

# CABINET

Thursday, 22 December 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 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005. (Pages 1 - 4)

### KEY DECISIONS

#### HOUSING PORTFOLIO

**4. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS**

Report of Director of Housing Services. (Pages 5 - 12)

#### CULTURE AND RECREATION PORTFOLIO

**5. REVIEW OF FACILITY ACCOMMODATION AT SHILDON SUNNYDALE LEISURE CENTRE**

Report of Director of Leisure Services. (Pages 13 - 20)

### OTHER DECISIONS

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

**6. AUTOMATED NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION (ANPR)**

Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 21 - 24)

#### REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

**7. COUNTY DURHAM MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - MINERALS ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT**

Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 25 - 30)

#### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

**8. BUDGET FRAMEWORK 2006/07 - TIMETABLE**

Report of Director of Resources. (Pages 31 - 34)

### MINUTES

**9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

To consider the minutes of the following:

- (a) Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1 22nd November 2005 (Pages 35 - 38)
- (b) Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3 - 28th November 2005 (Pages 39 - 42)

**10. AREA 5 FORUM**

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2005. (Pages 43 - 50)

**11. 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  
14<sup>th</sup> December 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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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,  
8 December 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and

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

**In**

**Attendance:** Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. J. Croft, V. Crosby,  
A. Gray, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin, J.G. Huntington, J.P. Moran,  
G. Morgan, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith, Mrs. I. Jackson Smith and  
T. Ward

**Apologies:** Councillors D.A. Newell

**CAB.95/05      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members had no interests to declare.

**CAB.96/05      MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005 were confirmed  
as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**CAB.97/05      CHIEF EXECUTIVES DEPARTMENT STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT -  
STRATEGY AND REGENERATION (KEY DECISION)**  
Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to revise the staffing  
structure of the Strategy and Regeneration Division of the Chief  
Executives Department in order to implement the Housing Land Capital  
Receipts Strategy that had been agreed by Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005.  
(For copy see file of Minutes).

The report gave details of the proposed creation of a new Capital  
Programmes Section to oversee the commissioning role, manage  
relationships with strategic partners, develop projects, monitor activities  
associated with the delivery of the Programme and to provide a link to  
local communities and partners on the progress of schemes. It also  
outlined changes to the job description and contract status of one existing  
member of staff.

**RESOLVED :**    1. *That the staffing structure for the Strategy and  
Regeneration Division of the Chief Executives  
Department be revised, as detailed in the report,  
namely the creation of the following posts (above  
Scale 6)*

- i) *Capital Programmes Manager (POL)*
  - ii) *Programme Development and Appraisal Officer (2) (POC)*
  - (iii) *Community Project Development Officers (2) (POA)*
2. *That the existing fixed term post of Town Centre Manager for Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor, be partially changed to reflect a development focus.*

**CAB.98/05      COMMUNITY REGENERATION BUDGET 2004/05 AND 2005/06**

The Lead Member for Regeneration presented a report regarding the Community Regeneration Budget for 2005/06. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The report outlined the way in which the Community Regeneration Budget would be used in 2005/06 to assist local community based partnerships and initiatives, contribute to the wider economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Borough and to assist partnerships and community groups to obtain match funding to help them complete their projects.

It was pointed out that the level of funding available for 2005/06 amounted to £55,000, which included £15,000 carried over from 2004/05.

Members noted that a large element of the budget would be used to commission consultancy work on behalf of the partnerships throughout the Borough to provide community appraisals covering all the Borough's non priority wards.

*RESOLVED :                      That the use of the Community Regeneration Budget for 2005/06, as detailed in the report, be approved.*

**CAB.99/05      SPORTS DEVELOPMENT - LEISURE CENTRE PROGRAMMING**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to change the Council's leisure centre facility programming between the hours of 3.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Monday to Friday, to allow the development of sporting opportunities for young people after the school day. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members noted that the need to increase participation and ensure that pathways were available for talented athletes to maximise their potential was referred to in national, regional and the Council's own sports planning documents.

Appendix 1 to the report showed the existing programming of leisure centre sports halls and identified an indicative programme for the development of sport, should room be made available to allow that to happen.

It was pointed out that the proposed change in the programme would not result in the loss of opportunities for adult 5-a-side football, which currently accounted for 50% of all sports hall time, as discussions had taken place with other facility providers to identify spare capacity that could be made available for community use.

*RESOLVED : That working within the existing budgets the proposed sports development programme outlined in the report be implemented by March 2007.*

**CAB.100/05 IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT (IEG5)**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the Council's IEG5 statement, which needed to be submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister by Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2005. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Siobhan Walsh, E- Government Officer attended the meeting to give a presentation regarding the Council's approach to e-Government and the progress made to date.

Members noted that the Council had met the target of 100% for all customer facing services to be delivered through electronic means by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005.

*RESOLVED : That the contents of IEG5 Statement be agreed.*

**CAB.101/05 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meetings of Overview and Scrutiny 3 Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2005. (For copies see file of Minutes).

*RESOLVED : That the Committee's recommendation be received and appropriate action be taken.*

**CAB.102/05 AREA FORUMS**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the following meetings:

Area 3 Forum - 9<sup>th</sup> November 2005  
Area 4 Forum - 15<sup>th</sup> November 2005

(For copies see file of Minutes).

*RESOLVED : That the reports 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 items of business on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in*

**CAB.103/05 CHANGES TO STAFFING STRUCTURE - LEISURE SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT - MAINTENANCE TEAM**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to alter the existing staffing structure of the Leisure Services Maintenance Team to improve its effectiveness and make efficiency savings. (For copy see file of Minutes).

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

**Published on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2005.**

**The key decision contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2005 unless they are called in by five Members of the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call in procedure rules.**

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# Item 4

## KEY DECISION

## REPORT TO CABINET

DATE 22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2005

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

### Housing Portfolio

#### CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

##### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Government is committed to driving forward Choice Based Lettings (CBL), to support the allocation of social rented housing and have set a target for all local authorities to have a CBL scheme in place by 2010. The belief is that offering choice with allocation policies is the best way to ensure sustainable tenancies and to build settled and stable communities.
- 1.2 The Government are actively encouraging regional or sub-regional bids from local authorities and other social housing providers to develop CBL, they have invited joint bids from social housing providers to develop such schemes.
- 1.3 The development of CBL will require significant and comprehensive consultation with all key stakeholders to be compliant with housing legislation.

##### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- 2.1 Approve the continued development of a sub-regional approach to CBL in partnership with the other Durham Local Authorities and key partners as appropriate, including a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase sub-regional bid to the ODPM for funding for the development and implementation of a CBL scheme.
- 2.2 Receive a further report on the financial implications and the outcome of the bid to the ODPM when resource implications become known.
- 2.3 Note the process and timetable outlined in the report for developing a CBL scheme.

##### 3. DETAILS

- 3.1 Traditionally many Councils have operated "points" based housing allocation systems, that have provided applicants with points according to need, e.g. for overcrowding or lack of facilities. The applicant with the most points, and therefore at the 'top of the list' is the applicant who is offered a home. This is the type of system we currently use and although applicants can state their area of choice on their application form, when they arrive at the front of the queue, provided the available property is in their stated area they are offered the available accommodation.

- 3.2 In 2001 a large scale review of national housing policy culminated in a green paper “Quality and Choice: A Decent Home For All”. One of the themes of this paper, consolidated in the Housing Policy Statement released in “Quality and Choice: A Decent Home For All – The Way Forward for Housing” was the introduction of choice into housing allocation policies.

Following the publication of “Quality and Choice”, bids were invited from authorities who wished to pilot choice-based letting schemes. The Government received 93 bids for 27 pilot projects. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published some initial lessons learned from the pilots and continue to provide good practice guidance via publication and information on the ODPM website.

The Government have made it clear that it sees choice of a home as essential to building sustainable communities and has consequently built a target into the Homelessness Act 2002 to require all Councils to have CBL by 2010.

- 3.3 The results of the evaluation of the CBL pilots and subsequent schemes have been generally positive, with the overall findings from the evaluation highlighting:-

- Applicant satisfaction with the opportunity to exercise relatively greater choice;
- Increased understanding of allocations and lettings by applicant;
- Greater relative perception of fairness of CBL compared to points system by applicants;
- Applicant support for the transparency of the CBL;
- Importance of proactive and support services of CBL.

- 3.4 CBL systems are now operating successfully in a wide range of local housing markets. A fundamental message from the evaluation study is that these schemes work in high demand areas as well as low demand areas. Although balancing “need” and “choice” is a challenging issue in high demand urban and rural locations, this can be resolved.

- 3.5 At present no statutory guidance exists for the delivery of CBL, but this is likely to be issued later this year. At this stage only a guide issued by the ODPM to “Implementing and Developing CBL”, is available.

- 3.6 The Government have highlighted six key messages for local authorities and their partners to consider in the preparation of CBL schemes.

#### **3.6.1 Enabling vulnerable groups to participate in CBL**

An issue that emerged from the CBL pilot programmes was the initial lack of support for vulnerable households. Innovated approaches are needed to be developed to tackle this challenge.

### **3.6.2 Meeting the Needs of Homeless Households and Households in Temporary Accommodation**

Considerable efforts have been made by the pilots to guard against disadvantaging homeless households. In reviewing or developing CBL schemes the needs of homeless households and of those in temporary accommodation must be met.

### **3.6.3 Community Cohesion and CBL**

An emerging issue the extent to which allocations and letting policies, including CBL, reinforce or change patterns at spatial segregation. Consideration must be given to ensure the CBL schemes do not directly or indirectly exacerbate spatial segregation.

### **3.6.4 Partnerships Working**

The ODPM emphasises the importance of partnership working in developing CBL systems. The ODPM believes schemes that involve only one organisation are unlikely to be able to provide a comprehensive service for applicants.

### **3.6.5 Monitoring, Reviewing and Enhancing CBL Models**

CBL systems must be reviewed and monitored so that improvements are continually made for the benefit of applicants and tenants.

### **3.6.6 Regional Approach**

The Government is keen to see the development of regional and sub-regional CBL systems. Existing local administrative boundaries do not necessarily reflect housing and labour markets and there is a need for allocation and letting systems to take account for this reality.

3.6.7 The ODPM is providing £4 million over three years (2005/06 – 2007/08) to support the development of regional and sub-regional strategies CBL schemes in England. This year the ODPM is making money available using a bidding process. The Government invited initial bids from all housing authorities which were required to be returned to the Government Office by 7<sup>th</sup> October 2005. Successful schemes will be announced by the end of November and funding will be made available by the end of December 2005.

3.6.8 The GONE and the ODPM have indicated that following the initial bidding round a review will take place on how future resources are allocated.

3.6.9 It is likely that a future round of bidding will take place early 2006 and there will not be a need to wait 12 months.

#### **4. SEDGFIELD POSITION RELATING TO THE KEY MESSAGES**

- 4.1 To commence the process of developing a CBL scheme for Sedgfield it is essential that the consideration of partnership working and opportunities for a regional approach be undertaken. On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005 representatives from all Durham district authorities met to consider a regional or sub-regional approach. In principle it was felt a common CBL scheme did have merits. Unfortunately not all districts were in a position to pursue a sub-regional funding bid by 7<sup>th</sup> October 2005 to the ODPM.
- 4.2 A further meeting with the Durham Authorities took place on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2005 where it was agreed to proceed, subject to the support and endorsement of individual Councils, in partnership with a CBL scheme and prepare for a future funding bid once the ODPM announced the future bidding arrangements
- 4.3 It is considered that we should proceed with the development of CBL as it is felt its introduction would positively contribute to production of a transparent system of allocation that provided a range of applicants in housing need with the opportunity to 'bid' for available accommodation.

#### **5. PREPARATION FOR A CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME**

- 5.1 ODPM guidance outlines an approach in planning and setting up a CBL scheme. They believe there are four key principles that need to be considered to successfully develop and implement CBL, those principles will be embraced to develop CBL in Sedgfield as part of a sub-regional scheme.

##### **5.1.1 Review Existing Allocations System**

This is the starting point, which includes a robust assessment of the existing allocations system. The ODPM encourage landlords to make use of the Audit Commissioner's "Key Lines of Enquiry" on allocations and lettings. The robust assessment should involve four aspects:-

- Current position on allocations and lettings;
- Changing nature of the housing market;
- Allocations and local housing policies;
- Allocations and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's)

##### **5.1.2 Agreeing A Vision**

It is essential that there is a long term "vision" for choice in lettings agreed by local stakeholders. The crucial question is "Why do we want to introduce choice"? It might for instance be about:-

- Providing a fair, transparent and understandable system;
- Developing an applicant central approach that enables households to be proactive in addressing their own requirements;
- Making better use of existing rented stock;
- Improving efficiency in allocations and lettings;
- Meeting the needs of vulnerable households;
- Helping to create sustainable communities and community cohesion.

### 5.1.3 Route Map

A “map” will be required that identifies the routes for moving from their current position to the vision. A series of changes will need to take place overtime to full establishment of CBL model.

### 5.1.4 Detailed Policies and Procedures

These should reflect local circumstances and take account of existing schemes so that good practice lessons are learnt and used to meet the needs of housing markets and different priorities. All policies, procedures and processes that are developed must be tested prior to full CBL scheme launch.

## 6. TIMESCALE

- 6.1 The ODPM guidance suggests that the timeframe for setting up a CBL scheme is likely to take appropriately 18 months to 2 years from initiating a review of allocations and lettings through the launch of a system.
- 6.2 The proposed timescale for introducing CBL in Sedgefield through a sub-regional partnership is likely to go beyond this timeframe due to the need to attain cross organisational decision and agreement on key issues of the CBL scheme.
- 6.3 It would be more realistic to look for implementation within 3 years.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Government require local authorities to embrace CBL, and have a scheme in place by 2010. Additional funding may be available to assist the regional or sub-regional development of such schemes, and a bid for funding will be forwarded to the ODPM when details of the bidding process is released.

## 8. CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The introduction of CBL will need to be undertaken compliant with the corporate Equality and Diversity requirements, Section 166 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by Section 15 of the Homelessness Act 2002) requires housing authorities to ensure advice and information about the right to apply for housing accommodation is available free and that if a person is likely to have difficulty in making an application, any assistance should be provided free of charge.
- 8.2 The Code of Guidance 2002 on allocation of accommodation recommends that written advice and information should be available in a range of accessible formats and languages, and stresses that where an allocation policy (such as choice-based lettings) requires greater participation by the applicant that housing authorities provide assistance for this. CBL's where the onus is on the customer to express an interest in a property can disadvantage people who have difficulties with the written word. Links should be made with support networks for those customers who are vulnerable and likely to be disadvantaged by the system.

8.3 Monitoring of lettings by ethnic origin takes place currently and this would need to be expanded to monitor the effect of any new procedures on black and minority ethnic applicants.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 It is unclear what resources would be required at this stage, and whether support will be received sub-regionally if the bid to the ODPM is successful.

9.2 A clearer understanding of resource needs for the development and implementation of the CBL scheme as well as for the future running costs would become known when the initial research and fact finding process has been completed.

9.3 It would therefore be appropriate to bring a further report once the outcome of the bid to the ODPM is known and a greater understanding of other future resource implications become apparent.

## **10. CONSULTATION**

10.1 There is a legal requirement on local authorities to consult with RSL's (Registered Social Landlords) about changes to allocations policies and we would ensure that through the process for gaining key partners, RSL's would be fully involved.

10.2 Overview and Scrutiny 2 have assigned to their forward plan a review of the Allocations Policy. Therefore this work will support the development of a CBL scheme.

10.3 The Government also recommends that housing authorities should consult:-

- Social Services Departments;
- Supporting People Teams;
- Health Authorities;
- Connexions Partnerships;
- Relevant Voluntary Sector Organisations;
- Other Recognised Referral Bodies.

10.4 Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 requires public sector landlords to have arrangements to inform and consult secure tenants who are likely to be 'substantially affected' by some proposed changes in matters of housing management.

## **11. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

11.1 Under Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Council must have an allocation scheme, for determining priorities, and as to the procedure to be followed, in allocating housing accommodation. The scheme must include a statement of the Council's policy on offering people who are to be allocated housing accommodation:-

- A choice of housing accommodation; or
- The opportunity to express preferences about the housing accommodation to be allocated to them.

11.2 The scheme must be framed so as to secure that a reasonable preference is given to the following groups:-

- People who are homeless;
- People who are owed a duty under relevant sections of the Act;
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds; and
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

11.3 The priority for housing accommodation must go to those with the greater housing needs. The Council's scheme must give reasonable preference to those applicants who fall within the groups mentioned above, over those who do not. Applicants who are not so entitled to a reasonable preference cannot compete on equal terms with those who are.

## 12. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Overview and Scrutiny 2 Committee have identified CBL as an issue that they wish to examine as part of their work programme.

**Contact Officer:** Graham Scanlon  
**Telephone Number:** 01388 816166 Ext. 4207  
**E-mail address:** [gscanlon@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:gscanlon@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Wards:** All Wards

**Key Decision Validation:** Yes

**Background Papers:** Not applicable

### 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 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

## KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET  
22 DECEMBER 2005

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF  
LEISURE SERVICES

### Portfolio: Culture & Recreation

#### Review of facility accommodation at Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre

## 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The pace with which the leisure market is changing demands that facility provision and accommodation is able to change also.
- 1.2 Consideration of accommodation located on the lower and ground floors of Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre which reflects a public consultation exercise undertaken in August and September of 2005, concludes that changes are necessary.
- 1.3 This report to Cabinet will seek approval in principle to redesign part of the leisure centre with the assistance of both the private and voluntary sector partners, and consider the existing operating arrangements with the SSLC bowling club.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That members of Cabinet approve in principle the redevelopment proposals outlined in the report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agree to a lease arrangement with the Bowling Club and authorise the Director of Leisure Services to negotiate appropriate Heads of Terms.
- 2.3 That a further report be submitted to Cabinet outlining development costs, funding partners and agreed Heads of Terms referred to in 2.2 above.

## 3 DETAIL

- 3.1 Members are aware of plans to extend the fitness suite at Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre currently located within a converted squash court. These proposals were articulated within the contract conditions negotiated with Competition Line and signed in 2004.
- 3.2 Cabinet have called for reviews of leisure centre accommodation within each of the Borough's leisure centres and changes are currently

underway at both Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

- 3.3 Given the programming of work to Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre is now under consideration for a start date of Autumn 2006, a consultation exercise with users of the leisure centre, Shildon residents and Shildon Town Council was undertaken in August and September 2005 in an effort to gather views about all the accommodation located on the first floor of the centre.
- 3.4 Areas under review included the lounge, the fitness suite, the second squash court, the sauna suite and the bowling green.
- 3.5 Anchored within the community strategy, corporate plan and medium term financial plan are the aspirations to improve the health of the residents of the Borough by encouraging more opportunities for physical activity, to provide facilities and programmes for our young people to engage in the cultural agenda and to work with other partners to attract capital investment and reduce operating costs.
- 3.6 The conclusion of the research findings are contained in section 6 of the report. However, shown at appendix 1 is a first and second floor plan setting out existing and proposed changes to accommodation which reflects the findings of the leisure centre research.

In summary the fitness suite would be extended on the first floor incorporating space currently occupied by the second squash court and lounge. The lounge would no longer exist, however the bar would remain in tact, the sauna suite would be redeveloped into changing accommodation, a new fitness class/activity area would be provided on the ground floor below the existing fitness suite and the bowling green and adjacent lounge would remain.

#### **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The consultation period commenced in August and extended into September 2005. The work was conducted within the local community targeting both users and non-users of the leisure centre.
- 4.2 The consultation process was delivered using a mixed strategy including qualitative and quantitative feedback from a questionnaire, emails, telephone and written responses.
- 4.3 There were 517 completed questionnaires received of which 468 were completed by existing users, 48 by non-users and 5 did not specify. Furthermore 6 written responses were received.
- 4.4 The age profile of the 517 sample was 23% under 18's, 11% 19-29 year olds, 27% 30-49 year olds, 11% 50-60 year olds and 29% 65 years and over.

- 4.5 Of the total sample, 29% were bowlers, 25% fitness users, 11% footballers, 7% users of fitness classes, 4% athletes, 4% martial arts exponents, 3% cyber café users and 13% other.
- 4.6 A detailed analysis of the research is available for inspection, however the main results indicate that current provision at the leisure centre broadly speaking reflects consumer demand, with emphasis lying on the need for specific improvements to certain activity areas. Results conclude that 32% of respondents want improvements to the quality of the bowling green, 27% want improvements to fitness training accommodation, for example larger room, more equipment and generally a better environment. A total of 18% want to see improvements to fitness classes which again includes a better environment, more equipment and greater variety and availability of classes. Finally 15% of the sample want to see more opportunities for junior fitness training, for example a larger space and more equipment.
- 4.7 Other comments included better changing rooms, better toilet accommodation and improved air conditioning to all physical activity areas.
- 4.8 Specifically, non-users (49 respondents) commented upon the need to increase accommodation for fitness classes, improve the environment for bowling, increase the accommodation for junior fitness opportunities and improve the environment and accommodation for fitness training.
- 4.9 The complete research findings are available for inspection.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Borough Council's desire to keep under constant review its investment in Leisure Services and to ensure that the facility stock reflects consumer demand has driven this research study.
- 5.2 To deliver changes to Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre which reflects the consultation feedback requires a re-assessment of current accommodation.
- 5.3 Should Cabinet approve on principle the proposals to develop the accommodation in line with the report's recommendations, relevant costs and partnerships will be able to be established in order to submit a further report to Cabinet before April 2006.

## **6 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Improvements to the quality of activity areas in terms of their size, the use of materials, equipment and temperature/humidity issues are key issues for our customers.

6.2 Generally speaking the Borough Council is providing the range of facility accommodation that is currently demanded, however in order to provide more accurately fit for purpose accommodation, the way in which existing areas are being used must be kept under constant review.

## 7 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 There is real pressure to increase the operating space for the expansion of fitness suite accommodation. The most cost effective way to do this is to convert the bowling green. However, if appropriate Heads of Terms of a lease are able to be successfully agreed between the Borough Council and the Bowling Club and subject to the satisfactory discharge of responsibilities under the terms of the lease, then the option to retain the bowling green should be approved.

**Contact Officer:** Mr Phil Ball  
**Telephone No:** Ext: 4386  
**Email Address:** pball@sedgefield.gov.uk  
**Ward(s)**

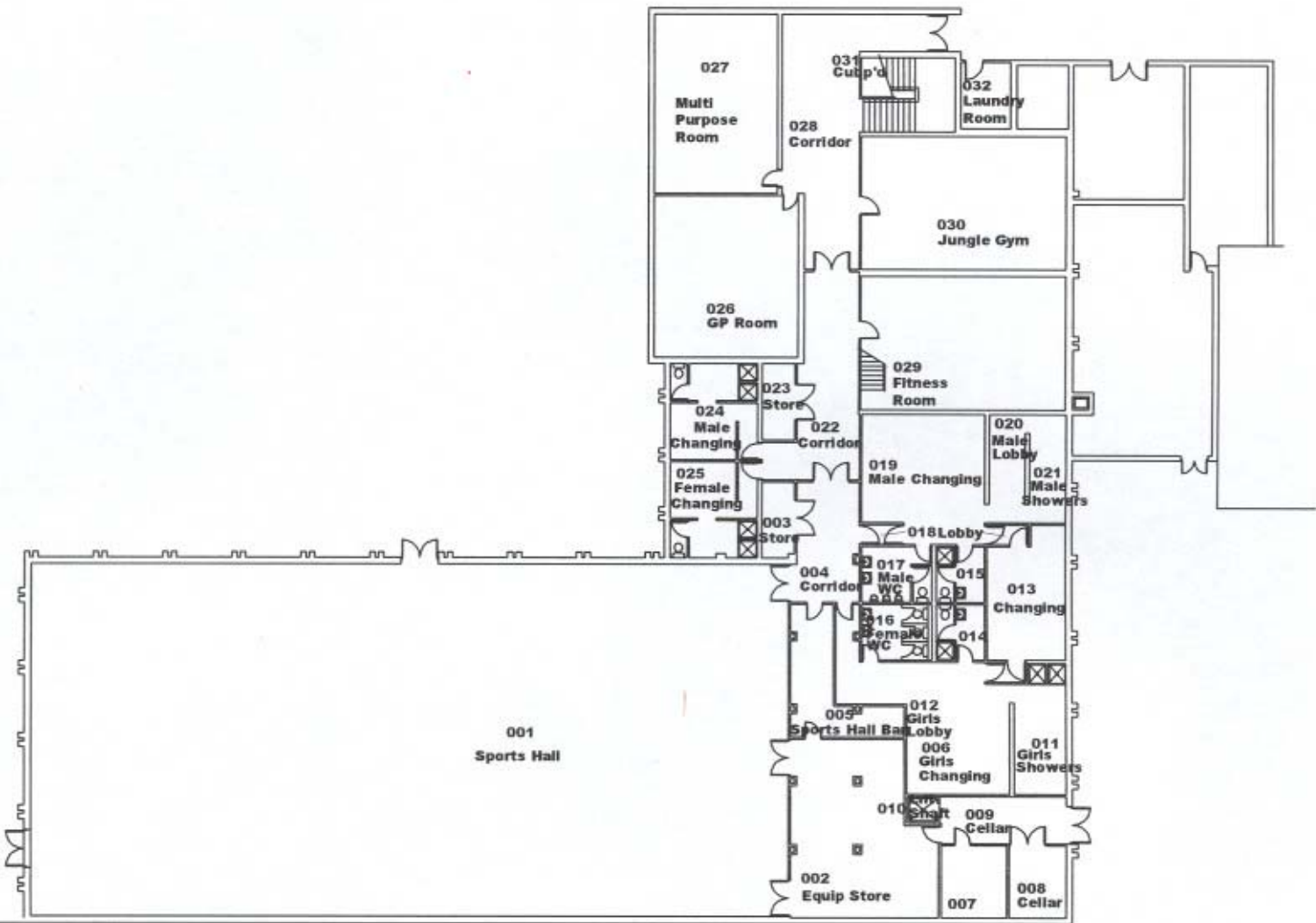
**Key Decision Validation:** Two or more wards

**Background Papers:** Review of Facility Accommodation at Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre – Public Consultation, August 2005

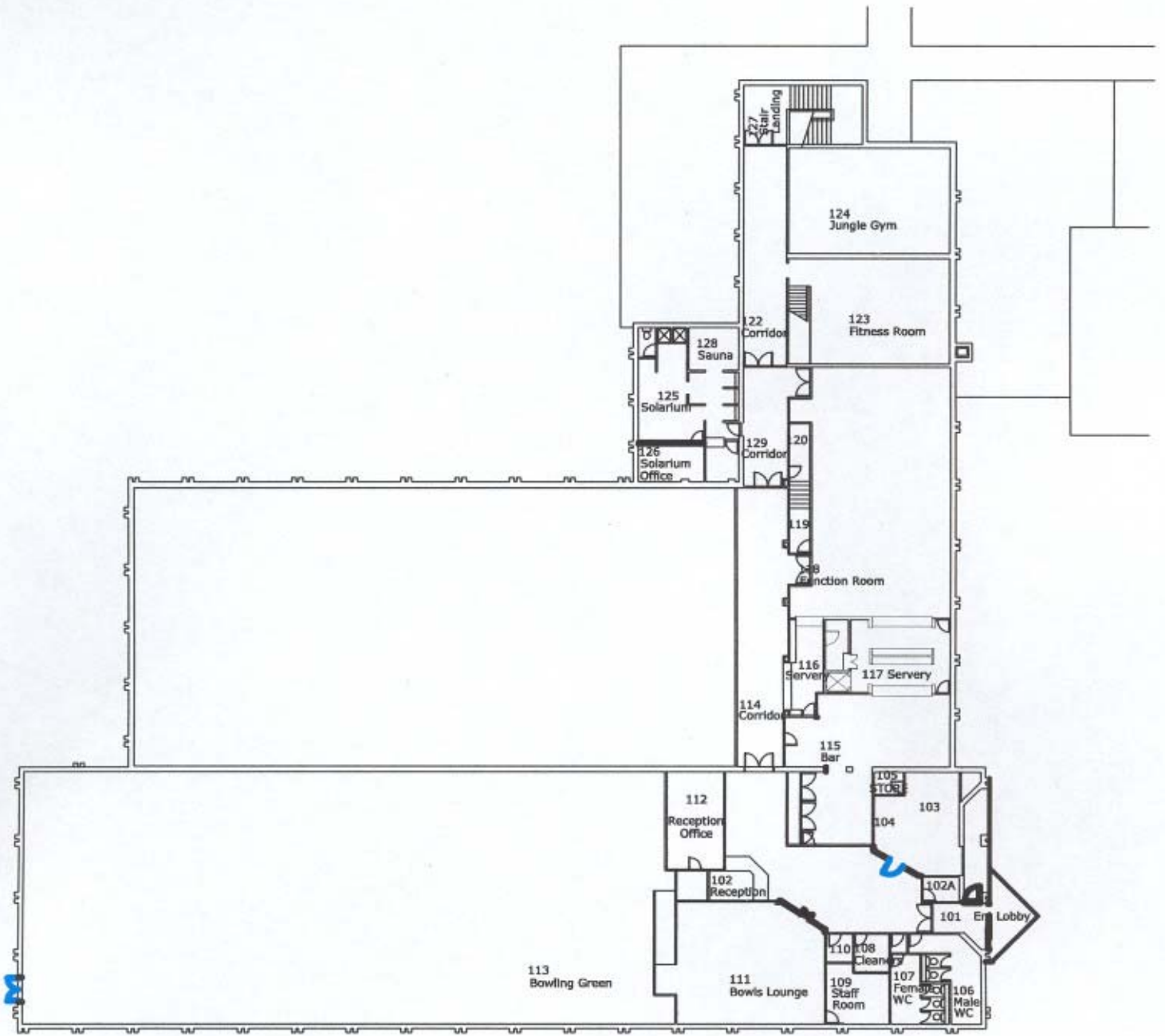
### Examination by Statutory Officers

	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"/>

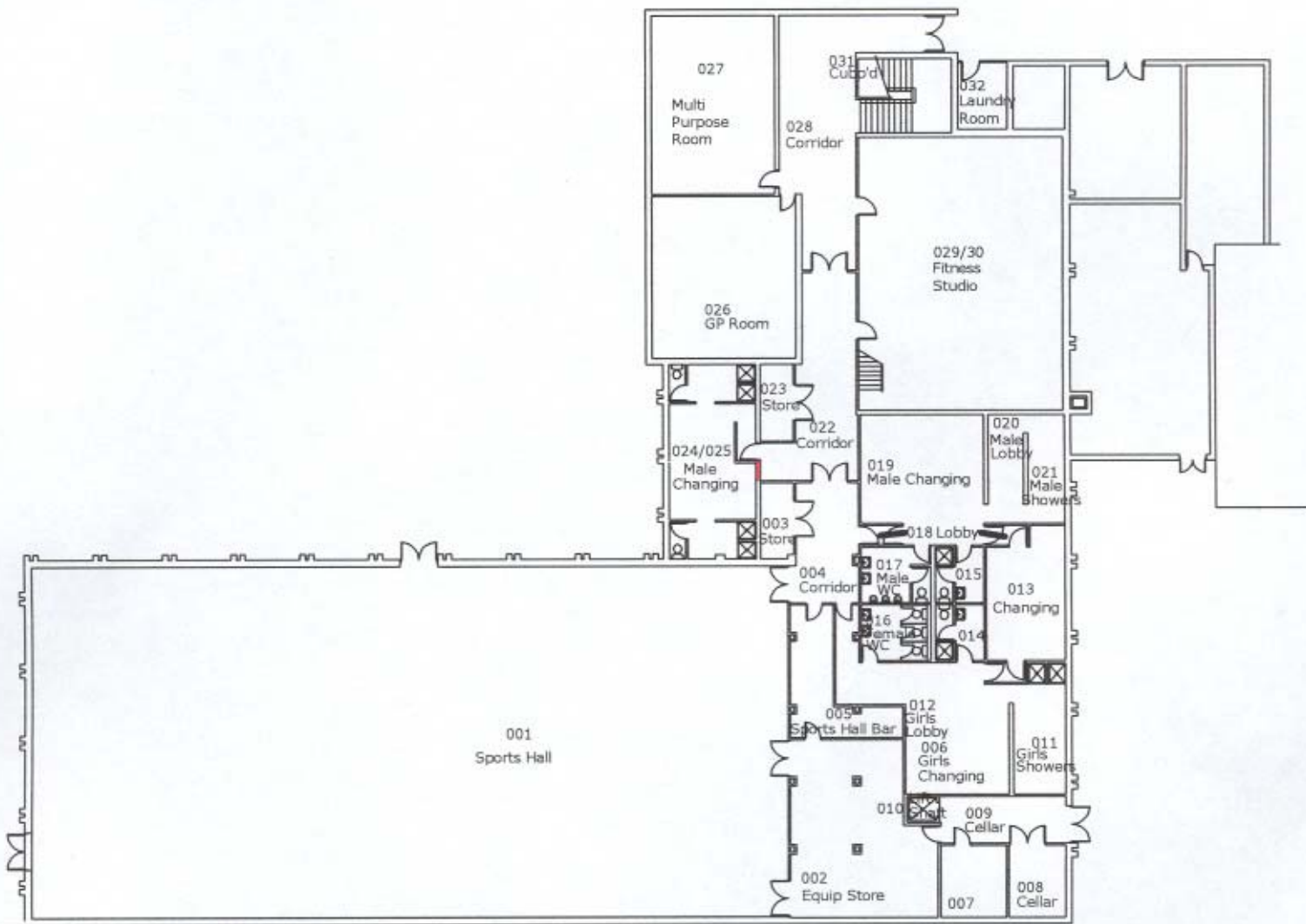
# Appendix 1



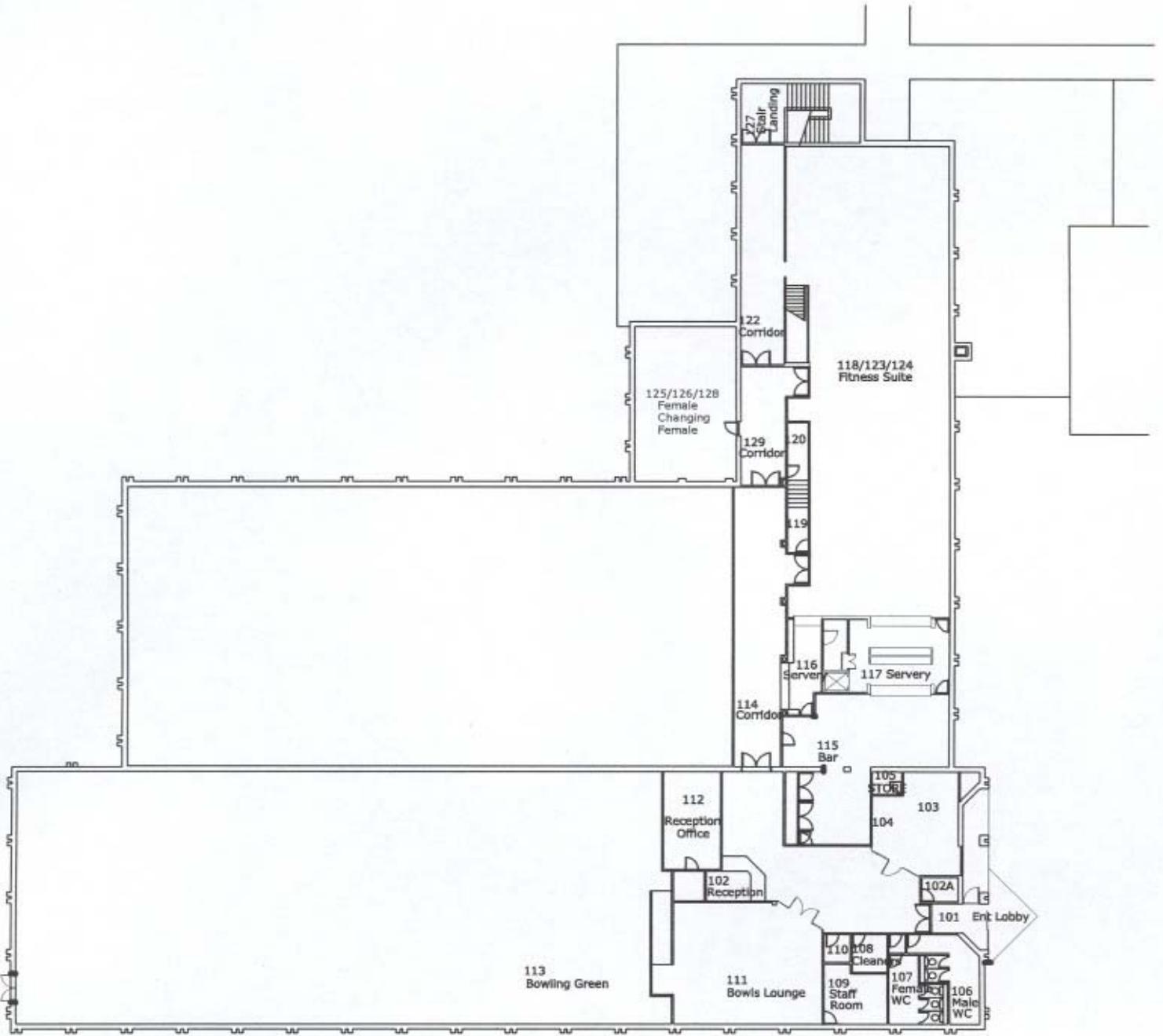
**Lower Ground Floor Level**



Ground Floor Level



Proposed Lower Ground Floor Level



Proposed Ground Floor Level



# Item 6

REPORT TO CABINET

22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2005

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF  
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES.

## Community Safety

### AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION (ANPR)

#### 1. SUMMARY

ANPR technology has been successful in reducing crime, road casualties and increasing public reassurance in areas where it has been deployed. The Sedgefield Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership has supported Durham Constabulary in a successful bid to government to increase ANPR capacity in the southern force areas of Sedgefield and Darlington.

ANPR will be introduced in 5 key locations within Sedgefield Borough from April, 2006. Capital costs directly associated with the initiative totalling £85,000 will be met by Durham Constabulary supported by £7,000 from the Borough Council as part of a commitment under the 2005/06 Community Safety Capital Programme.

The introduction of ANPR within the Borough is seen as making a significant contribution to establishing Sedgefield as a Borough with Strong Communities by promoting safer neighbourhoods and in accordance with Corporate Plan Aim 35 will contribute to crime reduction.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the Council extends its partnership working with Durham Constabulary by the introduction of the ANPR initiative within the Borough.
- 2) That the sum of £7000 be allocated from the 2005/6 Community Safety Capital Programme to provide a wireless CCTV connection to the Chilton Bypass.

#### 3. ANPR IN SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH.

Sedgefield Borough Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership has supported a bid by Durham Constabulary as part of a £15m national programme to roll out automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR). The Durham bid which covers the Southern Force Area including Sedgefield and Darlington has been successful with a target date for implementation of April, 2006.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras allow tracking of suspect vehicles and can determine within seconds whether a vehicle has been stolen, is known to be involved in a crime, or is untaxed.

Cameras scan and record the vehicle registration marks. The numbers are then cross-checked against a number of databases, including the Police National Computer, the DVLA databases and police intelligence records, both locally and regionally, to identify vehicles of interest to the Police.

If a registration plate is flagged up on a database, the system alerts the CCTV Control Centre with both a visual and audible signal, providing details of which database has triggered a hit. The Control Centre then coordinates with Police recognition, monitoring or interception of the vehicle by Police response vehicles.

ANPR cameras will be deployed at specified key locations throughout the Borough, building on the existing CCTV network with monitoring undertaken at the Council Control Centre at Chilton.

The capital cost of providing ANPR cameras at 5 sites throughout the Borough plus installation of ANPR technology in the Control Room together with additional hardware upgrades in the Control Centre will be some £85,000 which will be met by Durham Constabulary as will an annual cost of £10,000 with regard to an upgrade of the data line from the Control Centre to Bishop Auckland Police Headquarters. This funding will also support the Borough network of cameras by the addition of a new camera / location on the Chilton bypass. The Borough Council will support £7,000 capital for this site from the 2005/6 Community Safety Capital Programme to provide a 'wireless' CCTV connection which in addition to removing line rental costs will inform our thinking on technology options for the future of CCTV.

The ANPR agreement will be for 3 years. After year 1 maintenance of the ANPR equipment will be absorbed at minimal cost to our CCTV maintenance contract.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been developed between the Police and Neighbourhood Services Department with regard to operation of ANPR. This MOU places control over the overall CCTV / ANPR network and CCTV Operators involvement in monitoring with the Borough Council. This will ensure that ANPR monitoring is not undertaken to the detriment of our own CCTV monitoring function.

ANPR cameras will be located in Chilton, Ferryhill, Newton Aycliffe, Sedgfield, Shildon and Spennymoor.

ANPR has received significant positive national publicity over recent months and its introduction within Sedgfield Borough is seen as a key tool in reducing crime, road traffic accidents and increasing public reassurance.

The technology to be provided in the Control Room will

- include capacity to support further growth within the system.
- will gather and add valuable data to the database without operators actively monitoring which will result in arrests which would not otherwise have happened.
- will support dedicated joint operations with Police in relation to uninsured vehicles, disqualified drivers, travelling criminals and movement of drugs.
- Will increase the likelihood of the Sedgfield area becoming 'target hardened' to criminals and thereby reducing crime in the Borough.

### 3. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Capital cost directly associated with ANPR in Sedgefield Borough totalling some £85,000 will be met by Durham Constabulary. £7,000 within the 2005/06 Community Safety Capital Programme will support the addition of a new camera / location at Chilton Bypass utilising new wireless technology.

After year 1, ANPR maintenance costs, which are minimal, will be absorbed within the CCTV maintenance contract.

Sedgefield Borough Council CCTV Control Room will undertake monitoring of ANPR as part of the Borough's commitment to shared community safety objectives. Although no income will be forthcoming to the Borough for monitoring ANPR this is considered to be more than offset by the contribution ANPR will make to reducing crime & disorder and fear of crime in the area. Additionally, detailed operational procedures which are in place will ensure ANPR monitoring will not be undertaken to the detriment of other CCTV monitoring.

### 4. **CONSULTATIONS**

Consultation has taken place with the Sedgefield C&DRP and is underway with Town and Parish Councils within those areas ANPR cameras will be deployed.

Opportunity will be given to Elected Members from the Borough and participating Town & Parish Councils to view ANPR in operation following its introduction in April, 2006.

### 5. **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The proposal is consistent with the Crime & Disorder Strategy for the Borough and supports the Borough Council in meeting its responsibilities under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

### 6. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

**None.**

### 7. **LIST OF APPENDICES**

ANPR – Memorandum of Understanding.

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<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Dennis Scarr</b>
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01388 816166 Ext.4545
<b>E-mail address</b>	<a href="mailto:dscarr@sedgefield.gov.uk">dscarr@sedgefield.gov.uk</a>

**Wards:**

**Key Decision Validation: n/A**

**Background Papers:**

## 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"/>

# Item 7

## REPORT TO CABINET

22 December 2005

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

#### Portfolio: Regeneration

#### COUNTY DURHAM MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – MINERALS ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Minerals Issues and Options Report has been produced by Durham County Council to help prepare a new range of documents to replace the existing Minerals Local Plan. These documents will follow the same format for preparation as our Local Development Framework. Within the current Minerals Local Plan, there are a number of minerals allocations within Sedgefield Borough. These are an Area of Search for Sand & Gravel at Embleton and Lea Hall, Preferred Areas for brick making at Eldon and Todhills, and Preferred Areas for Magnesian Limestone at Thrislington Quarry.
- 1.2 Within this document, the County Council are asking for comment on sites that have either not yet come forward for development from an existing allocation or comments on sites that have been proposed for development by the mineral industry. The Borough Council's response to this Issues and Options Report focuses on its Vision, the approach to Landbanks, Sand & Gravel issues, brick making materials, Magnesian Limestone and industry supported sites.
- 1.3 The contents of this report have been discussed and agreed with the Local Strategic Partnership.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the comments made within the Report as the formal response of the Council to the County Council's consultation.

### 3 THE MINERALS ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT

3.1 The Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy (2004-2014) sets out a vision for a 'healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities'. The Sedgefield Borough Local Development Framework provides the spatial vision for the Community Strategy and this document has identified that;

'...the natural environment of the Borough needs to be conserved, enhanced and valued by the community. The quality of the natural environment is sometimes undervalued but it is important to our sustainable future. It is not only important that resources are allocated for the management of the natural environment but that new development is encouraged to help diversify the biological and natural interest in the surrounding area.

3.2 As part of this process, the Borough Council has designated a number of Local Nature Reserves close to the main settlements and has developed a wildlife garden for Bishop Middleham. The drive to create, maintain and enhance the network of bio-diverse sites in the Borough will continue. Similarly, new development should respect and, where possible, enhance the Landscape Character of the Borough. By ensuring that the design of new developments compliments rather than conflicts with Landscape Character, it helps the setting and vibrancy of the Borough's communities and helps provide an attractive Borough.

3.3 Moreover, the development and maintenance of good green space in communities is an important characteristic of sustainable communities. The opportunities for new development in the Borough should respect the existing provision of green space within settlements and where possible, make improvement either through new provision or the improvement of existing facilities.'

3.4 In arriving at this position the LSP agrees that the key drivers that support this view are;

- Ensuring development does not adversely affect Landscape Character
- The creation, maintenance and enhancement of a functional network of bio-diverse sites
- The promotion of good green space in communities and surrounding area

The County's Minerals Local Development Framework should take account of these within its vision.

#### **Overall approach to a Mineral Landbank<sup>1</sup>**

3.5 The Issues and Options Paper states that, in accordance with Government Guidance, there is a need to provide a minerals landbank for sand & gravel, crushed rock, dimension stone, cement making materials, brick making material and burnt dolomite. However, the County Council has not yet decided whether this end-date of the Plan should either 2016 or 2021. Until this is resolved in the Preferred Options Paper next year, it is not possible to assess how much mineral reserves are required for the landbank and as a result, we are unable to assess whether some or all of the proposed sites in Sedgefield Borough will come forward for development.

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<sup>1</sup> A landbank is a stock of planning permissions for the winning and working of minerals including dormant sites or currently non working sites. For energy minerals e.g. coal, oil or gas, there is no system of landbanks.

3.6 The following paragraphs provide some commentary on the potential sites that are included in the Minerals Issues and Options Paper.

**Lea Hall, East of Newton Aycliffe - Area of Search<sup>2</sup> for Sand and Gravel**

3.7 The existing Minerals Local Plan identifies an area of search for sand and gravel at Lea Hall. The primary reason why the Local Plan took this approach was the lack of detailed geological information as to the precise location of where workable deposits lie. The current sources of information on which areas of search was made are an independent study commissioned by the then Department of Environment in 1989 entitled “Assessment of the potentially workable sand and gravel resources in County Durham” and Mineral Assessment Reports produced by the Institute of Geological Sciences, now known as British Geological Survey.

3.8 There has been no material change in the information base since the adoption of the Minerals Local Plan in 2000. The production of sand and gravel resources is an important element in the development industry and the protection of land with potential resources should be welcomed.

**Eldon Brickworks – Preferred Area<sup>3</sup> for brick making materials**

3.9 The existing preferred area for future extraction by Eldon Brickworks is an area to the north of the existing quarry. The new owners of the Brickworks, Weinerberger Ltd, have indicated to the County Council that they would like to replace this preferred area with another area to the east of the existing quarry. It has been estimated by the owners that there are approximately 1.7 million tonnes of recoverable reserves and allow them to have a 25-year landbank. This landbank would allow the owners to make significant investment decisions in the knowledge that they have sufficient reserves to help pay for this investment. This should be supported. However, this new area of mineral extraction would bring quarrying in closer proximity to the residents of Old Eldon. It is important therefore that the County Council work with the Brickworks owners to limit the extent of mineral activity to an acceptable distance away from Old Eldon and put in place measures that will ameliorate the visual effects of quarrying upon these residents. Furthermore, it will be important to safeguard the existing screening provided by the mature woodland within the south-eastern part of the proposed Preferred Area.

**Todhills Brickworks, Byers Green – Area of Search for brick making materials**

3.10 Todhills Brickworks has benefited from a number of planning permissions for extracting brick making materials. The Clarence Farm site is currently undergoing restoration work and quarrying has recently begun at the Long Lane site. An Area of Search was identified in the Minerals Local Plan to help maintain a 15-year landbank. To enable this development to come forward in an acceptable manner, the allocation requested significant planting to screen the development in the future. This process has already

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<sup>2</sup> An area of search is defined as a broad area within which some mineral extraction may be acceptable, subject to detailed consideration

<sup>3</sup> A preferred area is defined as an area within a Mineral Consultation Area containing mineral resources which can be identified with a high degree of precision and where there is a strong presumption in favour of extraction. (Mineral Consultation Areas are areas defined in order to ensure consultation between the relevant District Planning Authority, the minerals industry and the County Council before certain non-mineral planning applications made within the area are determined.)

begun, showing the company's commitment to the long-term future of this Brickworks. This Area of Search remains within the Issues and Options document to enable the Brickworks to effectively plan for its future. This area of search should be supported.

### **Thrislington Quarry - Preferred Area for Magnesian Limestone Extraction**

- 3.11 Thrislington Quarry, lying to the south of Cornforth produces high grade magnesian limestone which is suitable for use in the steel and chemical industries and significant amounts of construction aggregates. The reserve of high grade magnesian limestone have been recognised by the Minerals Local Plan as a nationally important mineral and allocated a Preferred Area to the east of the A1(M). This approach has been taken forward within the Issues and Options Paper. The Issues Paper goes further by identifying the full extent of high grade mineral to be protected from non-mineral related development. The quarrying operations at Thrislington have been a major employer within this area of the Borough and these allocations would continue this practice. However, the continued expansion of mineral activity in this area will have a negative effect on the landscape character and could become over-dominant if the full extent of the reserve is exploited. It is therefore vitally important that this potentially negative impact can be successfully ameliorated to allow the exploitation of this nationally important mineral.

### **Bishop Middleham – Industry Proposed Extension to Quarry**

- 3.12 The operators of Bishop Middleham Quarry have requested that a western extension to be included in the Minerals Development Framework. This western extension would bring quarrying operations up to the extent of quarrying proposed by the operators of Thrislington. It would appear that there is no nationally important mineral to be found in this extension area, and would likely to be used for agricultural lime to supplement UK farming activity. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the continued expansion of mineral activity in this area will have a negative effect on its landscape character and could become an over-dominant activity.

### **Aycliffe Quarry – Industry Proposed Extension to Quarry**

- 3.13 Aycliffe Quarry lies to the south-east of Aycliffe Village and in close proximity to the A167, River Skerne and East Coast Mainline railway. The operators have requested that two extension areas be included in the Minerals Development Framework, one to the north and one to the south. The northern extension would bring quarrying operations closer to the Aycliffe Village Conservation Area and it is important that if this site does come forward, that measures are put in place to ameliorate this impact. The southern extension would take operations away from the Village but would take operations closer to the East Coast Mainline railway and the River Skerne. The Borough Council has recently produced a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to help make sure that future development activity does not have an adverse impact upon flooding. This Assessment identified that the River Skerne does pose a potential flood risk in this area. The County Council, in conjunction with the Environment Agency, will need to assess whether this potential flood risk can be overcome.

## **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None



## 5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The Borough Local Strategic Partnership has been consulted on this response to the Issues and Options Report.

## 6 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 None

## 7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

## 8 LIST OF APPENDICES

- 8.1 None

**Contact Officers:** Chris Myers  
**Telephone No:** (01388) 816166 ext **4328**  
**Email Address:** [cmyers@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:cmyers@sedgefield.gov.uk)

### Ward(s)

All

Key Decision Validation: This is not a Key Decision as the report relates to a consultation document

### Background Papers

County Durham Minerals and Waste Development Framework – Minerals Issues and Options Report

### 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 8

REPORT TO CABINET

22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2005

REPORT OF THE  
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**Portfolio: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

## **BUDGET FRAMEWORK – 2006/7 TIMETABLE**

### **1. SUMMARY**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of the annual Budget and its arrangements for consultation.

The attached Appendix proposes a timetable for the adoption of the 2006/7 Budget and arrangements for consultation, which will accommodate the requirements of the Constitution.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the timetable be approved, as shown on the attached Appendix.

### **3. DETAIL**

3.1 Part 4 Section C – Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution requires Cabinet to publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of a Budget and its arrangements for consultation. A proposed timetable is shown in the attached Appendix.

3.2 At the Cabinet Meeting to be held on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006, I intend to present a report which will set the scene for next year's Budget, including a summary of the initial Budget requirements, details of the Revenue Support Grant and Housing Subsidy Settlements and suggested spending targets for each of the Cabinet portfolio areas.

3.3 In terms of the arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny of the budget process this year, I have agreed that each individual Committee will again consider their own portfolio of services and the formal consultation process will begin 5<sup>th</sup> January and end 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006. Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings have been agreed with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> January 2006 for Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1/2/3 respectively.

3.4 Cabinet, at its meeting on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2006, will be able to consider the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as well as considering the views of Council Taxpayers, who will have participated in Focus Group meetings held in accordance with the Council Taxpayers' Consultation process, which is in its fourth year.

- 3.5 After taking those views into account, Cabinet will then approve the Budget proposals and make recommendations to the Council at its Meeting to be held on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2006, when the level of council Tax will be determined, taking into account the precept requirements of the County Council, Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service and Town and Parish Councils. The Council Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2006 is the earliest date possible for determining the Council Tax as this date is influenced by the date on which precepts of the County Council, Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service and Town and Parish Councils are received.
- 3.6 The statutory deadline by which the level of Council Tax must be determined is Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2006. Part 4 Section C – Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (2e to 2h) of the Council’s Constitution provide specific procedures where Council resolves to amend the recommendations of Cabinet (an in-principle decision). The period in between the Special Council Meeting on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> February and the statutory deadline for determining the Council Tax on 11<sup>th</sup> March does provide sufficient time to comply with the arrangements set out in the Constitution.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As the purpose of this report is to identify the timetable for the Budget process, there are no financial implications to be considered.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Council’s three Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be consulted as part of the Budget process. A representative sample of Council Taxpayers is also being consulted as part of the Budget process. The Tenants Housing Services Group will also be consulted in regard to the Budget Framework for the Housing Revenue Account.

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

##### **6.1 Links to Corporate Objectives/Values**

The timetable has been established to ensure that all appropriate actions are undertaken during the process of determining the 2006/07 budget in that the Council is:

- *Consulting the appropriate representatives of service users, customers and partners;*
- *Being responsible with and accountable for public finances.*
- *Being open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive.*

##### **6.2 Risk Management**

If this timetable is not met, the Council could suffer an adverse cash flow in not being able to collect Council Tax from Council Taxpayers from the beginning of the financial year on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006. This timetable has therefore been devised to ensure that the appropriate statutory deadline to determine the level of Council Tax can be achieved.

##### **6.3 Health and Safety**

No additional implications have been identified.

#### 6.4 **Equality and Diversity**

No Equality and Diversity implications have been identified as the purpose of this report is to identify the timetable for the budget process.

#### 6.5 **Legal and Constitutional**

The appropriate Legal and Constitutional implications have been taken into account in determining this timetable

No other 'Material Considerations' have been identified.

**Contact Officer:** Brian Allen  
**Telephone No.:** 01388 816166 ext. 403  
**E-mail:** [ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:ballen@sedgefield.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** The Constitution – Part 4 Section C – Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

#### **Examination by Statutory Officers**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
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"/>

**BUDGET FRAMEWORK – 2006/07 TIMETABLE****IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION, PART 4 – RULES OF PROCEDURE,****C – BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES**

<b><u>Committee</u></b>	<b><u>Report Distributed</u></b>	<b><u>Meeting Date</u></b>
<b>CABINET</b>		
• To consider Budget Framework	Wednesday 4/1/2006	Thursday 12/1/2006
<b>OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY</b>		
• Consultation Process	Begins Thursday 5/1/2006	Ends Wednesday 1/2/2006
• Overview & Scrutiny 1	Monday 16/1/2006	Tuesday 24/1/2006
• Overview & Scrutiny 2	Tuesday 17/1/2006	Wednesday 25/1/2006
• Overview & Scrutiny 3	Wednesday 18/1/2006	Thursday 26/1/2006
<b>CABINET</b>		
• To consider views of the Council Taxpayers' Forums	)	
	)	
	)	
• To consider view of Overview & Scrutiny Committees	) Wednesday 8/2/2006	Thursday 16/2/2006
	)	
• To approve the Budget proposals and make recommendations to Council	)	
	)	
<b>COUNCIL</b>		
• To consider recommendations from Cabinet	)	
	)	
	)	
• To consider views from Council Taxpayers' Forums	) Thursday 16/2/2006	Friday 24/2/2006
	)	
	)	
• To determine the Council Tax level	)	

# Item 9a

## **SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1**

Conference Room 1,  
Council Offices,  
Spennymoor

Tuesday,  
22 November 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor A. Gray (Chairman) and  
  
Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, B. Hall, D.M. Hancock, K. Henderson,  
J.G. Huntington, J.M. Khan, B. Meek, G. Morgan, Mrs. I. Jackson Smith  
and K. Thompson

**In Attendance:** Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. J. Croft, V. Crosby, Mrs. L. Hovvels,  
Mrs. E.M. Paylor and T. Ward

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs. A.M. Fleming and J.M. Smith

### **OSC(1).25/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members had no declarations of interest to submit.

### **OSC(1).26/05 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2005 and the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2005 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes)

With regard to the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2005, it was reported that Cabinet had agreed that as the outcome of job evaluation was subject to negotiations with Trade Unions it would not be appropriate for Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 to consider the report prior to Cabinet making a decision.

The recommendations in relation to energy monitoring arrangements (Minute OSC(1) 23/05 refers) were supported by Cabinet.

### **OSC(1).27/05 INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE - REPORT FOR HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2005**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Resources (for copy see file of Minutes).

The report outlined the work undertaken in the initial six month period of the internal audit plan for 2005/06 which had been considered and approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

It was explained that the approved audit plan scheduled a total of 812 man-days for the full year with a half year target performance of 432. The plan monitoring reports showed that a total of 431 days had been achieved.

Progress on the areas of work requiring the continuing involvement of the internal audit staff were outlined as follows: -

### **Regularity Audit**

The programme of regularity audit for the half-year had been substantially completed. Those areas not finalised, which included Spennymoor Leisure Centre, Supporting People Programme, Accounts Payable System Housing Benefits and IT, would be progressed shortly.

### **Performance Management**

It was reported that the development of the Council's arrangements for reviewing performance was proceeding.

The Audit Commission's observations on the existing arrangements were under consideration.

### **Data Matching**

Members were informed that during 2004/05 the Audit Commission had undertaken an NFI data matching exercise. This had provided the Council with a number of data matches to investigate.

It was explained that the data matching exercise was an important control in the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption and in contributing towards good corporate governance.

### **Risk Management**

Members were informed that Internal Audit staff continued to be involved in various aspects of risk management affecting the Council.

An electronic risk register had recently been acquired and work was ongoing to ensure that all departments and services could develop and benefit from the system.

### **Statement of Internal Control (SIC)**

Members were informed that the SIC highlighted three areas where remedial action was required - the financial management information system, income collection control and housing property works.

It was explained that the reconciliation processes associated with these financial systems were now up-to-date.

With regard to housing property works it was reported that the Director of Housing was developing a Service Improvement Plan following the outcome of the LSVT ballot. The Service Improvement Plan would comprehensively address the need to demonstrate value for money.

Specific reference was made to the Audit Commission Housing Inspectorate Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) assessment criteria. It was pointed out that an important area of the KLOE was the demonstration of value of money.



Members expressed their concerns that although the amount of Council owned housing had decreased as a result of the Right to Buy Scheme maintenance costs had increased.

It was explained that this would be addressed through the development of the service improvement plan and the KLOE assessment criteria.

#### AUDIT COMMISSION REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT 2004/05

With regard to the review of Audit Commission 2004/05 it was reported that the work of Internal Audit had been reviewed by the Audit Commission. As well as reviewing internal audit files the Audit Commission assessed the service against the standards contained in the CIPFA code of practice for internal audit. The agreed actions were set out in the report.

#### AUDIT COMMISSION REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF IT CONTROLS

Members were reminded that the Council implemented a new financial management system on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004. The Audit Commission had undertaken a review of the controls of the system and had concluded that the control arrangements were satisfactory.

In conclusion it was reported that much of the work undertaken by internal audit related to minimising the risks to the Council. It was reported that it was important that departmental senior management fulfilled their responsibility to implement appropriate remedial action on those occasions where significant risks were identified.

It was questioned whether any additional checks were required to ensure that the Council's financial processes were adequate. It was explained that Corporate Governance arrangements required all Council processes to be open, fair and transparent.

Members expressed concern that budget overspends were often not identified until the end of the financial year.

It was explained that budgetary control arrangements had been enhanced. The Council's strategic working groups would now receive quarterly reports in respect of those areas of their responsibility. Any variances from the approved budget would be considered. The use of resources was also an element of Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Specific reference was made to the possible outbreak of pandemic flu and how the Council could maintain key services during a period of high level of sickness absence. Members were of the opinion that staff should be multi skilled and flexible to ensure that key tasks could be carried out.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the half yearly report be received and that a full year report be considered at the appropriate future meeting of this Committee.

## **OSC(1).28/05 WORK PROGRAMME**

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

Members were updated on the progress of the ongoing reviews.

It was reported that the Area Forum Review Group was coming to the end of the review process. A final meeting was required, however, to clarify remaining issues.

With regard to the review of recruitment and retention it was reported that a final report was being produced.

Detailed discussion took place in relation to the Council's recruitment and selection policies. It was agreed that recruitment and selection policies be included on the work programme.

- AGREED:**
- 1. That the Council's recruitment and selection policies 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. L. Walker Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4237 email [lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk](mailto:lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk)

# Item 9b

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

Council Chamber,  
Council Offices  
Spennymoor

Monday,  
28 November 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillor V. Crosby (Chairman) and  
Councillors D.R. Brown, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. J. Gray, M.T.B. Jones,  
J.P. Moran, B.M. Ord and A. Smith

**Invited to attend:** Councillor M. Iveson

**In Attendance:** Councillors M.A. Dalton, Mrs. B. Graham, J.E. Higgin, A. Hodgson,  
Mrs. L. Hovvels and J.G. Huntington

**Apologies:** Councillors B.F. Avery J.P, G.C. Gray, Mrs. C. Potts, Mrs. L. Smith and  
Mrs. C. Sproat

**OSC(3)16/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
No declarations of interest were received.

**OSC(3)17/05 POLICE FORCE RESTRUCTURING**  
It was explained that the meeting had been convened to consider presentations from representatives of Cleveland and Durham Police authorities in relation to each Authority's views on proposals for Police Force restructuring and to seek the views of the Committee as part of a consultation process (for copies of presentations see file of Minutes).

Members of the Committee were informed of the background to the proposed changes, the reasons for change and the processes and timetable involved in the Home Office formulating a decision on the revised structure.

### **Presentation by Cleveland Police**

The Chief Constable of Cleveland Police, Mr. Shaun Price and the Chairman of Cleveland Police Authority, Mr. McLuckie, were present at the meeting to outline Cleveland Police Authority's views on restructuring and their reasons.

The Committee was informed that Cleveland had looked at and consulted major stakeholders on four options which were :-

- Tees Valley City Region Police Force (Cleveland and South Durham)
- Cleveland Police (current structure)

- Amalgamation between Cleveland and Durham Constabulary
- A Regional Police Force (amalgamation between Northumbria Police, Durham Constabulary and Cleveland Police)

A preferred option had to be submitted to the Home Office by 28<sup>th</sup> October 2005. The preferred option submitted by Cleveland Police was for a Tees Valley City Region Police Force.

Cleveland Police Authority outlined the advantages of the Tees Valley City Region Police Force option , proposed staffing levels, the anticipated cost of adopting this option, what the re-organisation would mean for Sedgfield Borough, Community Policing and Protective Services.

It was pointed out that a Mori Poll had been undertaken which had shown that the option of a Regional Authority was not popular, with only 21% of residents in Cleveland and Durham favouring that option. Furthermore, as part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's strategy "The Northern Way" , 8 city regions had been identified one of which was Tees Valley. It was considered that services should be provided co-terminus with that area . The force would have a population of 875,000 and would have huge development potential.

Members were then given the opportunity to raise questions in relation to the presentation.

In response to a query raised by a Member on levels of violent crime and detection rates it was explained that the perception of crime was greater than crime itself and Cleveland Police were working with Crime Reduction Partnerships to reduce incidents of violent crime.

Dealing with a query raised by the Committee on collaboration between the Police Forces it was explained that the number one issue for all police forces was to reduce crime so whichever option was chosen they would all work together to maintain that aim.

Members of the Committee also queried how any savings from the proposal would be utilised . In response it was explained that any savings would be reinvested into policing.

### **Presentation by Durham Constabulary**

The Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary Paul Garvin and the Deputy Chief Constable John Stoddart gave a presentation on Durham Constabulary's views in relation to restructuring.

They outlined the drivers for change and the criteria which had been given by the Home Office when considering the options for restructuring.

The Constabulary had consulted stakeholders and considered the following options :-

- Regional Force
- Durham and Northumbria
- Durham Constabulary
- Northumbria North Durham
- Durham and Cleveland
- Tees City Region

Members were informed that the preferred option of Durham Constabulary was a Regional Force covering Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland and this option had been submitted to the Home Office..

The rationale for Durham Police Authority's preferred option was outlined, together with Ministers' views and the impact which it would have on the area, protective services and neighbourhood policing. The anticipated cost etc, likely effects on Council Tax .and area structure were also outlined.

It was explained that this was considered to be the preferred option as the Regional Authority would have the capacity to provide a better level of protective service for the community and would mean better provision of community policing. The Regional Option also met the Home Office Guidelines in relation to population levels of the restructured forces. This option would also be less costly for Council Tax payers.

Members of the Committee were then given an opportunity to question the representatives from Durham Constabulary in relation to the presentation.

In response to a query raised by the Committee on the size of a Regional Force and the opportunity for local engagement it was explained that it would still be possible to have local engagement with a Regional Authority through Crime Reduction Partnerships.

A query was then raised regarding the geographical remoteness of some of the regional area and the differing population levels. It was explained that a Regional Authority would link in with local communities through local Community Inspectors and the 'beat bobbies'.

In response to a query on how savings would be utilised it was explained that a Regional Force would invest into protective services and in particular Neighbourhood Policing.

Cleveland Police Authority and Durham Constabulary then made final closing statements.

The representatives from the Police Authorities and the Council's Cabinet Members then left the meeting while the Committee formulated its comments.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- 1. That the proposal for a regional force developing the challenge of Level 2 protective services be endorsed and that it is not considered that the Cleveland proposal was a viable alternative for people of Sedgefield Borough.*
- 2. That whichever option is finally adopted Community Policing should not suffer and the affect on Council Tax should be kept to a minimum.*

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

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# Item 10

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 5 FORUM

Town Council Offices  
School Aycliffe Lane,  
Newton Aycliffe

Tuesday,  
29 November 2005

Time: 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs. A.M. Fleming (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor Mrs. B.A. Clare	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. J. Croft	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor V. Crosby	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor M.A. Dalton	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor R.S. Fleming	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor M. Iveson	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.P. Moran	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. E.M. Paylor	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.K. Piggott	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman	-	Dales Residents Association
Councillor Mrs. S.J. Iveson	-	Durham County Council
Superintendent B. Knevitt	-	Durham Constabulary
PC D. McKenna	-	Durham Constabulary
PC H. Young	-	Durham Constabulary
Councillor J. Dormer	-	Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor V. Raw	-	Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor M. Dalton	-	Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor S. Mlatilik	-	Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor A. Tomlin	-	Great Aycliffe Town Council
A. Robson	-	Residents Association
M. Robson	-	Residents Association
N. Porter	-	Sedgefield PCT
D. Rutherford	-	Sedgefield PCT
J. Mlatilik	-	Local Resident
M. Tomlin	-	Local Resident

**Apologies:** Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp - Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor G.C. Gray – Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor Mrs. J. Gray – Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor B. Hall – Sedgefield Borough Council  
Councillor K. Henderson – Sedgefield Borough Council  
Inspector A. Neill – Durham Constabulary  
Councillor C. Wheeler – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
Councillor Mrs. M. Gray – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
Councillor Mrs. A. Clarke – Middridge Parish Council

**AF(5)11/05 DRAFT RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

C. Walton, Head of Planning Services, was present at the meeting to give a presentation on Draft Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document. Copies of the document were available at the meeting for Members' information.

It was explained that the Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Extensions had been prepared as part of the Sedgefield Borough Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework would replace the Local Plan and would comprise of a Local Development Scheme which set out the work programme; a Statement of Community Involvement; a range of Development Plan Documents; Supplementary Planning Documents and Annual Monitoring Reports.

The Supplementary Planning Document on Residential Extensions had been prepared in advance of the Sedgefield Borough Local Development Framework as there was an urgent need for improved guidance on residential extensions as the existing guidance, produced in 2000, was now out of date.

It was reported that final year students from the University of Newcastle had been commissioned to review the existing guidance and identify national best practice. Council officers had subsequently refined the work to suit local circumstances.

A Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was produced and presented to the Borough Council's Cabinet in September 2005 where it was approved for public consultation. The consultation period had now ended and it was anticipated that the document would be adopted by the Council in February 2006.

The Draft Supplementary Planning Document was more comprehensive than the existing Supplementary Planning Guidance and provided detailed advice and guidance on the following:

- General design principles
- Porches
- Forward extensions
- Side, rear and rural extensions
- Conservatories
- Dormer windows and roof extensions
- Garages and outbuildings
- Walls and fences
- Other material considerations

In considering a planning application, the Council would take account of the design and how it affected the privacy, outlook, daylight of adjacent properties and the impact on the general street scene and character of the area. Specialist advice from the County's Highways Authority and Northumbrian Water Limited would also be taken into account when determining applications.

A proposal that was poorly designed in relation to its host dwelling or that utilised materials or window features which were not in keeping with the general street scene or character of the local area would constitute inappropriate development and be refused permission.



The Forum was informed that informal advice could be obtained before submitting a planning application by making an enquiry for consideration at the Council's weekly 'One Stop Shop'. The purpose of the 'One Stop Shop' was to provide free informal advice on a scheme that required permission and to suggest any appropriate changes.

**AF(5)12/05 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(5)13/05 POLICE REPORT**

PC Dave McKenna and PC Helen Young were present at the meeting to give details of the crime statistics for the area.

Superintendent Barry Knevitt was also present to discuss the concerns expressed by Members of the Forum in relation to Police communications system and response times.

The crime figures for the year to date were as follows:

Dwellinghouse burglary	37
Burglary (other)	30
Criminal damage	498
Vehicle crime	72
Theft of vehicle	31
Theft from vehicle	41
Damage to vehicle	176
Shoplifting	127

It was pointed out that when compared with last year's figures total theft had increased by 4.4%, violent crime had increased by 76.4% and violence against a person by 69.2%. It was pointed out that the substantial increases were due to new reporting methods.

With regard to rowdy nuisance behaviour, the following number of incidents had been reported.

<u>Ward :</u>	<u>September:</u>	<u>October :</u>
Neville Simpasture Ward	11	17
Greenfields Middridge Ward	23	21
Shafto St. Mary's Ward	49	47
West Ward	39	41
Woodham Ward	20	25

It was reported that the West Ward was no longer one of the top ten wards for anti-social behaviour problems.

Members of the Forum expressed concern regarding the number of incidents in the Shafto St. Marys Ward.

It was explained that the incidents occurred in the new Town Centre park and the well lit areas surrounding the Town Centre, and the Police would welcome any extra help from the Council's Neighbourhood Wardens in tackling the problems. It was pointed out that the deployment of Neighbourhood Wardens in the Town Centre on market days had made a substantial difference.

Specific reference was made to Operation Gumby, which was aimed at tackling the problems of shoplifting and anti-social behaviour. It involved dedicated patrols of the Town Centre.

With regard to the issue of communicating with the Police, Supt Knevitt explained that there were two communication centres. The South Communication Centre was based at Bishop Auckland and was responsible for handling calls for the south of the County (Weardale/Teesdale/Sedgefield and Darlington areas). The North Communication Centre was situated at Aykley Heads, Durham City and covered the remainder of the County.

The centres handled between 65,000 - 70,000 calls per month – 1,500,000 per year. The average time for answering the non-emergency number was between 6 and 7 seconds. 999 calls were usually answered in less than 4 seconds, which was well below the target time of three minutes. 999 calls from mobiles were answered by the North Communication Centre. The non-emergency number if not answered within a certain timeframe, transferred to the automated attendant.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the fact that Durham Constabulary operated on the Airwaves radio system. The digital system provided secure communication channels and gave good coverage of the area.

Members noted that calls were taken by support staff known as 'call handlers'. They had a list of questions to ask the callers to ensure that they received the necessary information. The call handlers transferred the information they had received regarding incidents to the 'call dispatchers'. The call dispatchers were aware of the officers on duty and their location when assigning incidents. The call handlers were under instruction not to make unrealistic promises regarding how quickly the calls would be responded to.

The Superintendent acknowledged that there could be delays between the switchboard and the call handler and had requested extra staff to address the problem. He also referred to a Best Value Review of the communications system and the 33 recommendations that had been made.

He reported that on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2005, new software would be introduced which would allow the call dispatcher to read information regarding an incident as it was being typed by the call handler. This would result in a quicker response. The software would also provide the call handlers with any call history and appropriate questions to be asked.

The Forum was also informed that a voice mail system for Beat Officers was being piloted and that work had begun on revising the shift patterns to match the busiest periods.

Members queried when it was appropriate to ring 999 as opposed to the non-emergency number. They were asked to view Durham Constabulary's website. This contained advice on which the Superintendent would like to receive feedback. If the feedback was positive he would produce leaflets detailing that advice. He also invited Members of the Forum to contact him if they wished to visit a Communication Centre.

**AF(5)14/05      SEDGEFIELD PCT - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Nigel Porter and David Rutherford attended the meeting to give an update on local health matters.

With regard to the future PCT configuration in County Durham, it was noted that Nigel Porter would be attending a meeting the following day with representatives of the Department of Health, where details of the proposed future structure would be announced.

The Chairman of the Area Forum reported that she had written to David Flory Chief Executive Officer of the new Strategic Health Authority to support the establishment of at least two PCTs at the very minimum and if that arrangement was not achieved, strong locality arrangements should be maintained.

The Forum was also given details of proposed structural changes in respect of Strategic Health Authorities, the North East Ambulance Service and Mental Health Trusts.

Attention was also drawn to the additional resources that Sedgefield PCT would be allocating to the following:

- Primary Care
- Cancer Services
- Continuing healthcare
- Mental Care
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Dentistry

It was pointed out that the number of NHS dentists within the Borough had increased.

Specific reference was also made to the development of the health centre and the Sure Start Centre in Newton Aycliffe.

Members of the Forum expressed concern regarding the difficulties encountered in travelling by public transport to hospitals outside the area, in particular the James Cook Hospital.

**AF(5)15/05 NAMING OF DEVELOPMENT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT SITE OF FORMER NURSERY ADJACENT TO SANDERSON CLOSE NEWTON AYCLIFFE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services regarding a request received from Bett Homes (NE) Limited to officially name and number the above development comprising of thirty four dwellings. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Members of the Forum proposed that the development be named Hamilton Court.

**AF(5)16/05 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman of the Forum reported that she had received two letters regarding proposals for schemes under the Local Improvement Programme.

**NB :** In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillors R.S. Fleming and M. Iveson declared a prejudicial interest in the above item as they were Members of Cabinet and left the meeting for the duration of discussion on the item.

The Chairman read out both letters to the Forum.

The first letter was regarding the Aycliffe A167 Corridor project, which involved upgrading the road surfaces, street lighting, street furniture and natural environment within the High Street of Aycliffe Village and the approaches to the High Street in Aycliffe Village.

The second proposal was to improve the nature area in Newton Aycliffe and the former Port Clarence Railway Line, which was adjacent to the nature area. The nature area was a piece of former wasteland between the Tallents Industrial Complex and the A167.

It was also reported that an e-mail had been received seeking a contribution from the Local Improvement Scheme towards the hall at Greenfield School.

**NB :** In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillors Mrs. A.M. Fleming declared a prejudicial interest in the above item as she was a School Governor of Greenfield School and left the meeting for the duration of discussion.

**NB :** In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare declared a prejudicial interest in the above item as her husband was Deputy Head of the school and left the meeting for the duration of discussion.

**NB :** In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillor V.

**Crosby declared a prejudicial interest in the above item as he was a member of the Management Committee for Greenfield Community College and left the meeting for the duration of discussion.**

**Councillor M.A. Dalton, Vice- Chairman in the chair.**

The Vice-Chairman read out the e-mail received regarding the need for funding for the construction of Greenfield School Hall.

**Councillors Mrs. B.A. Clare, V. Crosby, Mr. A.M. Fleming, R.S. Fleming and M. Iveson returned to the meeting.**

**AF(5)17/05**

**QUESTIONS**

A member of a Residents Association gave details of anti-social behaviour problems relating to children in her area and the difficulties she had encountered in obtaining support to deal with the matter at Residents Association meetings.

In response, Councillor Iveson, Lead Member of Community Safety, reported that he would investigate the anti-social problems in her area the following day and take appropriate action.

**AF(5)18/05**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

24<sup>th</sup> January 2006 at 7.00 p.m.

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

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