be awarded social needs points to reflect these circumstances.

- 3.3.3 Currently homeless applicants are made a single offer of accommodation as discharge of the Council homelessness duty; however have the same level of choice as general need applicants. This means if they choose a high demand area then they can be waiting for a considerable period of time for an offer of accommodation. Given that homelessness priority is a reflection of housing need then it is reasonable that this degree of choice should be limited to a Housing Management Area e.g. Area 2 Ferryhill, West Cornforth and Chilton, unless there is other reason that make a particular location unsuitable i.e. proximity to a violent ex partner.
- 3.3.4 The Homelessness Act 2002 explicitly excludes 16/17-year-old care leavers from the priority need categories. The Code of Guidance recommends that such young people are subject to joint co operation arrangements with Social Services; such a requirement is not currently reflected in the points system. Therefore it is recommended that care leavers are allowed access to the housing register subject to a suitable care package being in place and are awarded 15 points to reflect their lack of security of tenure.

### 3.4 **IMPLEMENTING AND REVIEWING THE CHANGES TO THE POINTS SYSTEM**

- 3.4.1 In order to make the necessary IT changes, develop suitable procedures, train staff, partners and other stakeholders on these changes it is envisaged that these changes will be implemented by the end of January 2006.
- 3.4.2 Due to the dynamic nature of the housing register and the major changes recommended in this report it is recommended that a further report be presented 6 months after the implementation of these changes to detail the impact on the Housing Register.

### 4. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

### 5. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 The proposed changes detailed within this report will be discussed with the Tenants Housing Services Group and other partners to ensure they are fully aware of the reasons for the changes and the impact on the operation of the Housing Register.

### 6. **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The Community Strategy Outcomes include a Borough with Strong Communities where residents can access a good choice of high quality housing. The Council's ambitions, which are linked, to the Community Strategy outcomes and are articulated through the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan. Our ambitions include delivering a Borough with Strong Communities with good quality affordable housing in safe neighbourhoods. The changes to the points award to housing applicants detailed in this report will ensure that access to the housing register is based on need and will contribute to sustainable communities.
- 6.2 **Risk Management**  
The key risk associated with the report is the changes do not ensure the discharge of the Council's Homelessness duty the flexibility to make minor changes to the points system as set out in this report mitigates this risk.
- 6.3 **Health and Safety**  
There are no additional health and safety implications over and above those for existing staff of the Borough Council.
- 6.4 **Sustainability**  
Effective and appropriate letting of housing can directly contribute to the sustainability of communities.
- 6.5 **Information Communications Technology**  
There are no specific ICT considerations.
- 6.6 **Equality and Diversity**  
Full account will be taken of the Borough Council's obligation to promote equity and diversity, INRAs are currently being undertaken for Homeless and Allocations these will take account of the proposed changes in this report..

- 6.7 Crime and Disorder  
There are no immediate Crime and disorder implications of the report.
- 6.8 Human Rights  
There are no immediate Human Rights issues contained within the report.
- 6.9 Social Inclusion  
Every effort will be made to ensure that through the allocation of housing social inclusion is promoted.
- 6.10 Procurement  
There are no immediate procurement issues contained in the report

7. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 will receive a presentation on the implementation of the Homelessness Prevention agenda and Choice Based Lettings on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

8. **LIST OF APPENDICES**

- 8.1 None

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**Contact Officer** Ian Brown  
**Telephone Number** 01388 816166 Ext. 4462  
**E-mail address** [ibrown@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:ibrown@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:**

[List other reports, publications documents and papers referred to in the preparation of the report. Include previous reports to Cabinet on the subject of the report.]

Sustainable Communities; settled homes; changing lives, - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005

Code of Guidance on the Allocation of Housing - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2002

**Examination by Statutory Officers**

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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# Item 5

## REPORT TO CABINET

24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2005

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**Portfolio: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT 2005/2006 POSITION TO 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY**

1.1 This is the second Capital Budgetary Control Report under the 2005/06 Budgetary Control Reporting Arrangements reported to Cabinet on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2005. The report provides a review of the position on the 2005/06 Capital Programme up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005. It includes an overview of progress made to date in meeting spending targets, including carry forward approvals from the 2004/05 capital programme, available capital resources and the proposed financing of the programme. The report also outlines developments that have occurred during the year to date that have an impact on the overall capital programme.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- (i) Cabinet consider the six month spend position to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005 and proposed financing of the Capital Programme;
- (ii) Further reports be submitted to Cabinet detailing the position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December and final outturn as at 31<sup>st</sup> March in line with the Budgetary Control Monitoring Arrangements 2005/06.
- (iii) Detailed reports showing progress on individual capital projects continue to be submitted to all future Strategic Working Groups in order to monitor progress throughout the year.

#### **3.0 CAPITAL SPEND AND RESOURCES MONITORING 2005/06**

##### **Initial Spending Targets / Revised Capital Programme**

- 3.1 The previous report provided detailed commentary on the initial spending targets for the Capital Programme for 2005/06 and subsequent adjustments made to the Budget in respect of :-
- approved carry forward of underspends from the 2004/05 Programme
  - reduction of the Regeneration Initiatives Programme Budget as a result of delays in receiving capital receipts from land sales
  - use of contingencies approved during the year

- 3.2 It is not intended to repeat any of the information already reported in the previous report. This report will instead focus on any further developments since the last report and provide an updated position on the Capital Programme at the half year stage.
- 3.3 It is important to note that the approved net budget for the Capital Programme shows only the use of the Council's own resources towards capital spending. However, the Council is committed to securing external funding to support and enhance its overall Capital Programme in the form of government grant approvals, lottery funding and other grants and contributions. The total (gross) level of capital spending is therefore significantly higher once this external funding has been taken into account. A number of additional grants and contributions have been secured since the last report and these have been reflected in the Budget table below.
- 3.4 The following table shows the original 2005/06 Capital Programme as approved by Council, the approved carry forward from 2004/05 which is added to give the revised Net Capital Programme approval for the year and also details all approved external funding secured to date to show the total Gross Budget reflecting total capital resources available for the year:

Capital Programme / Portfolio	Original Approved Net Budget £'000	Approved Carry Forward from 2004/05 £'000	Revised Net Budget £'000	Approved External Funding £'000	Gross Budget 2005/06 £'000
Resource Management:					
- ICT <sup>^</sup>	1,000	323	1,323	50	1,373
- Green Lane	175	-	175	-	175
- Chilton Depot <sup>~</sup>	76	56	132	-	121
Culture and Recreation*	610	40	650	1,284	1,934
Regeneration	400	494	894	1,011	1,905
Economic Development	200	159	359	300	659
General Fund Housing	1,000	-	1,000	853	1,853
Community Safety	80	(24)	56	-	56
Environment	120	-	120	-	120
Supporting People	70	-	70	-	70
Regeneration Initiatives <sup>#</sup>	2,500	554	3,054	-	3,054
Contingency Sum <sup>*~</sup>	69	-	69	-	80
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>6,300</b>	<b>1,602</b>	<b>7,902</b>	<b>3,498</b>	<b>11,400</b>
Housing Revenue Account	7,000	300	7,300	-	7,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,300</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>15,202</b>	<b>3,498</b>	<b>18,700</b>

<sup>^</sup> Includes £150,000 IEG Funding

<sup>~</sup> Includes £10,800 transferred from Contingency Sum to Chilton Depot

<sup>\*</sup> Includes £110,000 transferred from Contingency Sum to Culture and Recreation in respect of repairs to SLC roof

<sup>#</sup> £554,000 carried forward from 2004/05 Regeneration Initiatives Provision in respect of the Council's contribution towards the Gymnastics Centre at Spennymoor Leisure Centre

## Developments During 2005/2006

- 3.5 As previously reported, the £5 million special provision for capital spending on affordable housing and regeneration projects has been restricted to £2.5 million (plus £554,000 carry forward from 2004/05) as a result of delays experienced in receiving capital receipts from land sales.

A report by the Head of Strategy and Regeneration setting out the proposed development and implementation of this Programme was approved by Management Team and Cabinet in June 2005.

The report recommended that implementation of the Regeneration Initiatives Programme is undertaken in two specific strands and the Budget for 2005/06 has been split on this basis:

- Area Programmes and Strategic Investments £1,400,000
- Local Area Improvement Programme £700,000

There is also a provision for fees and staffing costs of £400,000.

A number of projects have now been committed to and approved by Cabinet in respect of this Regeneration Initiatives Provision. The current position in respect of this Budget is summarised below:

Playground Equipment Programme	£350,000
Gymnastics Centre Contribution	£554,400
Sure Start Centres Contribution	£75,000
Unallocated Resources	£2,074,600
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>£3,054,000</b>

The Head of Strategy and Regeneration is currently considering the staffing structure that will be required to move the major Regeneration Programme forward and a report will be brought to Cabinet shortly. Until the structure is fully implemented it will be difficult to make progress on project development. It is likely therefore that much of the unallocated resources will remain unspent in 2005/06.

- 3.6 External grant funding totalling £56,000 from the Countryside Agency in respect of a Countryside Management capital project at Ferryhill Carrs has recently been confirmed. The funding will be utilised alongside Council funding to enhance access and construct new pathways on the site.
- 3.7 The tender in respect of the construction of the Sure Start Centres at Shildon and Newton Aycliffe has now been awarded and works are expected to commence on site in the near future. The total value of the works is estimated to be around £1,250,000 of which £998,000 is being met from Sure Start Grant, £177,000 from other partners and £75,000 from the Regeneration Initiatives Budget.
- 3.8 Significant external funding has been secured in respect of the Economic Development Capital Programme from a number of sources including Single Programme Grant, private sector contributions and contributions from Durham County Council. This will allow an enhanced programme of works to be carried out in respect of the Council's Industrial Estates.

## Revised Capital Programme and Actual Spend to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005

3.9 As a result of adjustments described above and the approval of additional external funding, the revised gross spending target for 2005/06 has been increased to £20.1 million, although this may be regarded as optimistic bearing in mind the comments made earlier in relation to the major Regeneration Programme. A summarised statement of actual gross spend to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005 across all portfolios is shown as follows:

Portfolio	Revised Gross Budget £'000	Actual Gross Spend £'000
Resource Management:		
- ICT	1,373	286
- Green Lane	175	104
- Depot	132	95
Culture and Recreation	1,884	756
Regeneration	2,368	387
Economic Development	659	6
General Fund Housing	1,668	432
Community Safety	56	-
Environment	120	51
Supporting People	1,245	15
Regeneration Initiatives	3,054	1
General Contingency	69	-
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>12,803</b>	<b>2,133</b>
Housing Revenue Account	7,300	3,348
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,103</b>	<b>5,481</b>

3.10 A gross total of £5.481m has been spent in the first four months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005 or 27% of the revised gross Capital Programme. Grants and contributions totalling £1.3 million have been received in the year to date resulting in a net spend position of £4.1 million or 27% of the net Capital Programme of £15.2 million.

The previous report detailing the position as at the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005 showed gross capital spend of £3.3 million. An additional £2.2 million has therefore been spent in the last 2 months up to the half year stage.

### Capital Programme Monitoring

3.11 Due to the nature of capital projects it is difficult to predict exactly when financial payments will be made, unlike revenue budgets, which can be profiled accurately. Capital spending has traditionally been concentrated in the latter half of the year, particularly in the last quarter. It is recognised that some capital projects have significant lead-in times and in other cases there is a need to secure funding approval from other agencies before expenditure is incurred, which can all lead to delays. However, all capital budget holders should endeavour to avoid a heavy concentration of project work required late in the financial year. It is likely that earlier implementation of contracting arrangements would help secure enhanced value for money on capital works.

- 3.12 The December budgetary control report will be able to provide a clearer and more detailed picture of progress on the Capital Programme. In order to raise awareness of the position on the Capital Programme detailed financial monitoring reports showing progress on individual Portfolio's Capital Programmes will continue to be submitted to all future Strategic Working Groups.
- 3.13 In light of the substantial capital resources available as highlighted in paragraph 3.14 below, the Council will be able to maintain its flexible approach to managing the capital programme. As in 2004/05 underspending on key projects, which have commenced or been committed to during the year, will be able to be carried forward into 2006/07.

### Capital Resources

- 3.14 Based on current projections the total level of capital resources likely to be available to finance this year's Capital Programme are summarised in the table below. Capital resources are split between those brought forward from 2004/05 and those expected to be received in 2005/06:

<i>Available Capital Resource</i>	<i>Resources Held At 31.03.05 £'000</i>	<i>Anticipated In Year £'000</i>	<i>Total Anticipated Resources £'000</i>
Capital Receipts:			
- RTB's	-	2,462	2,462
- Land Sales	2,587	14,042	16,629
- Other Sales / Receipts	-	44	44
- Section 106 Agreements	137	50	187
<b>Total Capital Receipts</b>	<b>2,724</b>	<b>16,598</b>	<b>19,322</b>
Capital Grants:			
- Single Programme	65	1,296	1,361
- SHIP	-	650	650
- DFG	-	203	203
- Lottery Funding	18	1,066	1,084
- Sure Start Grant	-	998	998
- Other Grants #	-	200	200
<b>Total Capital Grants</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>4,413</b>	<b>4,496</b>
<b>Capital Contributions</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>740</b>
<b>Supported Capital Borrowing</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>671</b>
<b>Major Repairs Allowance [ HRA ]</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,037</b>	<b>5,037</b>
<b>Direct Revenue Financing [ HRA ]</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>1,875</b>
<b>Total Available Resources</b>	<b>2,826</b>	<b>29,315</b>	<b>32,141</b>

# includes IEG of £150,000

## Financing the Capital Programme

- 3.15 Assuming that revised spending targets are achieved by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006, and that the above capital resources are realised, the financing of the capital programme is likely to be as follows:

	<i>Initial 2005/06 £'000</i>	<i>Revised 2005/06 £'000</i>
<b>Gross Capital Spending Target (1)</b>	<b>15,800</b>	<b>20,103</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>		
Government Allocations:		
- Supported Capital Expenditure	671	671
- Capital Grants and Contributions	335	5,236
- Major Repairs Allowance	5,037	5,037
Capital Receipts	7,882	7,284
Direct Revenue Financing – HRA	1,875	1,875
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>15,800</b>	<b>20,103</b>

*(1) The initial target has been increased to reflect the approved carry forward from 2004/05 and the phasing in of additional grants and contributions secured in respect of specific capital schemes*

- 3.16 Assuming the revised spending targets are achieved, there will be unused capital receipts and other resources of around £12 million at the end of the financial year which can be used to support future spending commitments. The updated Medium Term Financial Plan to be approved by Cabinet later this year will determine how these resources will be used.

## Corporate Policy Implications

- 3.17 This report does not contain proposals that would require any changes to the Council's agreed policy framework and corporate objectives.

## 4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no further resource implications arising from this report. Planned spending commitments are in line with previously approved capital spending programmes set for the Council's portfolios.

## 5.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Comprehensive consultation has previously been held during the construction of the 2005/06 Budget Framework. This report does not contain any proposals or recommendations requiring further consultation.

## 6.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no other significant material considerations arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

## 7.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Consultation and engagement with Overview and Scrutiny Committees has previously been held in development and review of the 2005/06 Budget Framework.

Contact Officer: Brian Allen (Director of Resources)  
 Telephone No.: 01388-816166 ext. 4003  
 E-Mail Address: [ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk)

Ward(s): Not Ward Specific

### Background Papers:

1. Report to Council 25.02.05 Budget Framework 2005/06
2. Report to Council 29.06.05 Statement of Accounts 2004/05
3. Report to Cabinet 30.06.05 Promotion of the Regeneration of the Borough – Housing Land Capital Receipts Strategy
4. Report to Cabinet 14.07.05 Children’s Fixed Play Equipment 2005-07
5. Report to Cabinet 30.06.05 Housing Capital and Improvement Works 2005/06
6. Report to Cabinet 31.03.05 Culture and Recreation Capital Programme 2005/06
7. Report to Cabinet 09.12.04 Spennymoor Leisure Centre Gymnastics Centre
8. Report to Cabinet 12.05.05 Resource Management – Capital Programme 2005/06
9. Report to Cabinet 17.02.05 Spennymoor Town Centre – Contract Negotiation
10. Report to Cabinet 04.10.04 Spennymoor Town Centre – Shop Improvements Grants Scheme
11. Report to Cabinet 11.12.03 Spennymoor Town Centre Programme
12. Report to Cabinet 11.11.04 Single Housing Investment Pot Allocation – Ferryhill Station, Dean Bank and Chilton
13. Report to Management Team 25.07.05 Private Sector Housing Capital Programme and Single Housing Investment Programme Round 2
14. Report Cabinet 15.09.05 Capital Budgetary Control Report 2005/2006 – Position to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005
15. Report to Cabinet 27.10.05 Regeneration Services Capital Programme 2005/06
16. Report to Management Team 22.08.05 – Budgetary Control Monitoring Arrangements 2005/06

### EXAMINATION BY STATUTORY OFFICERS

	YES	NOT APPLICABLE
1. The report has been examined by the Council’s Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council’s S151 Officer or his representative.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council’s Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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24th NOVEMBER 2005

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**Portfolio: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

#### **REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT 2005 - 2006 POSITION AT 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

##### **1. SUMMARY**

This report summarises individual spending forecasts for the nine portfolios for 2005/2006, which shows that:

- The General Fund is expected to use balances of around £515,000 compared to a budgeted use of £800,000.
- The Housing Revenue Account is currently predicting an overspend of £201,000 on its revenue operations
- The Training and Employment Service is anticipated to make an operating loss in the region of £95,000, in line with the initial budget forecast.

##### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- That the financial position for 2005/2006 be considered.
- That a further report be submitted to Cabinet, detailing the position as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December and final outturn as at 31<sup>st</sup> March in line with the budgetary Control Monitoring Arrangements 2005/06 reported to Management Team on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2005.
- That detailed reports be submitted to the Strategic Working Groups in order to monitor progress throughout the year at a more detailed level..

##### **3. DETAILED FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

###### ***3.1 Monitoring Arrangements for 2005-2006***

The budgetary control monitoring arrangements for 2005-2006 have been enhanced by ensuring that the Councils four Strategic Working Groups receive regular reports in respect of those areas of responsibility, but at a more detailed level than is presented to Cabinet for consideration.

The report presented to the Cabinet meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> September was subsequently referred to the respective Strategic Working Groups for consideration, a small number of issues have been referred to Officers to examine and report back on at the next working group meeting, though it is not anticipated that the outcome of these reviews will impact on the financial positions previously reported.

As indicated in the September 2005 report the budgetary control framework will be further enhanced during the year to include the monitoring of budgets

susceptible to market forces which could lead to budget problems [e.g. Bar & Catering Income, Planning Fees etc.]

### 3.2 General Fund

The following table covers the first six months of 2005/2006 (April – September) and shows: -

- The approved budget for each of the main portfolios.
- The profiled budget for the first six months of 2005/2006.
- The actual income and expenditure as recorded in the Council's Financial Management System.
- Projected Probable Outturn for 2005/2006 based on spend to date and known commitments.
- Variance between the annual budget and the projected probable outturn.

The original approved budgets have been revised to take account of a full re-apportionment of asset charges across all Portfolios.

The Budgets take account of the release of funds to key growth areas with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2005 which was initially frozen pending the receipt of the proceeds of a major land sale at Newton Aycliffe.

The overall financial position for the General Fund is therefore as follows: -

	<b>Budget 2005/06 £'000</b>	<b>Budget To Date £'000</b>	<b>Spend To Date £'000</b>	<b>Probable Outturn £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>
<i>Resource Management*</i>	687	423	452	726	39
<i>Culture and Recreation</i>	3,857	1,934	1,862	3,898	41
<i>Environment</i>	4,407	2,242	2,101	4,466	59
<i>Housing</i>	624	358	336	606	(18)
<i>Regeneration</i>	1,591	811	681	1,515	(76)
<i>Community Safety</i>	675	440	421	687	12
<i>Supporting People</i>	1,023	4,845	4,430	713	(310)
<i>Contingency</i>	346	-	-	496	150
	13,210	11,053	10,283	13,107	(103)
<i>Use of Balances</i>	(800)			(515)	285
<i>Unanticipated Income</i>	-		(182)	(182)	(182)
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>12,410</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,410</b>	<b>-</b>

\*Includes Performance Management & Welfare & Communications Portfolios

On the basis that the whole of the contingency sum is fully utilised in 2005/2006 there will be an anticipated use balances of £515,000 against a budgeted use of balances of £800,000.

In preparing the probable outturn position, no account has yet been taken of the possible impact of the Job Evaluation exercise, which should be concluded later this year. It is difficult to forecast what impact this may have on service costs but at this stage it is assumed that the contingency sum will be sufficient to meet any likely costs of the scheme.

The main features that contribute to the overall underspend by Portfolio include: -

### **3.2.1. Resource Management**

The projected spend to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £726,000 compared to an initial budget of £687,000; an estimated overspend of £39,000. [Previous report £58,000 overspend]

The main factors that contribute to this overspend are as follows: -

- Staffing Budgets are examined collectively for control purposes and at this stage some additional savings are being achieved over and above those that were anticipated when the 2005-2006 budgets were determined.
- The Long Service Award scheme for employees with 15 and 25 years of services is anticipated to cost £28,000 this year.
- Additional Job evaluation analyst costs which are expected to be in the region of £43,000.
- A downturn in investment rates being received and lower than anticipated investment levels mean that investment income has fallen by £192,000.

### **3.2.2. Culture and Recreation**

The projected spend to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £3,898,000 compared to the initial budget approval of £3,857,000, a net overspend of £41,000. [Previous report £47,000 overspend]

There has been little change in the factors contributing to the overspend position since the last report these are summarised as follows:-

- Disruption at Spennymoor Leisure Centre as a consequence of the capital works being carried out for the Gymnasium extension has led to a higher than anticipated income reduction.
- Income targets set for the Bars are unlikely to be achieved as a result of changes in usage policy. [£16,000]
- Projections indicate that there will be additional costs of running Locomotion amounting to £58,000, 50% of which will be met by the NRM.
- Discontinued use of the Shildon pool has saved £11,000.
- The Director of Leisure Services is looking carefully at his current spending commitments and expects to make further significant inroads into the current overspend position by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

### **3.2.3. Environment**

Projected net expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £4,466,000 compared to a revised budget approved of £4,407,000 - an overspend of £61,000. [Previous report £46,000 overspend]

The main issues that are having an impact on the anticipated final position are broadly similar to the September report to Cabinet.

- Loss of licensing income of £15,000 as a result in delays in implementing the new powers & duties.
- The impact of the revised disposal arrangements using Thornley Transfer station has increased costs by £40,000.
- The impact on the refuse collection service as a result of the down turn in demand for the skip service has resulted in loss of income amounting to £25,000.
- The Director of Neighbourhood Service is looking carefully at his current spending commitments and expects to make significant inroads into the current overspend position by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 especially in relation to Street Scene Services.

#### **3.2.4. Housing General Fund**

Projected spend to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £606,000 compared to a revised budget approval of £624,000; an estimated underspend of £18,000 [Previous report £49,000 underspend], which is mainly as a result of: -

- Significant additional costs in bringing more Homeless units into service [£21,000]
- Loss of ERDF grant in respect of the Aycliffe Neighbourhood Management service.

#### **3.2.5. Regeneration**

The projected spend to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £1,515,000 compared to an original budget approval of £1,591,000, an underspend of £76,000. [Previously £87,000]

There has been little change in the reasons for the overspend which are: -

- Additional income being generated from increases in Planning Fee income.
- Lower than anticipated occupancy rates on the Industrial Units, together with higher levels of rent - free periods and other incentives are likely to result in a shortfall of rental income of £52,000.

#### **3.2.6. Community Safety**

The projected spend to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £687,000 compared to a revised budget approval of £675,000 - an overspend of £12,000 (or 1.7%). [Previous report £11,000] The revised budget now reflects the transfer of staff and functions from the Environmental Protection Team to Neighbourhood Wardens.

- The Council is in the process of appointing the additional Neighbourhood Wardens that were delayed because of the uncertainty of resources pending the receipt of the proceed from significant land sales.
- The main reason for the projected overspend relates to
  - Increased costs in respect of overtime payments in the Control Room

- Increased leasing costs associated with the recent replacement of Neighbourhood Wardens vehicles.

### **3.2.7. Supporting People**

The projected spend to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is £713,000, compared to an original budget approval of £1,023,000, an estimated underspend of £310,000. [Previous report £239,000 underspend]

There are no significant changes to the projections / issues previously reported which related in the main to the impact of the changes in respect of Housing Benefit Subsidy, resulting in an additional subsidy entitlement of £230,000.

### **3.3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

The projected position to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is an estimated overspend of £201,000, although there will be a net contribution to reserves as a result of the recovery of pre-ballot LSVT costs from Sunderland Housing Group

There are no significant changes to the projections / issues previously reported which were: -

- An increase in net rental income after accounting for losses in respect of empty houses and a reduced bad debts provision.
- The Housing Maintenance Budget will be overspent by around £200,000. These increased costs are partly as a result of works associated with the storm damage in the early part of the year. The Director of Housing is carefully examining the current spending profile in order to see what action can be taken to mitigate the overspend position.
- At this stage of the financial year it is assumed that the Contingency sum will be fully utilised during 2005-2006 partly to meet the costs of job evaluation.

Following the unsuccessful LSVT Sunderland Housing Group will reimburse the Council pre-ballot costs, which will be added to reserves.

### **3.4 Training and Employment Services**

The initial budget prepared for 2005/2006 predicted that the trading account would make an operating loss of about £95,000 [excluding asset charges] by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. Current projections indicate that after the six-month stage the operating this forecast remains unchanged.

The earlier report advised Members that Job-Centre Plus has announced that the Adult Learning contract is being substantially reduced with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005, the exact scale of the reduction is still uncertain but it will have a significant affect on the service currently being delivered. The impact is currently being assessed and a number of options / alternative means of service delivery are being examined and a report will be prepared for Cabinet's consideration at the earliest opportunity.

## **4. Further revenue developments during 2005-2006**

Since the budgets were approved in February there have been a number of developments that have provided the Council with additional resources which have been made available to provide enhanced service delivery. These were set out in

some detail in the report to Cabinet on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2005 but are summarised below for easy reference: -

- Cabinet considered a report on the 29<sup>th</sup> September in respect of the use of the Planning Delivery Grant allocation of £270,000 for 2005-2006. £73,500 is to be spent on upgrading the ICT systems and a further £166,000 on a revised staffing structure to enhance the planning service. Planning Delivery Grant of £131,000 is available in 2006-2007 to continue the funding of the revised staffing arrangements.
- The Council has again been awarded a DEFRA Performance Standards Grant for Recycling and Composting amounting to £27,267, which is to be used to help the Council achieve its 18% recycling target.
- The outcome of further Rating Appeals has resulted in a refund of £165,000 [after Agents commissions], which has been added to the Contingency Sum.
- The Council has achieved its stretch performance targets in relation to the County-wide Local Public Service Agreement and a claim in respect of the performance reward grant in the region of £268,000 has been submitted to the ODPM. A report outlining how these resources will be used will be prepared for Cabinet's consideration in due course.

## **5. Collection Fund Surplus**

The Council as billing authority for council tax and non domestic rates purposes maintains on behalf of the authorities which precept on the Council a separate set of accounts known as the Collection Fund. Whilst these accounts are not part of our normal budgetary control reporting arrangements any surplus or deficit on the fund has a direct impact on future council tax levels in the Borough. The projected surplus as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is currently in the region of £730,000 of which £171,000 represents the Councils share,[compared with £250,000 for 2005-2006]. This estimated surplus is subject to fluctuation depending upon collection rates and levels of debt written off and can only be taken into account in the determination of Council Tax levels.

## **6. Revenue Reserves 2005-2006**

Attached at **appendix 1** is a schedule detailing all of the Council's revenue reserves, which reflects the latest budget spending projections outlined above. It is anticipated that reserves totalling £10,235.8m will be available to the Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. Details of how the Council will use these will be included in the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan which will be considered by Cabinet later this year.

## **7. Revenue Provisions 2005-2006**

In approving the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2005-2006 to Council in June 2005 the Director of Resources was given authority to create revenue provisions in the sum of £197,000 that would be utilised to meet specific additional commitments in 2005-2006 for which no budgetary provision had been made. In addition the Council has other revenue provisions amounting to £1,274,000 that relate in the main to premiums and discounts on debt rescheduling that will be charged to revenue accounts over a number of years in accordance with approved accounting practices. A full schedule of all the Provisions held is attached at **appendix 2**.

## **8. Balance Sheet Management**

The report to Cabinet in September introduced the concept of reporting on significant items from the Councils "balance sheet", and in particular those items that may have a material impact on the Council if not reviewed on a regular basis.

This report updates the previous position in respect of :-

- **External Loan Debt** – monies borrowed by the Council.
- **Short Term Investments** – surplus cash invested by the Council.
- **Sundry Debtors** – sums owed to the Council in respect of Rents, Council Tax, overpaid Housing Benefits, Mortgages and Accounts Receivable. **[See Appendix 3 for further analysis]**

Performance Management arrangements closely monitor the above areas on at least a monthly basis to ensure that the Councils Treasury Management strategy is being adhered to in respect of the first two items and in respect of the last item debt recovery action is instigated where debts are not settled within expected time scales.

- **External loan debt**
  - The value of loans outstanding at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005 was £18.835m, down from £18.987m at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005.
  - The current strategy does not anticipate any new borrowing in the current financial year and consequently external loan debt at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 is expected to have reduced to £18.678m, an overall reduction in the year of £309,000.
- **Short Term Investments**
  - As at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005 the Council had £28.018m on short-term deposit with Financial Institutions. The original budget forecast of investment income was £1.4m, but delays in the receipt of the land sale proceeds and the recent reductions in Bank Base rate will see investment income fall to approximately £1.208m. The Council will however actively pursue investment opportunities throughout the year in order to maximise investment returns. The reduction in investment income has been fully accounted for in the budgetary control statement.
- **Sundry Debtors**
  - Recovery of all sums due to the Council promptly can have a significant material impact on the cash-flow of the Council and lead onto higher than expected investment returns as indicated above if it is actively managed.
  - As at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 the Council recorded in its Annual Accounts that the amounts due from debtors amounted to £9.955m. A significant proportion of this debt related to year-end grant claims which is a normal position, at this time of year and will be certified and paid as an outcome of the external audit process.
  - However some of the outstanding debt has to be actively managed to ensure that it is eventually collected and is not written off as a “bad debt”. As at the 30<sup>th</sup> September the following analysis is available

Type of Debt	Total Arrears	Current Arrears	Aged Arrears
	£	£	£
Current Housing Rents	616,749	266,164	350,585
Former Tenants Housing Rents	912,470	-	912,470
Council Tax	2,234,629	811,922	1,422,707
Accounts Receivable	754,105	703,383	50,722
Housing Benefit Overpayments	304,880	151,060	153,820
Mortgages	1,018	1,018	-
<b>Total Outstanding debt</b>	<b>4,823,851</b>	<b>1,933,547</b>	<b>2,890,304</b>

Current arrears is debt less than 60days old & Aged arrears is debt older than 60days

- Housing Rent is a weekly charge on the property. The five area teams manage current arrears with former tenants being managed by a centralised debt recovery team. Both Teams work to an approved policy document which involves a number of stages culminating in seeking repossession where a current tenant fails to make arrangements to pay and referral to a certified bailiff in former tenant arrears cases.
- Council Tax is an annual charge and the arrears above reflect those accounts where no arrangements have been agreed to collect the initial charge by instalments. When accounts fall into arrears Liability Orders are obtained from the Magistrates Court. Where this procedure fails to obtain settlement of the debt a range of other recovery processes are initiated including use of certified bailiffs and committal proceedings. Whilst the level of arrears looks high it must be taken in the context of the overall total debit in excess of £253 million. The Council has a very good collection rate and since Council Tax was introduced it has achieved a collection rate in excess of 99%.
- Accounts Receivable debt can relate to any of the services that the Council provides. Debt recovery action is the responsibility of the department that provides the service and raises the initial invoice. If the department is unable to collect the debt the Director of Resources may refer the debt to a certified Bailiff for further recovery action
- Housing Benefit overpayments usually arise where a person in receipt of benefit has failed to notify the Council of a change in circumstances that would effect their entitlement. If the claimant is still in receipt of benefit the overpayment is automatically recovered at the rate of £8.55 per week. Where the claimant is no longer in receipt of benefit or has vacated the property an accounts receivable invoice is sent. In instance where a former claimant moves back into the Borough and becomes eligible for benefit the debt is reinstated and recovered from on-going entitlement.
- Mortgages debt is all less than 60 days old, and arrangements are in hand to recover the debt outstanding.

## 9. Training Issues

Effective Budget monitoring is dependant upon Heads of Service and Budget Holders taking ownership of the budgets they manage to ensure services are delivered in accordance with Councils priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan. To-date Heads of Service have received a training session on their roles and responsibilities in respect of budget preparation and Budget Monitoring and further



sessions are planned for other budget holders. Consultations are being held with IPF Ltd. to develop an appropriate course around the financial aspects of service planning and a training package is being formulated in respect of continued end user training in respect of the Councils' Financial management system.

#### 10. CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report does not contain proposals that would require any changes to the Council's agreed policy framework and corporate objectives.

#### 11. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no further resource implications arising from this report.

#### 12. CONSULTATIONS

Comprehensive consultation has previously been held during the construction of the 2005/2006 Budget Framework. This report does not contain any proposals or recommendations requiring further consultation.

#### 13. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no other significant material considerations arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

#### 14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

Consultation and engagement with Overview and Scrutiny Committees has previously been held in development and review of the 2005/2006 Budget Framework.

**Contact Officer:** Brian Allen (Director of Resources)  
**Telephone:** 01388-816166 Ext. 4003  
**E-Mail:** [ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Ward(s):** Not Ward Specific

**Background Papers:** ~ Report to Special Council 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005 – Budget Framework 2005/2006.  
 ~ Report to Council 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005- Statement of Accounts 2004-2005  
 ~ Report to Cabinet 15<sup>th</sup> September 2005- Revenue Budgetary Control Report – Position at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2005

#### Examination by Statutory Officers:

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative.	✓	
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative.	✓	
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative.	✓	
4. Management Team has approved the report.	✓	

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**BALANCES STATEMENT 2005 - 2006**

Appendix 1

	<b>ACTUAL AT 31/3/05 £'000</b>	<b>CONTRIB. IN YEAR £'000</b>	<b>USE OF FUNDS £'000</b>	<b>EST. BAL. AT 31/3/06 £'000</b>
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>				
70 406 : BUDGET SUPPORT FUND	1,622.0	0.0	(515.0)	1,107.0
70 407 : GENERAL FUND	2,240.3	0.0	0.0	2,240.3
70 413 : NON HRA HOUSING FUND	203.2	0.0	0.0	203.2
70 408 : INSURANCE FUND	1,098.4	15.0	(25.0)	1,088.4
70 409 : ASSET MANAGEMENT FUND	501.8	0.0	0.0	501.8
70 410 : ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND	267.1	0.0	(67.8)	199.3
70 411 : EMPLOYMENT TRAINING	386.8	0.0	(95.0)	291.8
70 412 : YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND #	151.1	0.0	(50.0)	101.1
70 414 : ENERGY MANAGEMENT FUND	29.7	0.0	(10.0)	19.7
70 416: OTHER MINOR FUNDS	31.8	6.0	(10.0)	27.8
70 303: LOAN DEBT SUPPORT FUND	706.1	0.0	(250.0)	456.1
<b><u>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</u></b>	<b>7,238.3</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>(1,022.8)</b>	<b>6,236.5</b>
# Based on current levels of applications				
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>				
76 041 : WORKING BALANCE	3,460.3	539.0	0.0	3,999.3
<b><u>TOTAL H.R.A</u></b>	<b>3,460.3</b>	<b>539.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3,999.3</b>
<b><u>TOTAL RESERVES</u></b>	<b>10,698.6</b>	<b>560.0</b>	<b>(1,022.8)</b>	<b>10,235.8</b>

**PROVISIONS STATEMENT 2005 - 2006**

**Appendix 2**

	<b>ACTUAL AT 31/3/05 £'000</b>	<b>CONTRIB. IN YEAR £'000</b>	<b>USE OF FUNDS £'000</b>	<b>EST. BAL. AT 31/3/06 £'000</b>
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>				
70 302 : PREMIUMS - DEBT RESCHEDULING	193.0	0.0	(45.0)	148.0
70 300 : HEALTH EXPRESS	0.0	4.0	(4.0)	0.0
70 304 : SURE START - FERRYHILL & CHILTON	58.7	0.0	0.0	58.7
70 305 : SURE START - SHILDON & AYCLIFFE	69.6	0.0	0.0	69.6
70 301 : SPECIFIC YEAR END PROVISIONS				
: PC REPLACEMENT COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT	0.0	5.0	(5.0)	0.0
: COUNCIL TAX BACK SCANNING OF DOCUMENTS	0.0	14.4	(14.4)	0.0
: BENEFITS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS INITIATIVES	0.0	50.0	(50.0)	0.0
: LSP ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT	0.0	45.0	(15.0)	30.0
: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN	0.0	28.0	(28.0)	0.0
: COMMUNITY APPRAISALS - REGENERATION	0.0	15.0	(15.0)	0.0
: LOCAL PLAN - STRATEGIC FLOODING RISK ASSESSMENT	0.0	10.0	(10.0)	0.0
: LA 21 - ACTION PACKED FUTURES EVENT	0.0	6.0	(6.0)	0.0
: GREEN LANE OFFICES - ASBESTOS REMOVAL	0.0	10.0	(10.0)	0.0
: ICT CONTRIBUTIONS TO CRM PROJECT OFFICE	0.0	8.0	(8.0)	0.0
: ICT - CONSULTANCY RE E-PROCUREMENT IMPLEMENTATION	0.0	2.0	(6.0)	(4.0)
<b><u>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</u></b>	<b>321.3</b>	<b>197.4</b>	<b>(216.4)</b>	<b>302.3</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>				
76 042 : PREMIUMS - DEBT RESCHEDULING	1,146.2	0.0	(427.1)	719.1
76 042 : DISCOUNTS - DEBT RESCHEDULING	(197.5)	0.0	39.3	(158.2)
<b><u>TOTAL H.R.A</u></b>	<b>948.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(387.8)</b>	<b>560.9</b>
<b><u>TOTAL PROVISIONS</u></b>	<b>1,270.0</b>	<b>197.4</b>	<b>(604.2)</b>	<b>863.2</b>

### OUTSTANDING DEBT AS AT 30th September 2005

<b>Current Housing Rents</b>	Current Position £		Position at 31st July 2005 £	Position at 31st March 2005 £
Total arrears				
- Houses, Bungalows & Garages	<b>506,397</b>		<b>496,538</b>	<b>461,193</b>
- Other charges [ HB overpayments etc.]	<b>110,352</b>		<b>115,051</b>	<b>146,923</b>
	<b>616,749</b>		<b>611,589</b>	<b>608,116</b>
Analyses as follows:-				
- Less than £500 outstanding	266,164	3440 tenancies	261,284	
- Between £501 & £1000 outstanding	132,766	188 tenancies	138,329	
- over £1000 outstanding	217,819	121 tenancies	211,976	
	<b>616,749</b>	3749 tenancies*	<b>611,589</b>	

\* Estimated No. tenancies at 30th September 2005 = 8926

### Former Housing Tenants

- Total arrears at 31st March 2005	£ <b>982,784</b>	
- New Former Tenants since 1st April 2005	155,213	
- Cash Receipts since 1st April 2005	(68,452)	
- Total arrears written off at 30th September	<u>(157,075)</u>	
- <b>Total arrears as at 30th September 2005</b>	<b>912,470</b>	1894 cases

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## Council Tax

	Current Year £	Previous Report £
Total Collectable Debit	<u>29,644,676</u>	<u>29,638,739</u>
Already Paid	14,527,063	9,225,758
<b>Debit Outstanding</b>	<b><u>15,117,613</u></b>	<b><u>20,412,981</u></b>
Instalments arranged	12,883,066	18,082,866
reminders Sent	811,922	1,033,397
Final Notice issued	449,797	875,974
Liability Order Obtained	972,910	420,744
	<b><u>15,117,695</u></b>	<b><u>20,412,981</u></b>

# The Council has a full range of recovery procedures in respect of council tax and has a recovery rate well in excess of 99% in this area.

## Accounts Receivable

	Current £	Previous £
Value of invoices outstanding	<b>754,105</b>	<b>544,566</b>
Analysed as follows:-		
- Between 0 & 60 days	703,383	462,287
- Between 61 & 120 days	11,145	53,322
- Outstanding over 120 days	<u>39,577</u>	<u>28,957</u>
	<u>754,105</u>	<u>544,566</u>

## Housing Benefit Overpayments

	Current £	Previous £
Value of Overpayments Outstanding	<b>304,880</b>	<b>341,410</b>
Analysed as follows:-		
- recovery from on-going entitlement	153,820	210,104
- recovery by Invoice	<u>151,060</u>	<u>131,306</u>
	<u>304,880</u>	<u>341,410</u>

## Mortgages

	Current £	Previous £
Value of Mortgages Outstanding	170,631	176,030
total arrears outstanding	<b>1,018</b>	<b>600</b>

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# Item 7

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Tuesday,  
25 October 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor J.E. Higgin (Chairman) and

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. J. Croft, M.A. Dalton,  
Mrs. L. Hovvels, R.A. Patchett, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, T. Ward and  
J. Wayman J.P.

### **Tenant Representatives**

A. McGreggor and Mrs. M. Thomson

### **In**

**Attendance:** Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. K. Conroy, V. Crosby, A. Gray,  
Mrs. J. Gray, B. Hall, J.G. Huntington, B. Meek, G. Morgan and  
Mrs. I. Jackson Smith

**Apologies:** Councillors J. Burton, T.F. Forrest, G.M.R. Howe, Ms. M. Predki and  
G.W. Scott

### **OSC(2).14/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members had no interests to declare.

### **OSC(2).15/05 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 were confirmed  
as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **OSC(2).16/05 INVESTING IN MODERN SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

D. Scarr, Head of Community Services, attended the meeting to give a  
presentation on Durham County Council's proposals for Phase 2 of  
Investing in Modern Services for Older People. (For copy see file of  
Minutes).

The Head of Community Services reminded Members of the process of  
Phase 1, detailing its outcomes, the proposed plans for Phase 2 and the  
general comments that had been received upon the completion of Phase 1.

The Committee was informed that Consultants, Peter Fletcher Association  
and CURS, University of Birmingham, had been employed by Durham  
County Council to review Phase 1 implementation and to suggest options  
for Phase 2 within the wider context of modernising services for older  
people. Details were shown regarding the policy context, the requirements  
of users, the demographics, current supply and their recommendations.

The options to be considered by Durham County Council and issues that faced Sedgefield Borough Council were also detailed in the presentation.

Members expressed support for the need for all Local Authorities to work together in identifying the needs and choices for older people in planning and delivering accommodation and support services.

It was noted that the majority of older people and those who would require services in the future had expressed a clear preference for support in their own homes. Residential care was identified as the least attractive option. It was believed that Extra Care Housing was making a positive contribution to the delivery of services, however, it was felt that more work was needed on establishing the most appropriate model and in developing options, which included Local Authority Sheltered Housing.

Members commented on the cost of equipping homes with adaptations and the length of time it took for the work to be undertaken. The Head of Community Services explained that the commitment of the Council to supporting people in their own homes would be conveyed in the recommendations submitted at the end of the consultation period, together with the recommendation that resources needed to be focused on front line services.

It was agreed that all Member's comments would be taken back and incorporated into the overall response at Sedgefield Borough Council.

- RECOMMENDED:*
- 1. That the recommendations outlined in the Peter Fletcher Report 2005, as follows, be supported: -*
    - a) Develop a Joint Strategy and Commissioning Plan for Older People with a shared vision and direction.*
    - b) Extend partnership and engagement structures with older people.*
    - c) Older persons Modernisation Group to lead on the development of the Joint Strategy.*
    - d) Partnership Boards to take forward the implementation at local level.*
    - e) Districts to develop Accommodation Strategies for Older People to underpin the Joint Strategy.*
    - f) Set up a Project Team to implement Phase 2 including District and PCT representation.*
    - g) Reinvest savings.*
    - h) Develop front line service roles.*
  - 2. That the need to develop Mixed Communities and Sheltered Housing Options within future Extra Care Models be highlighted.*

**OSC(2).17/05 SEDGFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2004/05**

Dr. A. Learmouth, Director of Public Health and Health Improvement, attended the meeting to inform Members of the content of the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2004/05, "Health and Wellbeing of People in Sedgfield". (For copy see file of Minutes).

The presentation detailed the structure of the report, the 27 priorities for action, with specific reference made to the four main aims, which had been identified nationally: -

- Tobacco control
- Education
- Coronary heart disease and cancer
- Local area based needs assessment and engagement

It also detailed the inequalities in health throughout the Borough, which considered all aspects of peoples lives, making specific reference to the 'rainbow of health,' the agencies who had contributed to the completion of the report, ward based statistics, the super output areas and the priorities for action.

Members raised concerns regarding the lack of information available for preventative health measures, specifically for long-term health problems. The Director of Public Health and Health Improvement explained that procedures within all practices were reviewed regularly, however, it was pointed out that she would discuss specific concerns with those responsible.

Detailed consideration was given to the support needed for Community Development, specifically with regard to children's attainment, education and health development.

Members finally expressed their concern regarding the current transportation service available to patients.

*AGREED: That the Committee reviews the progress of the four main aims identified within the report and receive a further report at a future meeting.*

**OSC(2).18/05 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2005 were noted. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**OSC(2).19/05 WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chairman of the Committee setting out the Committee's work programme for consideration and review. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were informed that the Reviews of The Review of Cultural Facilities Within the Borough and The Value of Tourism had been completed and would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

Members requested that the topic of Aids and Adaptations be placed on the Work Programme for consideration.

- AGREED:**
- 1. That an item relating to Aids and Adaptations be included on the Committee's Work Programme.*
  - 2. That the Committee's Work Programme as outlined in the report be approved.*

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Mrs. S. Billingham, Spennymoor 816166, Ext 4240, [sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk)

# Item 8a

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 1 FORUM

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Monday,  
24 October 2005

Time: 6.30 p.m.

- Present:** Councillor J.M. Khan (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and
- Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor Mrs. B. Graham – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor A. Gray – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor M.T.B. Jones – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor B.M. Ord – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor G.W. Scott – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor A. Smith – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor W. Waters – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Inspector A. Green – Durham Constabulary
  - Mrs. G. Willis – Sedgefield PCT
  - Mrs. M. Fordham – Sedgefield PCT
  - Mrs. L. Robson – County Durham and Durham Acute NHS Trust
  - Councillor Mrs. E. Maddison – Spennymoor Town Council
  - Councillor Mrs. M. Smith – Spennymoor Town Council
  - N. Wood – Tudhoe Grange Upper School Student Council
  - I. Geldard – Tudhoe Grange Student Council
  - S. Carse – Neighbourhood Warden
  - A. Lamb – Greenways Residents Association
  - B. Lamb – Greenways Residents Association
  - P. Lawton – Greenways Residents Association
  - R. Stewart – M.A.R.G.
  - D. Gordon – Member of the Public
  - S. L. Armstrong – Member of the Public
- Apologies:**
- Councillor Mrs. C. Sproat - Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor K. Thompson – Sedgefield Borough Council
  - Councillor Mrs. J. Wood – Spennymoor Town Council
  - Mrs. E. Croft – Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
  - Mrs. M. Khan-Willis – Durham County Council
  - Councillor N. Foster – Durham County Council

### **AF(1)13/05 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 were confirmed as a correct record.

During discussion of this item reference was made to Minute No : AF(1)8/05 – Police Report. It was explained that at that meeting discussion was held regarding graffiti and in particular the length of time

for its removal. Following that meeting Street Scene Section at the Borough Council had been informed of the concerns and the particular graffiti referred to at the meeting had been removed that day.

**AF(1)14/05**

**POLICE REPORT (LOCAL ISSUES AND ROAD SAFETY)**

Inspector A. Green was present at the meeting to give details of the crime figures for the area. The crime statistics in relation to reported crime were as follows :-

Burglary dwelling	-	5
Burglary (other)	-	9
Vehicle crime	-	17
Criminal Damage	-	32
Violent Crime	-	34
Theft	-	45
Total Crime	-	130
Overall percentage detection rate	-	31.5%

It was noted that total crime had increased by 9% compared to the same period in the previous year. The overall percentage detection rate had also increased by 9% since July 2005.

It was reported that drug statistics for across the Borough were as follows :-

Drugs seizures	-	71
Drug arrests	-	47
Drug prosecutions	-	68
Cautions	-	14

Reference was made to the loop at the top of the A688. Concerns had been raised and discussions were being held with traffic management on possible solutions.

During discussion of this item the following issues were raised :-

- Anti-social behaviour and in particular under-age drinking in public places and also
- Nuisance caused by fireworks and bonfires.
- The use of Neighbourhood Wardens and additional Police patrols to combat anti-social behaviour.
- The sharing of data between the Police and Primary Care Trust.
- Nuisance being caused by motorcycles
- Drugs awareness seminars

In relation to anti-social behaviour and under-age drinking in public places it was explained that figures in relation to seizure of alcohol etc., would be given at the next meeting of the Forum. However, in response to a query raised, it was explained that the average age for under-age drinkers was between 15 and 17 years.

It was noted that additional patrols had been deployed in Spennymoor Town Centre in an attempt to combat anti-social behaviour. The Police were also working in conjunction with Neighbourhood Wardens to tackle issues. CCTV was also being utilised and monitored.

It was also suggested that the PCT could provide data which the Police could find useful particularly in relation to drug abuse etc., and may enable trends to be identified. This information could also be of use to the Crime Reduction Partnership.

Members of the Forum also discussed the possibility of the re-instatement of Drugs Awareness Seminars which used to be held.

In relation to nuisance being caused by motorcycles it was reported that the Police were undertaking an ongoing operation to try and deal with the issue.

**AF(1)15/05 BISHOP AUCKLAND HOSPITAL**

L. Robson, Director of Nursing, (County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospital) was present at the meeting to answer members questions in relation to Bishop Auckland Hospital. She provided some background to the current position.

She explained that as result of the Darzi Review, it some time ago had been suggested that Health Care Services needed to be more rationalised with major operations being moved to the larger hospitals. It was, however, pointed out that a minor operations would continue to take place Bishop Auckland Hospital and a number of Consultants were holding sessions there. Patients who needed further surgery would be referred to one of the larger specialised hospitals.

Miss Robson explained that a key issue had been the proposed merger of two wards as a result of difficulty in recruiting nursing staff to cover for maternity leave, etc. The proposals had been perceived as a permanent closure and this had never been the intention.

It was explained that the move of major surgical procedures to Darlington had come about as a result of the need to maintain the level of expertise among surgeons and ensure that there was sufficient work of the calibre needed.

This would lead to spare capacity at Bishop Auckland Hospital and it was proposed that collective surgery from the rest of the area could be taken at Bishop Auckland Hospital and would be focused on intensive therapy etc.

Reference was also made to the Midwifery Unit at Bishop Hospital and the hospital which had received positive response from people using the unit and had capacity to be used by patients from Darlington and Durham.

In relation to Acute Medicine for heart attacks, strokes, etc., this would still be undertaken at Bishop Auckland Hospital. It was explained that the

proposals were the result of a need for change and to maintain an effective/safe service across the area.

During discussion a query was raised regarding the training of Junior Doctors. It was explained that Junior Doctors were still being trained at Bishop Auckland Hospital. Accreditation for training anaesthetists had also been regained.

In response to a query raised regarding dealing with major incidents, it was explained that round the table exercises had been held and the ability to deal with major incidents had been tested.

Discussion was also held regarding the level of cleaning within Bishop Auckland Hospital and in particular whether there was an adequate number of cleaners to maintain levels of hygiene in the Hospital to deal with the MRS superbug. It was explained by Miss Robson that the cleaning of the Hospital was purchased on a contract basis and it was considered that there were sufficient cleaners to deal with current activity. Cleanliness at the Hospital was constantly being reviewed and the levels of the superbug were very low.

A query was raised in relation to the midwifery-led maternity unit at Bishop Auckland Hospital. It was explained that usage of the unit was monitored.

Dealing with a query in relation to haematology and service provision, it was explained that there was a need to look at the haematology provision across the region.

Discussion was also held regarding provision of changing facilities for staff. It was explained that changing facilities for staff were provided which enabled uniforms to be worn only within the hospital. There was also a policy that uniforms should not be worn outside the hospital. However, no facilities were available for washing the uniforms in the hospital and therefore they had to be taken home for that purpose.

Reference was also made to transport and apparent lack of a joined up approach to ambulance and transport provision. It was explained that private taxis were used in some cases.

#### **AF(1)16/05**

#### **SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

Mrs. M. Fordham and Mrs. G. Wills, Sedgfield PCT attended the meeting to give an update on local health matters and performance figures.

Reference was made to the Local Improvement Finance Trust Initiative (LIFT) and in particular progress. It was explained that the Spennymoor Programme had included the provision of the Health Centre and incorporated the library. Durham County Council had, however, indicated that they no longer wished to reprovide there. A feasibility study would therefore have to be undertaken in relation to the reprovion of the Health Centre. A sum of money had been set aside for that study and suitable locations would be examined.



During discussion concern was expressed regarding NHS dental services and the length of time to obtain an appointment and also the lack of provision. It was also queried whether there was to be a dental practice on the site of the former Venue.

It was considered that research needed to be undertaken to ensure that there was sufficient NHS dental provision in the Spennymoor area.

In relation to the feasibility study and timing, it was hoped that the study would be undertaken prior to any dissolution of the PCT.

Discussion was also held regarding the provision of healthcare and whether it was adequate for the additional population that was anticipated in Spennymoor.

The Forum was also informed of proposals in relation to the re-provision of Primary Care Trusts. It was explained that proposals would be out for consultation in December. It was anticipated that the consultation paper would identify three options :-

- ❖ Option 1 – no change
- ❖ Option 2 - a merger with one single county-wide trust
- ❖ Option 3 – North and South Primary Care Trusts

It was suggested that those proposals should be considered at an Area Forum meeting as part of the consultation process.

Reference was also made to a health care self-assessment which the County Health Scrutiny Committee had fed into.

Mrs. Fordham also made reference to a questionnaire for members of the public "Your Health Your Care, Your Fate". Copies of that questionnaire would be forwarded to members of the Forum for completion and were to be forwarded to Citizens Survey Freepost AMG40159, Grays, RM20 3ZY.

The Forum was informed of details of achieving patient access targets which had been submitted to the Board Meeting in October. (For copy see file of Minutes).

In relation to the target on maximum waiting for Outpatients appointments, it was explained that over 13 week waiters were below profile for most of the months identified in the report. Targets all continued to be reached in relation to patients wishing to see a Primary Health Care Professional within 24 hours and a GP within 48 hours.

Reference was made to the difficulty with the breakdown of accident and emergency statistics as information relating to accident and emergencies was unable to be obtained from the University Hospital of North Durham and the University Hospital of North Tees.

Details were also given in relation to patient choice, quality indicators and ambulance targets.

During discussion reference was made to the nutritional value of school meals etc., and it was suggested that this be further discussed at the next meeting.

In relation to public health smoking quitters, discussion was also held regarding advice etc., which young people were given in relation to smoking. It was explained that there were young people dropping clinics etc. However, those did not seem to be targeted.

The document "Our Public Health" was circulated to members of the Forum.

The Forum then discussed the contamination policy for ambulances and it was explained that the following situation existed :-

If crews thought the ambulance needed cleaning the working day the operational staff were stood down and the ambulance was cleaned with an anti-bacterial solution.

If it was felt that a fuller clean was needed the ambulance is out of operation and sent to the workshop.

Workshops can also clean the ambulance if maintenance work etc., is being undertaken.

Every thirteen weeks ambulances were given an immediate deep clean.

Every twenty six weeks taken apart inside and out and a full deep clean carried out.

**AF(1)17/05**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was to be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2005 at 6.30 p.m. at Middlestone Moor Community Centre..

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Mrs. Gillian Garrigan Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240

# Item 8b

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 2 FORUM

Chilton and Windlestone  
Community College

Tuesday, 1 November  
2005

Time: 6.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs. C. Potts (Chairman) – Sedgfield Borough Council and

Councillor B.F. Avery J.P	–	Sedgfield Borough Council
Councillor R.S. Fleming	–	Sedgfield Borough Council
Councillor A. Hodgson	–	Sedgfield Borough Council
Councillor G. Morgan	–	Sedgfield Borough Council
Mrs S. Dodsworth	–	Sedgfield Borough Council
G. Muncaster	–	Bishop Middleham
C. Mason	–	Sedgfield Borough Council – Neighbourhood Warden
Councillor G. Attwood	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor M. Errington	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor P. Gray	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor J. Lee	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor L. Potts	–	Chilton Town Council
C. Hall	–	Castles Residents Association
M. Taylor	–	Chilton West Residents Association
J. Weston	–	Dean Bank Residents Association
Councillor G. Porter	–	Durham County Council
Sergeant K. Vincent	–	Durham Constabulary
Councillor J. Chaplin	–	Ferryhill Town Council
Councillor A. Denton	–	Ferryhill Town Council
G. Hall	–	Ferryhill Station Residents Association
D. Cullerton	–	Local Resident
J. Cullerton	–	Local Resident
G. Errington	–	Local Resident
C. Harrison	–	Local Resident
L. Race	–	Local Resident
W. Race	–	Local Resident
B. Sheppard	–	Local Resident

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs. K. Conroy - Sedgfield Borough Council.  
Councillor T.F. Forrest – Sedgfield Borough Council  
Councillor J.E. Higgin – Sedgfield Borough Council  
Councillor B. Meek – Sedgfield Borough Council  
Councillor D.A. Newell – Sedgfield Borough Council  
Councillor R.A. Patchett – Sedgfield Borough Council  
Councillor Ms. M. Predki – Sedgfield Borough Council

**AF(2)13/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members had no interests to declare.

**AF(2)14/05 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(2)15/05 POLICE REPORT**

Sergeant K. Vincent was present at the meeting to give details of the crime figures and local initiatives for the area.

It was reported that the crime statistics for the area over the following months were:

	<u>September:</u>	<u>October:</u>
Total No. of Crimes (Regarding below incidents)	117	121
Dwelling Burglary	13	11
Att. Burglary - Dwelling	0	0
Burglary Other	9	2
Violence Against Persons (Assaults)	11	7
Theft of Motor Vehicles	2	3
Theft from Motor Vehicles	8	10
Attempted Thefts from Motor Vehicles	1	0
Theft - General	27	23
Drug/Substance Misuse	8	6
Criminal Damage	39	56
Rowdy Nuisance Behaviour	130	140
Motorcycle complaints	19	5
(Total for 2003 – 43)		
(Total for 2004 – 73)		
Total No. of Incidents	648	666
Total Number of Arrest	56	80

Sgnt Vincent informed members that Operation Ballade, Pelmet and Shore were ongoing in the areas of Chilton and West Cornforth and were producing results in targeting racial problems and anti social behaviour. Operation Darc had also resumed to promote household security. Security equipment would be available from the Crime Prevention section based at Spennymoor Police Office.

It was reported that the problems regarding uninsured vehicles in the area were being addressed. Sgnt Vincent explained that an operation was being carried out by Durham Constabulary Road Policing Department. The operation enabled Police Officers to seize vehicles that were stopped and found to have no insurance.

Specific reference was made to a number of multi-agency initiatives that were taking place. Members of the Forum were informed that they included the removal of graffiti and 30 tonnes of rubbish. A protocol had also been developed by Sedgfield Borough Council and County Durham Fire and Rescue Brigade to target and remove unauthorised bonfires.

With regard to confidential reporting boxes, it was pointed out that they had now been installed in Hutton House, Henderson House and Chilton and Windlestone Community College. It was noted that they had already been installed in areas of Ferryhill and West Cornforth.

Concerns were raised regarding the continuing problem of anti-social behaviour, specifically the problem of properties being targeted. Sgnt Vincent explained that the Police were aware of the problem and it was receiving their attention.

Detailed consideration was given to ways of tackling the problem, with suggestions being made for the introduction of youth shelters. The positive and negative points of youth shelters, together with where they had been introduced successfully/unsuccessfully were discussed. It was reported that Chilton Town Council was considering the implementation of a Multi-Use Game Centre, which could be floodlit, with security installed. Members welcomed the proposal and asked to be kept up to date.

**AF(2)16/05**

**SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

N. Porter, Chief Executive, Sedgefield Primary Care Trust, attended the meeting to present an update on local health matters and performance figures. Copies of the Board papers for achieving patient access targets and baseline performance requirements together with "Your Health Matters" magazine were distributed at the Forum.

N. Porter informed members of the Forum that Primary Care Trusts across the country would be reconfigured by October 2006 following the publication of 'Commissioning a Patient Led NHS.' Proposals had been made to the Department of Health that the number of Primary Care Trusts within Durham and Darlington be reduced from 6 to 1.

It was reported that the Leaders and Chief Executive Officers of the District Councils within County Durham had met with the Chief Executive Officer of the new Strategic Health Authority to express concerns regarding the proposal to have one PCT to cover such a large area. It was felt that the health services were best provided on a locality basis and there should be at least two Primary Care Trusts established, at the very minimum.

Members of the Forum felt the existing structure was working well and the fact that Sedgefield PCT had recently obtained a 3 Star rating, supported that view. It was pointed out that Members of the Area 5 Forum had supported the above recommendation of the District Councils of establishing two Primary Care Trusts. It was agreed the Area 2 Forum would do the same.

Reference was made to the number of Listening events that had taken place, which had been successful in allowing the public to air their views, together with the success of the Integrated Teams.

Members of the Forum raised concerns regarding the lack of progress that had been made on the development of the new Health Centre. They expressed their disappointment at the management of the project and the

fact that promises had been made on a number of occasions and had not been kept.

Specific reference was made to the lack of contact with the Chairman of Chilton Workingmen's Club, the owner of the land on which the centre could be sited. It was also believed that the feasibility study had not taken place, nor had the land been valued by the LIFT Company.

The Chief Executive of Sedgefield Primary Care Trust apologised for the fact that the community's expectations had not been met. He reassured the Forum that contact would be made with the Chairman of the Club and the matter would be discussed with the relevant officer.

Members of the Forum were also reassured that the Feasibility Study was underway and should be completed by June 2006. The results of which would then be sent to the LIFT Company. Once the results had been compiled and the land identified as suitable/unsuitable the project would be able to progress. It was explained that if the land at the Club was found to be unsuitable it would not result in the collapse of the project. Chilton had been identified as a priority location and would receive a Health Centre.

**AF(2)17/05**

#### **LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Leader of the Council was present to inform Members of the Local Improvement Programme.

It was explained that the Borough Council had received a substantial receipt from the sale of land and had agreed to use the money to support activities that fell within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's eligible expenditure definition of regeneration and affordable housing.

It was pointed out that schemes to be advanced through the Local Improvement Programme would need to demonstrate:

- Conformity to the specified ODPM regeneration and affordable housing criteria.
- Clear linkages to the delivery of the Council's Community Strategy and its key aims and plans and outcomes.
- Appropriate levels of community consultation and reference to any Local Community Appraisal.
- Provision of sufficient detail in the project's submission to show a specific quantification of the benefits to be achieved by the investment and to explain the process by which the scheme will be delivered and over what time period.
- How any current or revenue funding implications would be managed.
- Value for money should clearly be demonstrated to include any match funding from other grant sources.

Allocations were based on the local areas percentage share of households within the Borough. It was emphasised that there was no pressure to spend allocated budgets within any one financial year. Unspent money

would be rolled forward into the next financial year and protected for that Forum Area.

All project proposals for the 2005/06 financial year needed to be forwarded to the Regeneration Team by January 2006. The Team would appraise the proposals for the relevant Area Forums and make recommendations to Cabinet in the new year.

It was pointed out that from April 2006, each Area Forum would be engaged in preparing a Local Area Framework based upon the Borough's Community Strategy to help identify those projects that would best meet the needs of the area. It was noted that officers in the Regeneration Section were currently engaged in preparing facts and figures for the five areas on which the Local Area Frameworks could be based.

Detailed discussion was given to problems associated with Private Landlords and the type of properties that would be built.

**AF(2)18/05**

**ABANDONED VEHICLES**

C. Mason, Neighbourhood Warden, was present at the meeting to update the Forum of the recent changes regarding abandoned vehicles.

It was reported that Neighbourhood Wardens had become responsible for Abandoned Vehicles on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2005.

It was explained that any vehicle that had been abandoned, was untaxed or advertised for sale on a public road was at risk of being seized.

Neighbourhood Wardens were now able to access personnel details from the vehicles number plate, which would enable them to contact the owner. They could issue letters and 24-hour Notice directly to the owners to inform them to remove the vehicle. If after that period the vehicle had not been moved, it would be seized and the owner issued a fixed penalty notice.

Members of the Forum were reassured that Neighbourhood Wardens were on patrol across the area monitoring the problem.

It was agreed that a further report would be brought to a future meeting in the new year.

**AF(2)19/05**

**NAMING OF DEVELOPMENT**

**Land rear of New South View, Chilton**

Consideration was given to a report of the Building Control Manager regarding a request received from Riverdale Homes to officially name and number the above development comprising eleven detached dwellings. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members of the Forum proposed the name of, "John Herriott."

**AF(2)20/05**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10<sup>th</sup> January 2006 at 6.30 p.m. at West Cornforth Community Centre.

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Miss S. Billingham Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240, [sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk)



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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