

CABINET

Thursday, 6 December 2007

10.00 a.m.

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

AGENDA and REPORTS



This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request

العربية (Arabic)

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

বাংলা (Bengali)

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

(中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese)

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

हिन्दी (Hindi)

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

polski (Polish)

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

Español (Spanish)

Póngase en contacto con nosotros si desea recibir información en otro idioma o formato.

اردو (Urdu)

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیے۔

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 22nd November 2007. (Pages 1 - 6)

KEY DECISIONS

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

4. KERBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICE 2008/2010 (KEY DECISION)

Report of Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 7 - 14)

LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

5. PROPOSED MERGER BETWEEN SBC TRAINING AND BISHOP AUCKLAND COLLEGE (KEY DECISION)

Report of Assistant Chief Executive. (Pages 15 - 20)

OTHER DECISIONS

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

6. SEDGFIELD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - MAPPING SENSITIVE AREAS FOR BIRDS PROJECT

Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 21 - 32)

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO

7. PUBLIC SECTOR EFFICIENCY

Report of Director of Resources. (Pages 33 - 46)

MINUTES

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

To consider the minutes of the following:

- (a) Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 6th November 2007 (Pages 47 - 50)
- (b) Strategic Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 20th November 2007 (Pages 51 - 56)

9. AREA FORUMS

To consider the minutes of the following meetings:

- (a) Area 2 Forum - 6th November 2007 (Pages 57 - 60)
- (b) Area 3 Forum - 14th November 2007 (Pages 61 - 64)

EXEMPT INFORMATION

The following item is not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972. As such it is envisaged that an appropriate resolution will be passed at the meeting to exclude the press and public.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP/LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIOS

10. SALE OF FORMER INDUSTRIAL SITE AT MIDDRIDGE

Joint report of Chief Executive and Director of Resources. (Pages 65 - 70)

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Lead Members are requested to inform the Chief Executive or the Cabinet Secretary 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.

B. Allen
Chief Executive

Council Offices
SPENNYMOOR
28th November 2007

Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong (Chairman)

Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, V. Crosby, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson, Mrs. L. Hovvels, J.M. Khan, D.A. Newell and W. Waters

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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

Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
22 November 2007

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong (Chairman) and
Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, V. Crosby, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson,
D.A. Newell and W. Waters

In Attendance: Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, D. Farry, G.C. Gray, B. Haigh,
Mrs. S. Haigh, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin, J.G. Huntington,
Ms. I. Jackson, B. Lamb, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, A. Smith and T. Ward

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. L. Hovvels and J.M. Khan

CAB.99/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Members had no interests to declare.

CAB.100/07 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.101/07 ESTABLISHMENT OF REGENERATION TRUST (KEY DECISION)
Consideration was given to a report regarding the proposed establishment of a Regeneration Trust to maximise the effectiveness of the Council's contribution to investments in the Coalfield priority areas outlined in the Housing Master-plan for Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was noted that Savills Consultants had prepared a comprehensive report for the Council, which recommended the establishment of a community based Regeneration Trust, to which approved financial resources and associated assets would be transferred.

Members were reminded that the Council had allocated the sum of £9 million (£3 million per annum over the three years covering the period 2007/2008 to 2009/2010) to regenerate the former Coalfield priority areas, recognising that further significant funding would be required in future years.

It was explained that whilst the Trust would hold assets for the benefit of the community, the projects themselves would be delivered through a Housing Regeneration and Development Company. The report proposed that further work should be jointly commissioned with the District of Easington and Wear Valley District Council to look at ways of establishing

a non locality based, profit making Housing and Regeneration Development Company to provide programme management for the regeneration of all priorities across the former Durham Coalfields Communities.

It was also proposed that in the light of local government review, consultation takes place with the Department for Communities and Local Government, Durham County Council in its role as transitional authority and such other persons as the Council may be directed to consult.

- RESOLVED :**
1. *That the principle and concept for the establishment of a Sedgfield Regeneration Trust be approved as being consistent with all previous commitments to support those areas of the Borough in need of immediate regeneration.*
 2. *That the need for further consultation with the Department for Communities and Local Government, Durham County Council in its role as transitional authority and such other persons as the Council may be directed to consult be noted. All appropriate approvals to be sought in order to take the initiative to implementation stage.*
 3. *That the Chief Executive be directed to take all necessary actions in order obtain the required consents and to submit further reports to Cabinet regarding:*
 - *Membership selection and governance for the Trust*
 - *The creation of a Housing Regeneration Development Company for the coalfield communities in Easington, Sedgfield and Wear Valley.*

CAB.102/07 LICENSING ACT 2003 - DRAFT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY (KEY DECISION)

Consideration was given to a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that the Licensing Act 2003 required the Council as Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy every three years.

It was reported that the Council's existing policy had recently been reviewed and redrafted to take account of recent changes in Government guidance, issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act.

Members' attention was drawn to the copy of the redrafted Statement of Licensing Policy, which was attached at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED : That the Statement of Licensing Policy be submitted to Council on 23rd November 2007 for approval.

CAB.103/07 LARGE SCALE VOLUNTARY TRANSFER (LSVT) - ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SHADOW BOARD

Consideration was given to a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Members were reminded that Council at its meeting on 26th October 2007 had approved Large Scale Voluntary Transfer to a stand alone Registered Social Landlord as the preferred option for the future ownership and management of the Council's housing stock.

It was explained that a key requirement of the project plan and governance arrangements for the delivery of the preferred option was to establish a 'Shadow Board', which must be made up equally of Council representatives, tenants and independents (members of the community with the required and appropriate skills to support the development of the new Housing Association).

The report outlined the proposed selection criteria, the timetable and the process for the appointment of Council nominees, tenant and independent board members.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That a Shadow Board of 12 members be established, consisting of 4 Council nominees, 4 tenants, 4 independent members of the community.*
 - 2. That the arrangements set out in the report for the selection and appointment of the Council nominees to the Shadow Board be approved.*
 - 3. That the arrangements set out in the report for the appointment of tenant and independent members to the Shadow Board be approved.*

CAB.104/07 HOUSING INCOME MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Lead Member for Housing presented a report setting out details of the Housing Income Management Policy. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was noted that the key issues and areas covered within the policy document, set out in Appendix 1, were:

- The Council's approach to the recovery of debt
- Support for vulnerable tenants
- Tenant and stakeholder involvement
- Prioritisation of debt
- Raising awareness of access to debt advice
- Former tenants arrears
- Communication

RESOLVED : That the Housing Income Management Policy, attached to the report at Appendix 1, be adopted.

CAB.105/07 WINDLESTONE HALL RUSHYFORD, PLANNING STATEMENT AND DESIGN BRIEF

Consideration was given to a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes)

It was explained that Windlestone Hall, a Grade II listed building, together with its ancillary buildings and grounds, was currently being offered for sale by the County Council. The Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Development Brief had been prepared by the Council's Design Conservation Landscape and Tree Management Team, in consultation with English Heritage and Durham County Council's Archaeological Section, to guide prospective purchasers in the preparation of adaptation, restoration and development proposals for the site.

It was explained that if the Brief and Statement was made a Supplementary Planning Document, it would provide more statutory planning weight and would be subject to the provisions of a sustainability appraisal, appropriate assessment and would also form part of the statutory development plan. The status would strengthen the Council's role as Local Planning Authority, by providing officers with a robust mandate for dealing with any planning or listed building applications to secure a standard of development commensurate with the historic status of the site.

RESOLVED : That the production of the Windlestone Hall Planning Statement and Design Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document be agreed and that it be incorporated within the revised Local Development Scheme.

CAB.106/07 REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT - POSITION AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2007

Consideration was given to a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The report gave details of the approved budget for the main portfolios, profiled budget to 30th September 2007, actual income and expenditure, forecasted outturn for 2007/08 and the variance between the annual budget and the projected outturn.

With regard to the General Fund, it was expected that balances of around £595,000 would be used compared to a revised budgeted use of £760,000 a saving of £165,000. The Housing Revenue Account was expected to contribute to balances £108,500 compared to revised budgeted use of £160,000, an overall projected saving of £268,500.

It was also noted that the Training and Employment Service had made an operational surplus of £33,500 in the period April to September.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the position as at 30th September 2007 be noted.*
 - 2. That further reports be submitted detailing the position as at 31st December 2007 and the final outturn position as at 31st March 2008 in line with the budgetary control monitoring arrangements 2007/08.*

**CAB.107/07 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT - CAPITAL PROGRAMME
EXPENDITURE AND FINANCING POSITION AT 30TH SEPTEMBER
2007**

Consideration as given to a report detailing the progress made to date in meeting the Council's spending targets, the carry forward approved by the Council of commitments unspent on the 2006/2007 capital programme, the available capital resources and the proposed financing of the 2007/08 programme. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was reported that a gross of £6.545m had been spent in the first six months to 30th September 2007 or 26% of the gross Capital Programme budget of £25.245m.

It was proposed that as the level of funds set aside to meet the demand for disabled adaptations to tenants homes was insufficient, an additional £300,000 should be provided from the Housing Revenue Account to reduce the backlog.

- RESOLVED :*
- 1. That the six months spend position to 30th September 2007 and amendments to the Capital Programme be noted.*
 - 2. That further reports be submitted to Cabinet and all Strategic Working Groups detailing the position as at 31st December 2007 and the final outturn as at 31st March 2008, in line with the budgetary control monitoring arrangements.*
 - 3. That additional funds amounting to £300,000 be made available from existing Housing Revenue Account resources to fund the backlog of work in relation to Disabled Persons Adaptations.*

CAB.108/07 AREA FORUMS

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the following:

- Area 4 Forum - 25th September 2007
- Area 1 Forum - 29th October 2007

(For copies see file of Minutes)

RESOLVED : That the reports be received.

Published on 23rd November 2007

The key decisions contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 3rd December 2007 five working days after the date of publication unless they are called in by three Members of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call in procedure rules.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, on Spennymoor 816166 Ext 4240 ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk

Item 4

KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET

6th December 2007

REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/ DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Environment Portfolio

KERBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICE 2008 / 2010

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Sedgefield Borough Council currently has an 'Agreement' with Durham County Council for the provision of a kerbside recycling service – the 'Kerb-it' scheme, delivered under contract by Premier Waste Management Ltd. (PWM). The existing 'Kerb-it' recycling contract with the County Council terminates on the 31st March 2008 as does the Borough Councils 'Agreement'.

1.2 The terms and conditions of the existing Contract do not contain an extension clause and therefore the current service cannot be extended beyond the 31st March 2008.

1.3 This report considers the results of a joint procurement process undertaken by this Council in partnership with Easington, Chester-le-Street and Durham City Councils to provide a replacement kerbside recycling service from the 1st April 2008.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1 The 'variant' Tender submitted by Greencycle Plc., in the sum of £54.57 per tonne of recyclate collected, be accepted and approval be given to award a 2-year Contract to Greencycle Plc. for the provision of the kerbside recycling service as described in their 'variant' bid.
- 2 That the Council purchases re-usable plastic bags for the collection of mixed plastics and cardboard as outlined within the report..

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Sedgefield Borough Council currently has an 'Agreement' with Durham County Council for the provision of a kerbside recycling service – the 'Kerb-it' scheme, delivered under contract by Premier Waste Management Ltd. (PWM). The contract with PWM and the consequent 'Agreement' with the County Council come to an end on the 31st March 2008.

3.2 In order to meet its statutory obligations in respect of recycling targets, and also to satisfy residents' expectations, it is imperative that provision is made for an alternative service, and/or service provider, to be in place with effect from 1st April 2008.

3.3 The identification of future options in respect of recycling services was the subject of a comprehensive review carried out by the Recycling Services Review Group of Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3, from June 2006 to April 2007. The Review Group recommendations were subsequently formally presented to Cabinet in June 2007. Cabinet's response to the Review Group recommendations was delivered at its meeting on the 13th September 2007.

3.4 Cabinet endorsed the Review Group's 'Recommendation 3' that *'Consideration be given to various options for the continuation of a kerbside collection service after 31 March 2008, including working in partnership with current partners of the existing kerb-it scheme.'*

4. THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

4.1 Officers representing the Borough Council have subsequently been in discussion with Service Managers from Chester-le-Street DC, Durham City Council and Easington DC regarding the joint procurement of a new kerbside recycling service. Potential Contractors have been identified and Tenders have been sought for the provision of a service identical to the existing 'kerb-it' service i.e. the fortnightly collection of glass, paper and cans using 55 litre boxes from the curtilage of the property and segregated into compartmentalised vehicles at the kerbside for onward transport to re-processors.

4.2 The term of the contract was stipulated as 2 years with a possible 2-year extension.

4.3 Expressions of interest in providing the service were received from several companies and all were sent a copy of the Tender documents. However completed documents were only returned by the following companies (in alphabetical order):

- a) Abitibi Consolidated Recycling Europe
- b) Greencycle Plc.
- c) Greenstar Environmental Ltd.
- d) PD Logistics
- e) Premier Waste Management Ltd.

Tenderers were required to provide a rate for delivering the specified service to each of the households in the Contract Area (i.e. the cumulative area covering the above-mentioned Borough and District Councils) based upon the price per tonne of recyclable material collected.

The following tenders were received for the provision of a service which complied with the contract specification (in numerical order):

	<u>£/tonne</u>
i)	£ 67.91
ii)	£ 78.52
iii)	£ 99.25
iv)	£ 123.15
v)	£ 155.00

4.4 Within the terms of the Tender documents, Tenderers were also allowed to provide a price for alternative methods of collection, which in their opinion provided added value to the current service.

Four of the Tenderers took the opportunity to submit such 'variant' bids. The variances from the specified level of service, in all cases, included either the collection of additional materials or the use of different types of collection vehicles.

The following tenders were received for the provision of a service, which varied from the defined contract specification (in numerical order):

	<u>£/tonne</u>	<u>Proposed Variances from Specification</u>
i)	£ 54.57	(2 additional materials)
ii)	£ 59.74	(1 additional material, stillage type vehicles)
iii)	£ 64.86	(1 additional material. 'Eurocyclers' vehicles)
iv)	£ 69.97	(2 additional materials, stillage type vehicles)
v)	£ 89.99	(2 additional materials, 'Eurocyclers' vehicles)

(Note: One tenderer submitted 2 variant bids)

4.5 All of the submitted Tenders, both 'compliant' and 'variant' have been evaluated using a pre-defined evaluation matrix (Appendix A) developed to balance the price of the submitted tenders against the quality of the service offered. The matrix assessed each Tenderer and their respective submissions in respect of both financial and operational matters, taking into consideration such issues as tender price, ability to deliver the service on the due date, Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, environmental performance and experience.

Tenderers were made aware of the evaluation model prior to submission of their bids.

4.6 A summary of the cumulative evaluation scores for each of the submitted bids is shown at Appendix B.

5. PREFERRED TENDER

5.1 Following full evaluation of the submitted bids the officer group overseeing the procurement process have jointly selected a preferred bid i.e the variant tender submitted by Greencycle Plc.

The benefits of this option are;

- The kerbside collection and recycling of mixed plastics and cardboard will be introduced which will greatly increase customer satisfaction.
- Recycling rates will increase giving better performance with respect to key BVPIs and LAA targets.
- The tender price offers excellent value for money.
- The tender has scored highly for quality.
- The company's aim is to maximise its income from the contract by maximising the amount of material it collects and recycles. Staff are to be paid a bonus linked to tonnages recycled and £2 per tonne will be donated to charity.
- The company have passed an assessment of financial viability having a turnover of £6 Million pounds in the last six months.
- Whilst this is a new company the management team are experienced in the industry.
- The company have satisfied the steering group that they have robust plans in place to commence the service from 1/4/2008 provided the contract is awarded in December.

The risks of this option are;

- This company was formed in 2005 and as its first contract to deliver kerbside collection services starts in early December the joint officer group cannot assess their track record.
- The contract is to run for 2 years with an option to extend for a further two. If the contract proved not to be financially viable the company could seek to terminate early.
- The company has stated that it needs to recycle 25,000 tonnes a year across the whole of the contract area to make a profit and current recycling rates are 17,200 tonnes. To improve recycling tonnage they propose to add cardboard and plastics to the service and employ 4 full time dedicated 'recycling education staff' (1 for each Council area) to drive up participation in the scheme.
- The more material that is recycled the more the contract costs the council.
- The company proposes that residents put out the additional material, plastic and cardboard, in waste plastic bags. The steering group consider this to be a potential problem in causing litter and reducing customer satisfaction and it would therefore be proposed to provide a reusable bag. The Council will be required to purchase bags for plastic and cardboard at a cost of around £1.20 per household.

5.2 As the Councils of Chester-le-Street, the City of Durham, Sedgefield Borough and the District of Easington have entered into this tender process jointly it is imperative that each authority agrees to award the contract to the same company with respect to the same tender. In order to minimise the chance of the contractor not being able to deliver the service from 1/4/2008 the aim is to award the contract in mid December so that vehicles can be ordered, depots acquired and staff engaged involving TUPE transfer if appropriate. If there are delays in awarding the contract there may be slippage which means the service cannot be provided from 1/4/2008. If each Council does not agree to select the same option the process will not be completed and may have to be started again or the Council may have to negotiate an individual contract that may lose the economies of scale.

6. CORPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The procurement and provision of a new kerbside recycling service as outlined in this report support the following ambitions and aims contained within the Council's Corporate Plan 2006/07 – 2008/09.

Corporate Ambition	Community Outcome	2006 Aim
Attractive Borough	Ensuring a cleaner greener environment	<i>Aim A1</i> – Monitor and improve local environmental conditions
	Reducing waste and managing natural resources	<i>Aim A5</i> – Increase recycling rates to ensure that local and national targets are met.
Corporate Values	Be responsible with and accountable for public finances	<i>Aim C7</i> – Identify year-on-year efficiency gains from the conception, procurement, and delivery of goods, services and works

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Borough Council anticipate recycling approximately 5000 tonnes of material through the 'kerb-it' scheme this year. The 'Agreement' with the County Council for the provision of the service costs the Borough Council £40,000 per annum.

7.2 The preferred bid aims to drive recycling tonnages up by approximately 45% over the 2-year life of the scheme. Potentially this could result in the tonnage collected within the Borough increasing to an estimated 6000 tonnes in 2008/9 and 7250 tonnes in 2009/10. The cost per tonne for delivering the service tendered is £54.57.

7.3 The County Council have agreed to pay the recycling credit equivalent sum per tonne of recyclate collected through this contract, to the participating Borough and District Councils. The likely recycling credit rate for 2008/09 will be in the region of £46.07 per tonne.

7.4 Therefore the anticipated net revenue cost for the provision of the service for 2008/09 is:

$$6000 \text{ tonnes} * (£54.57 - £46.07) = \text{£51,000}$$

7.5 In addition to the annual revenue expenditure for the provision of the service there will be a need for a one off purchase of re-usable plastic bags at a cost of approximately £50,000.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Borough Councils Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Service Managers from the other participating Authorities.

8.2 Waste Management Officers from Durham County Council sat on the Joint Officer Steering Group from the outset of discussions on this initiative. They were fully involved in all initial discussions and decisions on the proposals. These officers voluntarily

withdrew from the Group at the procurement/tender preparation stage due to the County Councils association with one of the prospective tenderers, Premier Waste Management.

8.3 The Chairman of Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been consulted in relation to the procurement process in general and in particular in relation to the time constraints surrounding the award of the Contract as detailed in Clause 5.2 above. The Chairman recognised the importance of making an early decision regarding the award of the Contract and that any delay could have a serious impact on the achievement of the desired commencement date of the initiative. He therefore agreed that under Part 4B – Access to Information Procedure Rules (para. 16, ‘special urgency’ decisions) and Part 4E – Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules (para. 15(i), ‘Call-in and Urgency’) of the Councils Rules of Procedure, the matter is considered to be one of ‘special urgency’ and may properly be put to the Cabinet on the basis that no call-in shall take place.

9. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 **Sustainability:** Environmental and financial sustainability underpin the whole ethos of this proposal. All tenders were tested in relation to both of these factors within the evaluation process.

9.2 **Risk Management:** The risks associated with the award of this Contract to the preferred bidder are outlined in Section 5 above.

9.3 **Health and Safety:** All tenderers and proposed operational activities were tested in relation to health and safety issues within the evaluation process.

9.4 **Equality and Diversity:** All tenderers were tested in relation to equality and diversity issues within the evaluation process.

9.5 **Legal and Constitutional:** Easington District Council, as the ‘lead’ Authority for the initiative, included legal representation on the Steering Group to consider any legal implications arising from the process including contractual and TUPE issues.

9.6 **Procurement:** The whole of the procurement process has been carried out in accordance with the OJEU open tendering procedure.

No other material considerations have been identified.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

Progress in relation to Cabinets response to the Recycling Review Groups recommendations in respect of future recycling services is the subject of regular updates to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3.

11. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A - Tender Evaluation Model

Appendix B - Cumulative Summary Score Sheet

Contact Officer: Gordon Lennon
Technical Services Manager
Telephone Number: 01388 816166 ext 4266
E-mail address: glennon@sedgefield.gov.uk

Ward(s) All Wards

Key Decision Validation:

Decision will incur expenditure in excess of £100,000

Background Papers

- o Cabinet Minutes 13th Sept 2007 – Response and Action Plan in relation to Recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny Recycling Services Review Group
- o Tenders received on the 26th October 2007 for the provision of a service for the ‘Kerbside Collection of Segregated Recyclates’ to the Councils of Chester-le-Street District, Easington District, City of Durham and Sedgefield Borough.

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"/>

This page is intentionally left blank

Item 5

KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET

6 December 2007

REPORT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Portfolio - Learning and Employment

PROPOSED MERGER SBC TRAINING AND BISHOP AUCKLAND COLLEGE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In September 2006 Cabinet gave its approval for officers to investigate the feasibility of entering into a strategic alliance with Bishop Auckland College to improve training opportunities for residents of the Borough and South West Durham.
- 1.2 Cabinet also gave its approval for officers to investigate the feasibility of providing strategic centres of excellence in training with the potential to build a construction trades training centre at Spennymoor linked to existing training facilities at Coulson Street, utilising the Council's capital receipts from the sale of housing land as gap funding.
- 1.3 This report sets out the proposal to merge the Council's training service with Bishop Auckland College and to provide a construction training centre of excellence at Coulson Street, Spennymoor as part of the overall redevelopment of Bishop Auckland College. It sets out the core business of the merged entity, the proposed activities of the centre and seeks approval for the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to sign a Memorandum of Understanding as a clear statement of intent to work with Bishop Auckland College to realise the project.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the progress made since September 2006 in the investigation of the feasibility of working with Bishop Auckland College and endorses the proposed merger as set out in the report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agree in principle to further development work being undertaken on the proposed Construction Training Centre and receive a report in due course setting out the council's capital contribution to the project within the confines of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 2.3 The Cabinet give approval for the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to sign a Memorandum of Understanding as a clear statement of intent to work with Bishop Auckland College to merge the

Council's Training Service with the College and to build a construction training centre at Coulson Street as an integral part of the redevelopment of Bishop Auckland College.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Sedgefield Borough Council has operated a training service since 1978. It is now the only Council in the region to offer both youth and adult programmes. The Council's training service focuses on return to work training for long term unemployed people as well as modern apprenticeships, specialising in business administration, construction and engineering training for young people.
- 3.2 Cabinet approved a report in September 2006 setting out a proposal to investigate a potential strategic alliance with Bishop Auckland College. The primary driver for this initiative is the changing nature of contracting environment in which training operates, which now favours larger organisations; and the greater potential to improve choice, quality and access to training and learning opportunities for the people of the Borough and South West Durham. In addition a joint training service offers potential for strategic contracts with the major building programmes such as the building schools for the future programme to supply the skills needed and to give opportunities for our residents that are currently unavailable.
- 3.3 A number of workshops and meetings have been held between officers of the council and the college to examine: Governance & structure core business, funding streams and the potential for improved facilities including the building of a new state of the art construction training centre at Spennymoor.

4. **GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE**

- 4.1 Officers from the Collage and the Council have examined the most beneficial structure and governance arrangement for the new entity. Options examined included:
- A partnership agreement
 - SBC training absorbing functions of the college.
 - A merger with SBC training becoming part of BA College.
 - A stand alone company.
- 4.2 The preferred option is for a merger, with SBC training transferring to Bishop Auckland College as an entity within the college, with a joint Board to oversee operations. This model would allow SBC 50% nomination rights to the joint Board to continue the Council's strategic influence over training and would also give the entity access to FE led revenue funding, which currently is denied to SBC training. It is proposed that the merged entity be established during 2008/ 2009.
- 4.3 A Steering Group has been established to oversee the development of the merger. The Council is represented by the Leader of the Council,

the portfolio holder for learning and employment, the Chief Executive and the Asst Chief Executive.

5. **CORE BUSINESS**

5.1 Having given close examination of the areas of business that currently complement each other, it is recommended that the following areas form the core business of the merged entity:

- Delivery of advanced and apprenticeship programmes in construction, engineering and administration.
- Delivery of FE courses in construction and engineering.
- Delivery of young apprenticeship in construction plus other school projects in construction and engineering such as the new diplomas.
- Delivery of Train to Gain in construction, engineering and administration.
- The management and co-ordination of the LSC Work Based Learning contracts.
- Delivery of Entry to Employment.
- The management and co-ordination of the LSC Train to Gain contract
- Links to Higher Education establishments such as the University of Sunderland to provide franchise courses up to degree level.

5.2 The merged entity would have an annual turnover of £3.5m rising to over £4m over a three year period. This is three times the size of the current operation at Spennymoor and represents a significant growth in provision of training and learning opportunities within the Borough.

6. **CONSTRUCTION TRAINING CENTRE**

6.1 Bishop Auckland College are undergoing major capital redevelopment at the Woodhouse Lane Campus. Phase one of the redevelopment is complete. The College are entering into negotiation with the Learning and Skills Council with regards Phase Two of the redevelopment which includes the core business as detailed above.

6.2 Initial plans have been discussed with regard building a new construction training centre adjacent and linked to the Council's existing training centre at Coulson Street, Spennymoor. This facility would complement the redevelopment of the College at its Bishop Auckland site and would form part of the redevelopment of the college as a whole.

6.3 It is proposed that the following functions would be housed at the Woodhouse Lane campus:

- Higher Education
- Admin

- FE construction
- Motor Vehicle

6.4 It is proposed that the following be provided at the Spennymoor site:

- Employer led higher skills
- Work based learning construction including brickwork, joinery, plumbing / gas, electrical, tiling, kitchen fitting, painting and decorating.
- A 14-16 centre for construction with a focus on new diplomas.
- Work based learning administration.

6.5 It is proposed that the construction training centre at Spennymoor be completed Autumn 2009.

7. **COPORATE POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The Vision for the project is to facilitate a step change in both the quantity and quality of construction related training for the people of the Borough and to make a significant contribution to the social and physical regeneration of the Borough. It is a key project for Sedgfield Borough.

7.2 The Borough has identified through its performance management framework, top priorities of employment, learning and health. This proposal will make a significant impact upon these key issues. The development of a construction training centre and a merger with Bishop Auckland College are priority actions within the Council's Corporate Plan. The project would bring a further education college into Sedgfield Borough.

7.3 The vision is of a construction training programme capable of servicing the needs of the major strategic projects of the Borough Council and within the County. The project would help support the housing renewal programme and the housing maintenance contract by providing a supply of skilled labour to undertake these programmes of work. The project would also provide the skills needed for the Building Schools for the Future programme and provide a centre of excellence for school age pupils to explore vocational diplomas and GCSEs within south west Durham. The current training provision is not sufficient to fulfil the needs of these major public sector building programmes.

8. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Human Resources

The council would need to facilitate a TUPE transfer of staff from the existing training service to Bishop Auckland Collage. Human Resources have carried out some initial work, and due diligence and measures will follow in due course.

8.2 Financial Resources

The project will require a significant investment on behalf of Bishop Auckland College and the Borough Council in partnership. The full cost of the new construction training centre is being calculated in order to bid for funds to the Learning and Skills Council. This exercise is underway, we expect to have this information by February 2008. Officers will also be exploring external funds from One NorthEast.

However Members will need to be aware that the merger and development of a new construction training centre could involve the transfer of the existing training centre at Coulson Street and the adjacent land, valued at around £600K. Additional support could be made in the form of revenue balances and if required, capital resources for which an allowance of £2.5m has been made in the Transitional Plan which will be presented to Cabinet prior to Christmas.

9. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 9.1 Verbal consultations have been undertaken with the Learning and Skills Council, Durham County Council LEA and Durham County Council Building Schools for the Future team. All of which have been positive. Staff are aware of the proposal and have been working on it as part of a partnership team and the principle of the transfer has been discussed with Trade Unions at the corporate consultation panel. It is proposed to have full a consultation event with the staff of both organisations following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- 9.2 The MOU will be based upon the contents of this report and will be signed on Friday December 7th.

10. **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Key other material considerations include:

Constitutional and legal Implications

This is a TUPE transfer on terms no less favourable than staff enjoy at present.

Risk Management

The merger will be subject to full risk analysis as we move through the process over the coming months.

Health and Safety

Non

Sustainability

Non

Information Technology

Non

Equity and Diversity

Non

Crime and Disorder

Non

Human Rights

Non

Social Inclusion

The project will give greater training and employment opportunities to the people of Sedgefield Borough and so promote greater social inclusion.

Procurement

The procurement of the new training centre will be through Bishop Auckland College.

7. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

Contact Officer Andy Palmer
Telephone Number 01388 816166 Ext.
E-mail address anpalmer@sedgefield.gov.uk

Wards: All

Key Decision Validation: Result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings of £100,000 or above.

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 6

REPORT TO CABINET

6th December 2007

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Planning and Development Portfolio

Sedgefield Borough Local Development Framework – Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds Project

1 Summary

- 1.1 The Borough Council published its Core Strategy Preferred Options Report for consultation on the 9th July 2007. To accord with the EC Habitats Directive (92/42/E) and Habitat Regulations 2007, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was undertaken to ensure that the emerging Core Strategy will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European and International designated nature conservation sites. Such sites include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites.
- 1.2 The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report concluded that the Core Strategy should adopt certain avoidance measures to minimise any potential for bird collisions with, or disturbance from, wind turbines for four identified bird species: Golden Plover; Peregrine; Merlin; and, Hen Harrier (Appendix 1). The winter months are the best time to undertake this project, due to the bird migration patterns.
- 1.3 The avoidance measures proposed by the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report were:
 - The boundaries of the most valuable bird sites should be clearly defined during the preparation of the Local Development Framework;
 - No wind farms should be located within 600 metres of valuable bird sites; and,
 - Key flight lines are to be mapped to inform the further development of policy relating to the location of wind farms.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agree to the commissioning of this Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds Project. The Project would be then required to go through an open tender process before the Project can commence. Due to the specialist nature of the project, we will approach specific consultancies instead of undertaking an open tender process.

3 Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds Project

- 3.1 The Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds Project will:
- Ensure that the Borough Council delivers on the recommendations of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report;
 - Is in conformity with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
 - Form part of the Council's evidence base when preparing policies and proposals in the Local Development Documents that will form the Local Development Framework; and,
 - Act as a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 3.2 The appointed consultants will be required to define and map areas, and plot likely bird flight routes, of particular importance for feeding and breeding bird species in order to minimise the impact of future developments that might arise as a result of the Borough's Local Development Framework.

Outcomes

- An understanding of the most important sites within the Borough for the four bird species identified;
 - An appreciation of the boundaries of these most important sites;
 - An understanding of other bird species present and the condition of these most important sites;
 - A map of likely principle flight corridors across the Borough of importance to Golden Plover, Peregrine, Hen Harrier and Merlin.
- 3.3 Important sites are to be confined within the Borough, however it is recognised that bird flight routes may extend to sites beyond the Borough's boundary. The Project will identify likely routes and propose reasons why birds are using these routes. Where it is possible to infer connections to European and Ramsar sites, these will be recorded.
- 3.4 Due to the sensitivity of the data, nesting locations will not be disclosed in the final report.

4 Resource Implications

- 4.1 The Local Development Framework is currently being developed. It will be necessary that external specialists be employed to produce technical specialised documents to supplement those developed by the Sustainable Communities and Forward Planning Teams. The Mapping of Sensitive Areas for Birds will be one such document.
- 4.2 It is estimated that, after taking account of utilising in-house GIS resources, the cost of producing this will cost approximately £6,000. This cost is identified in the Local Development Framework budget 2007/8. Neighbouring Councils have been approached to jointly commission the study and achieve efficiency savings.

5 Consultations

- 5.1 The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been subject to a six-week consultation period. As part of their response, Natural England has recommended

that this project be undertaken to fully inform policy decisions. The Attractive Borough Group of the Local Strategic Partnership will be consulted upon the findings of the Mapping of Sensitive Areas for Birds Project.

6 Other Material Considerations

Links to Corporate Objectives / Values

The production of the document will help meet Corporate Aim 25, which is to provide a high quality, efficient and customer focussed Planning Service that supports sustainable improvement of the built and natural environment of the Borough.

6.1 Legal Implications

The Council must have regard to the EC Habitats Directive (92/42/E), the Habitats Regulations 2007, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and PPS 9 in respect of its Planning function.

6.2 Risk Management

If the project is not undertaken, there is a significant risk that the Core Strategy will be found to be “unsound” at its Examination in Public.

6.3 Health and Safety Implications

No additional implications have been identified.

6.4 Sustainability

There is no requirement to undertake Sustainability Appraisal for this project. However, the findings of the project will feed into subsequent Appraisals of Local Development Documents.

6.5 Equality and Diversity

Once published, the Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds Project will be made available in alternative languages, Braille or in audio format where requested, and will be placed on the website in pdf format.

6.6 Social Inclusion

No additional implications have been identified.

6.7 Procurement

The Mapping of Sensitive Areas for Birds Project will be subject to open tender.

7 Overview and Scrutiny Implications

7.1 None

8 List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Protected Species

Appendix 2 – Tender document for the Mapping of Sensitive Areas for Birds Project (separate document)

Contact Officers: Chris Myers

Telephone No: (01388) 816166 ext 4328

Email Address: cmyers@sedgefield.gov.uk

Ward(s)

All

Background Papers

DCLG (2006), Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment, Wetherby, DCLG Publications

Treweek Environmental Consultants (2006), Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East

Sedgefield Borough Council (2007), Local Development Framework: Appropriate Assessment of Sedgefield Borough Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Screening Report

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"/>

Appendix 1 – Protected Species



Hen Harrier



Merlin



Golden Plover



Peregrine

This page is intentionally left blank



MAPPING SENSITIVE AREAS FOR BIRDS

TENDER DOCUMENT

NOVEMBER 2007



	Page
Introduction	3
Background	3
Steering Arrangements	4
Scope of Tender – Key Tasks	4
Timescales & key outcomes	5
Invitation to Tender	5
Costs	5
Tender Evaluation	5
Submission of Proposals	6
Outputs Required	6

Introduction

To define and map areas, and plot likely flight routes, of particular importance for feeding and breeding bird species in order to minimise the impact of developments that might arise as a result of Borough Council's Local Development Framework.

Background

The Borough Council published its Core Strategy Preferred Options Report for consultation on 9th July 2007. This Development Plan Document, part of the suite of documents that will make up the Borough's Local Development Framework (LDF), puts forward the preferred policy approach to the future built development of the Borough.

To determine and reduce the environmental effects of the Core Strategy a Sustainability Appraisal and an Appropriate Assessment (AA)¹ Screening Study were undertaken. AA aims to ensure that plans, such as the Core Strategy, will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European designated nature conservation sites. Such sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs)², Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)³ and Ramsar Sites⁴.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Study assessed the potential impacts of preferred options on European and Ramsar Sites within the Borough and on sites within a 'zone of influence' of the Core Strategy. These sites included all European and Ramsar sites in neighbouring Local Planning Authority jurisdictions. As such, well-known sites outside of the Borough, including the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA and the North Pennine Moors SPA, were considered as potentially sensitive to changes in land use in Sedgefield Borough.

The findings of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Study included that the Core Strategy should adopt certain avoidance measures to minimise any potential for bird collisions with, or disturbance from, wind turbines for a group of four species⁵.

¹ Appropriate Assessment is also known as Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

² Special Protection Areas are sites designated under the EC Birds Directive for rare or vulnerable bird species, for regularly occurring migratory bird species, and for the protection of wetlands, especially wetlands of international importance.

³ Special Areas for Conservation are protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive that make a significant contribution to conserving the habitat types and species (excluding birds) identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive.

⁴ Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Although they are not part of the European Site (Natura 2000) network the Government has stated that Ramsar sites should receive the same level of protection as SACs.

⁵ The screening exercise determined that for most species listed under Annex I of the Birds Directive no significant impacts could occur. However, it was not possible to determine whether the Core Strategy, in combination with other plans and projects, would result in detrimental effects on four species of bird at levels of significance in relation to the Conservation Objectives of European Sites. The four species identified were golden plover, peregrine falcon, merlin and hen harrier.

The avoidance measures proposed include the following:

- The boundaries of the most valuable bird sites should be clearly defined during the development of the LDF;
- No wind farms should be located within 600m of valuable bird sites;
- Key flight lines are to be mapped to inform the further development of policy relating to the location of wind farms.

Steering Arrangements

A steering group containing representatives from the appointed consultant and Council Officers will manage the project. To keep the project on time, it will be important for this group to meet on a regular basis to ensure that both parties are satisfied with progress and identify any problems that could lead to delay. To this extent, it is vital that the appointed consultant develops a project management structure that identifies key milestones and dates for their delivery.

Scope of Tender – Key Tasks

The key tasks of the project are:

1. To define and map the locations of the Borough's most important sites for bird species that are potentially vulnerable to wind turbine development, including those which were identified in the Appropriate Assessment;
2. To identify the boundaries of the most important sites through appraisal of habitat in the vicinity of the most important locations;
3. To provide bird species lists and brief assessments of condition for the most important locations;
4. To map the likely principle flight corridors across the Borough of importance to birds potentially affected by wind turbine development, including species identified in the UK and Durham Biodiversity Action Plans and golden plover, peregrine, hen harrier and merlin; and,
5. To present data in a single report.

Important sites are to be confined to the area of Sedgefield Borough, however it is recognised that bird flight routes may be to sites beyond the Borough's boundaries. The report will identify likely routes and propose reasons why birds are using these routes. Where it is possible to infer connections to European and Ramsar Sites these should also be recorded.

Due to the sensitivity of data, an agreed means of ensuring that nesting locations are not disclosed in the report should be agreed.

Timescales & key outcomes

The appointed consultant will be required to set out, at the outset, when each of the Key Tasks will be completed. It will be important that the conclusions of the Report are clearly identified and developed, as this will allow the Council to identify key areas of constraint in the preparation of Local Development Documents.

Invitation to Tender

This brief will enable consultants to submit a proposal for the scheme. This should include:

- a. proposed methodology;
- b. time to be spent on the study by each named individual involved, including details of any sub-consultants (e.g. bird specialists) to be used to fulfil the requirements of the commission;
- c. overall timetable of works and the expected fees for the study;
- d. resume of experience of similar studies;
- e. cost analysis of the study broken down into individual elements, such as Site Audits;
- f. a Risk Assessment of the various elements of the study e.g. in terms of long-term sickness cover and staff leaving and the identification of whether contingencies are required;
- g. method of liaising with the client during the project.
- h. compliance with the Mapping Service Agreement Framework with respect to a Contract Licence(s) for the use of Service Provider(s) data.

Costs

The tender is required to provide a fixed price quotation (exclusive of VAT) for the Mapping Sensitive Areas for Birds in the Borough of Sedgfield Project.

It is suggested that the full payment will be made after submission of the final report, within 30 days from presentation of invoice in each case, subject to the adherence to the project's timeframe.

Tender Evaluation

The consultant will be awarded following the tendering process. It will be on the basis of the best value and generally most economically advantageous to the Councils. The award criteria of the Contract will be based on price (40%) and quality (60%):

Price	40%
Quality	60%
Quality will be assessed regarding:	
Resources	10%
Project plan outline	5%
Examples of previous Bird Study work	10%
Methodology	10%

Staff experience and expertise	15%
Details of sub-contractors	5%
References and experience	5%

The Council will need to be satisfied that the tender can provide a robust and high quality study able to withstand close scrutiny at a public examination.

The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest tender or any of the tenders received and will not be responsible for any costs incurred in preparing the tender submissions.

2 copies of the tender documents must be submitted.

Submission of Proposals

All contact from shortlisted consultants should be with Chris Myers, Forward Planning Manager at Sedgefield Borough Council. Proposals should be based on the information in this brief. It is not anticipated that further information will be made available. However, if any additional information is made available it will be released to all parties.

Selected consultancies may be asked to meet with Council Officers before a selection is made.

Proposals should be submitted for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer at Sedgefield Borough Council by no later than 12.00pm Friday ***** 2007 and the preferred consultant will be appointed thereafter.

The final report will be required by 31st March 2008.

Outputs Required

The selected consultant will be expected to provide the following outputs:

- i. A formal presentation to the sponsors of the projects' conclusions
- ii. A draft report to be presented on CD;
- iii. 4 final reports (2 bound and 2 single side loose leaf) and on CD; and,
- iv. The CDs to be in Microsoft Office format for word processing, spreadsheet, database and GIS shapefiles.

References

Sedgefield Borough Council (2007), Local Development Framework: Appropriate Assessment of Sedgefield Borough Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Screening Report.

Item 7

REPORT TO CABINET

6th DECEMBER 2007

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Portfolio: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

PUBLIC SECTOR EFFICIENCY

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates Members with information relating to progress with the Gershon Efficiency agenda and achievement of efficiency targets set by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 1.2 This report contains details of the Council's overarching strategy that has been developed for achieving efficiency gains and actual progress made for the period 2005-06 to 2006-07.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
 - a) Cabinet notes the progress made by the Council in relation to the efficiency agenda and achievement and monitoring of efficiency savings.

3.0 PUBLIC SECTOR EFFICIENCY

Background

- 3.1 Under the current comprehensive spending review period every local authority is expected to achieve efficiency savings of 2.5% per annum during the period 2005-06 to 2007-08, compared to their 2004-05 baseline. Efficiencies obtained from revenue, capital spend and better use of assets all count towards this target.
- 3.2 At least half of the efficiency savings should be 'cashable' – this means that they release funding for use elsewhere, either for reinvestment in other priority services or to hold down the council tax. The other half can be 'non-cashable' savings, leading to improved performance for the resources used.
- 3.3 In response to the Efficiency Agenda, the Council developed a comprehensive strategy that provides a broad framework for achieving efficiency savings. This strategy statement is shown in **Appendix A** and this framework for achieving and articulating efficiency savings is being integrated into:
 - Corporate Plan and Priorities
 - Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Business and Service Plans
 - Performance and Risk Management Frameworks
 - Procurement programmes and projects
 - Partnership relationships

Reporting for Efficiency – Annual Efficiency Statement

3.4 The primary source of information is the self assessed Annual Efficiency statement (AES) to be signed by the Leader, Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer. Each year the Council has to submit two Annual Efficiency Statements (AES), which include the following elements:

- Forward Looking AES – required by mid-April. A very brief (1-2 pages) outline strategy, showing key actions to be taken during the year and expected efficiency gains.
- Backward Looking AES – required by mid-June. To set out actual gains achieved in the past financial year by each service and cross-cutting area.

Efficiencies Achievements

3.5 So far the Council has submitted three backward looking returns to the DCLG detailing efficiencies, which have been delivered up to the 31st March 2007. A total of **£1.243m** of efficiency gains have already been delivered against a target of **£0.833m** to the end of 2006-07. The targets and efficiencies achieved to date are summarised as follows:

Year	DCLG Targets		Efficiencies Achieved to Date	
	Target	Cumulative	Actual	Cumulative
2004-05*	-	-	99,928	99,928
2005-06	430,000	430,000	697,852	797,780
2006-07	403,000	833,000	445,486	1,243,266
2007-08	403,000	1,236,000	-	-
Total	1,236,000	1,236,000	1,243,266	-

* the efficiency review covers the period 2005-06 to 2007-08 but an allowance has been provided such that efficiencies achieved in 2004-05 can be included as long as they are not one-offs and will continue throughout the whole of the following three-year period.

3.6 As can be seen, the Council is already ahead of its cumulative target (for 2006-07) and overall target of £1.236m (required by 2007-08). Details of actual efficiencies that make up the above figures are provided in **Appendix B**.

3.7 The Forward Look 2007-08 AES which was submitted to DCLG in April 2007 sets out planned savings of **£609,310** in the current financial year and Cabinet at its meeting on 26th April 2007 has already considered its contents. Under the arrangements set out by the Government, the AES was approved for electronic submission by the Leader in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Section 151 Officer (Director of Resources).

3.8 A large proportion of the savings planned in the current financial year have been built in to the 2007-08 revenue budgets and details of these are provided in **Appendix C**. These savings amount to **£367,660** and the following table shows the broad areas where these savings have been planned alongside expectations as to whether these savings will be achieved.

Broad Area of Saving	Planned Savings £	Progress (Red, Amber, Green)*	Estimated Outturn £
Medical Expenses	1,100	RED	-
Scanning Services	21,500	GREEN	21,500
Dept and Section Training	28,090	AMBER	25,630
Staffing Costs	192,500	GREEN	231,780
Electricity	44,240	GREEN	128,590
Gas	25,760	GREEN	25,760
Communications / Postages	5,380	GREEN	5,400
Equipment, Furniture, Materials	16,140	GREEN	25,220
Subscriptions	10,950	GREEN	10,950
Travelling and Mileage	13,140	GREEN	17,160
Stationary and General Office	8,860	AMBER	5,730
Total	367,660		497,720

* Red – Not achieved, Amber – Partially achieved, Green – Fully achieved or exceeded

- 3.9 As the above table shows, it is expected that the planned savings target of **£367,660** in 2007-08 will be achieved with savings of **£497,720** now expected for the year - an additional **£130,060** above the budgeted figure.
- 3.10 It should also be noted that there were planned savings of **£75,790** included in the target which will not be fully met and revised expectations are that only **£21,200** will be achieved. This leaves net expected savings to be **£443,130** (i.e. £497,720 less £75,790 plus £21,200), which still exceeds the target of **£367,660**.
- 3.11 Details of other efficiencies amounting to **£241,650** (i.e. not those in the above table), which contribute to the overall total of **£609,310** in the Forward Look AES 2007-08 are as follows:
- Surplus land sales of £15m generating investment interest of £225,000;
 - Use of online BECS calculator for determining benefit entitlement resulting in non-cashable administrative savings of £1,650; and
 - Introduction of Automated and paperless direct debit administration non-cashable savings £15,000.
- 3.12 The disposal of surplus land can be subject to unanticipated delays beyond the Council's control and hence on grounds of prudence and good risk management it was not considered appropriate to assume that all anticipated land sales would materialise in the development of the budget framework for 2008/09 as this could adversely impact on the robustness of the budget estimates.

Future Considerations

- 3.13 In its Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announcement made in October 2007, the Government aims to build on progress made over the last few years and further embed a culture of innovation and value for money. All public services have been set a tough target of achieving at least 3% cash-releasing value for money gains per year over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. It is important that the development of the Budget Framework 2008-09 that has now commenced is firmly built on rigorous pursuit of efficiencies in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Efficiency agenda influences the financial management of the Council and the use of its resources. Given the significant demands on the revenue budget, the need to rigorously identify and pursue savings is essential to enable a sustainable budget to be maintained and this will need to continue in the preparation of the Budget Framework for 2008-09, which has now commenced.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There are no consultation implications arising from the information contained in this report.

6.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Links to Corporate Ambitions/Values

- 6.1 Achievement and demonstration of value for money in the delivery of services is a key priority as reflected in the Council's Corporate Plan. This priority is being championed at the highest level to help further integrate and embed the process into day-to-day activities and into service and financial planning.

Risk Management

- 6.2 There are risks associated with making efficiency gains and these include the following:

- Efficiency gains being identified but not achieved
- Failure to complete AES by the due date
- Service standards being eroded through cumulative efficiency gains
- Ability of the Council to make efficiency gains on its own reducing over time.

These risks can be minimised by ensuring ongoing monitoring and review of progress and making effective use of the North East Regional Centre of Excellence for support and guidance in this matter. Ongoing awareness, commitment and drive across the whole Council to identify opportunities for achieving efficiencies is essential to make further progress.

Legal and Constitutional

- 6.3 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct overview and scrutiny arrangements arising from this report although a detailed progress report has already been considered by Overview and Scrutiny 1 at its meeting on 10th October 2006.

8.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – Strategy for Achieving Efficiency Gains

Appendix B – Backward Look AES 2006-07

Appendix C – Details of Budget Savings included in Forward Look AES 2007-08

Contact Officer: Alan Smith (Director of Resources)
Telephone: 01388-816166 ext. 7776
E-mail: alansmith@sedgefield.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Releasing Resources into the Front Line: A Review of Public Sector Efficiency – Sir Peter Gershon July 2004
2. Delivering Efficiency in Local Services – ODPM Guidance 12th November 2004
3. Efficiency Technical Note for Local Government – ODPM Guidance 28th January 2005
4. Report to Cabinet 31st March 2005 – Public Sector Efficiency
5. A Guide to Completing the 2005-06 Mid-year Update – ODPM Guidance September 2005.
6. Efficiency Guidance for Service Plans – 14th December 2005 Internal Guidance provided to Heads of Service Group.
7. Delivering Efficiency in Local Services – One Year On – February 2006.
8. Measuring and Reporting Efficiency Gains – A Guide to Completing Annual Efficiency Statements – May 2006.
9. Medium Term Financial Plan 2006-2009 'Efficiency, Investment, Improvement'
10. Report to Overview and Scrutiny 1 10th October 2006 – Public Sector Efficiency
11. Report to Cabinet 26th April 2007 – Forward Look AES 2007-08
12. Delivering Value for Money in Local Government - Meeting the Challenge of CSR 2007 – October 2007

EXAMINATION BY STATUTORY OFFICERS

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

Strategy for Achieving Efficiency Gains

This annual efficiency statement outlines the Council's strategy for securing efficiency gains. The Government has set a target for efficiency gains of 2.5% per year, which results in a target for Sedgefield of **£1.236m** by **2007-08**. In line with nationally set targets, the Council's aim is that at least half of the total efficiencies that are identified and secured should be 'cashable' – equating to **£0.618m** for Sedgefield. The aim of securing efficiency gains is to reinvest cash savings and direct resources towards the achievement of both corporate and service specific objectives, whilst at the same time seeking to minimize any increase in the level of council tax.

The Council has a strong track record of reviewing its spending in order to identify administrative and efficiency savings as a key element of the budget and tax setting process and has exceeded targets in the first two years of the efficiency agenda. A rolling three-year financial strategy forms the basis of the authority's forward financial planning which is linked to the achievement of key strategic objectives. This includes matching and aligning resources to key priority areas. The Council will improve efficiency by examining methods of raising productivity and enhancing value for money. The Council will follow closely best practice guidance in this field and will use a range of mechanisms to deliver its efficiency savings. Sedgefield's efficiency framework will make use of the following strategies to help achieve its efficiency targets.

Making effective use of opportunities for Partnering, Joint working and Collaboration

- The Council recognises that it cannot work in isolation to deliver the efficiencies required. It has already fostered strong working relationships in a range of service areas with partners such as Competition Line, County Durham E-Government Partnership, County Durham Supporting People Partnership and other local authorities.
- The Council will maintain and develop its partnership working arrangements with stakeholders to ensure that opportunities for joint service delivery arrangements are identified and pursued. Collaborative working, either internally or externally, to deliver efficiency gains will be supported.

Securing Efficiencies through the Council's Procurement Strategy

- Effective procurement strategies, practices and procedures are expected to play a key part in the Council's strategy to achieve its efficiency targets.
- The Council will build on its procurement strategy working towards the National Procurement Guidelines and the National Procurement Strategy milestones.
- We will be targeting efficiency savings in appropriate categories of spend and exploring the full range of procurement tools including e-procurement.

Securing Efficiencies through the Council's Business Transformation Programme

- The Council aims to transform services to make them more accessible, convenient, responsive and cost-effective. Investment is being made in web-based transactional services to increase and improve the effectiveness of interactions between residents and the Council.
- Significant improvements in the way that the Council does business with its citizens will be achieved through the Council's ongoing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy. The Council will extend the roll-out of services delivered through the CRM programme.
- A range of other initiatives including a major programme of change across customer facing and transactional services, particularly in respect of splitting the back and front office functions to improve productivity and effectiveness through the 'Making Change Happen' business transformation programme.

Making effective use of Financial, Physical and Human Resources

- The Council's cashable efficiency savings target has already been incorporated in the Council's medium term financial plan covering the three-year period to 2008-09. In future planning rounds, service and financial planning will require a sharper focus on efficiency.
- The Council has a good track record in managing its financial resources effectively and will continue to strongly pursue practices to achieve and demonstrate that value for money is being secured. The Council will ensure, through its financial strategy, that resources and investment are made available in targeted areas to secure the required improvements in service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness.
- The Council's physical assets will be maintained in accordance with the asset management plan and provision made in revenue and capital budgets for maintenance and investment programmes to ensure effective and efficient use of assets. The Council has an asset disposal strategy in relation to surplus land which will provide additional resources for investment in Council services.
- A strategic approach to the Council's use of human resources will be taken via improvements being considered in workforce planning and human resources policies and strategies. Dedicated resources have been made available to secure efficiencies and improvements in sickness absence across the Council.

Undertaking Service Reviews to drive improvements and efficiencies in service delivery

- Service Reviews are expected to play a key part in challenging existing service provision and exploring alternative models of service delivery. The council's service improvement programme will be aiming to improve efficiency as well as effectiveness (outcomes).
- The Council will review and implement recommendations from an on-going programme of service reviews that will form the basis for delivering efficiency targets.

Strengthening Performance Management and Monitoring Arrangements

- The Council will continue to strengthen its performance management arrangements, which is key to securing efficiency gains. Sound programme and project management arrangements will be used that will apply to the delivery of performance improvement, e-government and major procurement projects.
- A proper understanding of costs and quality of services will be needed for taking focused action. Robust information on the costs of each service area, including unit cost data, alongside performance data and quality measures will be established, monitored and developed over time to track progress.
- Achieving and demonstrating Value for Money in service delivery is a key corporate priority and the Director of Resources will take the lead in efforts to improving efficiency as well as tackling wider value for money issues.

In summary, the Council regards the efficiency agenda as a positive opportunity to reshape public services and improve outcomes for citizens. It will be working closely with its partners to take advantage of initiatives to secure efficiency savings. This includes utilising the Regional Centres of Excellence and using them as a vehicle for joint working and collaboration, accessing funds to support joint projects and utilising guidance and best practice with regards to identifying and measuring efficiencies.

APPENDIX B

	On-going gains from 2004-05	Further gains achieved in 2005-06	On-going gains from 2005-06	Further gains achieved in 2006-07	On-going Gains 2004-05 and 2005-06 Inflated	Cumulative Gains
Supporting People	70,000	89,675	89,675	89,675	163,635	163,635
1 Maximising existing infrastructure and expanding volume of business	70,000	89,675	89,675	89,675	163,635	163,635
Corporate Services	27,510	597,495	568,549	205,375	610,841	778,394
1 Reduced annual licence fee for new FMS	17,510	-	-	-	17,944	17,944
2 Provision of ICT Management for neighbouring authority	-	12,500	12,500	-	12,810	12,810
3 Business continuity arrangements with neighbouring authority generating infrastructure savings	-	5,000	-	-	-	-
4 Joint procurement with neighbouring authority of network penetration testing	-	1,000	-	-	-	-
5 Paying creditors on due date basis (as opposed to 'next' paysheet)	-	14,210	-	-	-	-
6 Reductions secured in costs of several data line circuits	-	8,736	-	-	-	-
7 Sale surplus land: Cobblers Hall Site J, Burn Lane	10,000	556,049	556,049	-	580,087	580,087
8 Legal services internal capacity resulting in less work outsourced to specialist legal consultants	-	-	-	20,000	-	20,000
9 Staffing restructure in chief executives department generating savings in staff costs (pro rata)	-	-	-	4,593	-	4,593
10 Enhanced level of training for both members and officers through increasing engagement in partnership and joint working arrangements	-	-	-	36,300	-	36,300
11 Cash receiving contract renegotiated making savings on annual revenue costs	-	-	-	9,928	-	9,928
12 Reduction in cashing hours whilst maintaining same opening hours of cash offices	-	-	-	5,799	-	5,799
13 Reduction in payslips and postage by transferring payment of wages from weekly to monthly basis	-	-	-	5,245	-	5,245
14 New three year contract for provision of scanning services for Revenues Section	-	-	-	22,680	-	22,680

APPENDIX B

	On-going gains from 2004-05	Further gains achieved in 2005-06	On-going gains from 2005-06	Further gains achieved in 2006-07	On-going Gains 2004-05 and 2005-06 Inflated	Cumulative Gains
15 Usage of new Fraud Freephone number at no cost to the Council	-	-	-	432	432	432
16 A 20% discount of price of software to support mobile working and BECS benefit claims	-	-	-	7,875	7,875	7,875
17 Online BECS claims procedure generating savings in administration/processing times	-	-	-	1,522	0	1,522
18 Review of single person discounts informed by Experian database facilitated more targeted response to households generating savings in administration and process costs	-	-	-	1,898	1,898	1,898
19 Joint working through provision of in-house asset management and valuation expertise to neighbouring district council	-	-	-	7,000	7,000	7,000
20 Reduction in printing costs of MTFP	-	-	-	2,458	2,458	2,458
21 Reduction in costs of budget consultation exercise by changing format of workshops with consultees	-	-	-	2,600	2,600	2,600
22 Restructuring of Accountancy Services Section leading to ongoing revenue savings	-	-	-	8,000	8,000	8,000
23 Development of interface between Torex and FMS done in house	-	-	-	12,000	12,000	12,000
24 Printing and photocopying costs rationalised as a result of centralisation of function in ICT	-	-	-	14,000	14,000	14,000
25 Disposal of surplus land of £3.2m generating additional investment interest on capital receipt	-	-	-	43,045	43,045	43,045
Procurement	-	142,895	22,740	71,346	23,304	94,650
1 OGC Procurement Price Savings	-	17,765	17,765	-	18,206	18,206
2 Watercoolers	-	1,370	1,370	-	1,404	1,404
3 Energy - Large Sites Gas	-	46,224	-	-	-	-
4 Energy - Large Sites Electricity	-	25,583	-	-	-	-
5 Energy - Small Sites Gas	-	12,740	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B

	On-going gains from 2004-05	Further gains achieved in 2005-06	On-going gains from 2005-06	Further gains achieved in 2006-07	On-going Gains 2004-05 and 2005-06 Inflated	Cumulative Gains
6 Stationery	-	3,605	3,605	-	3,694	3,694
7 Joint procurement with neighbouring authorities of APLAWS saving consultancy costs	-	1,013	-	-	-	-
8 Joint procurement of Browsealoud software with neighbouring authorities	-	2,095	-	-	-	-
9 Savings on provision of housing information on website compared to external provider	-	12,000	-	-	-	-
10 Range of savings arising from procurement of laptops, dongles and anti-virus appliance	-	18,500	-	-	-	-
11 Savings on provision of planning information on website compared to external provider	-	2,000	-	-	-	-
12 Joint procurement of electoral registration with neighbouring councils securing a 10% discount.	-	-	-	1,600	-	1,600
13 Renegotiation of mobile phone contract securing revenue savings	-	-	-	38,068	-	38,068
14 One off cash credit from mobile phone account supplier following renegotiation of contract	-	-	-	9,750	-	9,750
15 One off rebate obtained on phone line rental from supplier	-	-	-	1,300	-	1,300
16 Savings obtained over 2 years on landline to mobile calls using affiniti network (pro rata)	-	-	-	1,796	-	1,796
17 Joint procurement of equipment for DR site and penetration testing	-	-	-	6,000	-	6,000
18 Development of planning information on website handled in-house	-	-	-	2,000	-	2,000
19 Procurement savings on purchase of blackberries for communication and e-mail purposes	-	-	-	2,880	-	2,880
20 Support for year end processes for Revenues and Benefits conducted in-house as opposed to using system supplier	-	-	-	4,000	-	4,000
21 Renegotiation of contract for mail filtering with supplier over 3 years	-	-	-	2,891	-	2,891

APPENDIX B

	On-going gains from 2004-05	Further gains achieved in 2005-06	On-going gains from 2005-06	Further gains achieved in 2006-07	On-going Gains 2004-05 and 2005-06 Inflated	Cumulative Gains
22 Price efficiencies achieved through use of OGC Framework for purchase of IT, Professional and Telecomms Services	-	-	-	1,061	1,061	1,061
Productive Time	-	25,620	-	-	-	-
1 Making effective use of pooling resources and secondments	-	6,000	-	-	-	-
2 Minimising recruitment costs by maintaining database of prospective job applicants	-	19,620	-	-	-	-
Transactions	-	14,473	-	-	-	-
1 Consider greater use of online recruitment methods	-	2,555	-	-	-	-
2 Use of e payments - 24/7 touchtone facility	-	11,918	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	97,510	1,162,953	680,964	445,486	797,780	1,243,266
TARGET SET BY GOVERNMENT FOR SBC		430,000	680,964	215,000	215,000	860,000
						430,000
						1,201,686

Details of Budget Savings included in Forward Look AES 2007-08

Description	Amount
A cashable saving of £1,100 in medical expenses whilst still maintaining the standard of service throughout the Council	1,100
Cashable savings of £21,500 as a result of negotiating a new three year contract with the supplier in respect of document scanning services for the Revenues and Benefits Service	21,500
A £28,090 reduction in the departmental and sectional training budgets across a range of service areas.	28,090
A cashable saving of £38,970 arising from reduction in employee costs in Council Tax Admin made possible by technological improvements in service delivery through improved scanning and workflow systems	38,970
A restructuring of the Accountancy Services Section leading to cashable savings of £28,440	28,440
A cashable saving of £5,050 in the Cash Office budget by using cashiering resources more effectively	5,050
Savings of £82,550 in employment costs across services in Leisure	82,550
Savings of £10,420 in employment costs across services in environment	10,420
Savings of £9,650 in employment costs as a result of more efficient use of staffing in CCTV Control Room	9,650
Reduction in administration of the Concessionary Fares of £17,420 through lower staffing costs	17,420
A cashable saving of £10,000 in electricity costs in Green Lane administrative offices	10,000
A cashable saving of £34,240 in electricity costs across Leisure complexes within the Borough	34,240
A cashable saving of £10,000 in gas costs in Green Lane administrative offices	10,000
A cashable saving of £15,760 in gas costs across Leisure complexes within the Borough	15,760
A cashable saving of £5,380 in postage, stationery and microfilming costs as a result of transferring weekly paid staff onto a monthly basis	5,380
Savings of £12,340 in equipment, furniture and materials across various service areas	12,340
A reduction of £3,800 on maintenance of Tunstall Medicare system	3,800
A reduction in subscriptions of £10,950 whilst still maintaining service standards	10,950
A reduction in car mileage and leasing costs of £9,490	9,490
A reduction in travelling expenses of £3,650 within the transport budget in Environmental Services	3,650
A reduction of £8,860 in stationery and general office expenses across a range of service areas	8,860
Total savings assumed in budget 2007-08	367,660

This page is intentionally left blank

Item 8a

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROSPEROUS AND ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Tuesday,
6 November 2007

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor G.C. Gray (Chairman) and

Councillors D.M. Hancock, Mrs. I. Hewitson, B. Lamb, Mrs. E. Maddison and J. Robinson J.P

In

Attendance: Councillors Mrs. P. Crathorne, A. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, J.E. Higgin, J.G. Huntington and Ms. I. Jackson

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. L. M.G. Cuthbertson, P. Gittins J.P., G.M.R. Howe, A. Smith, B. Stephens and A. Warburton

P&A.11/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

P&A.12/07 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

P&A.13/07 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Consideration was given to a report relating to the monitoring of Performance Indicators against the Council's Ambitions of a Prosperous and Attractive Borough and supporting Community Values covering the period from 1 April 2007 to 30th September 2007. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Committee was informed of the new style of reporting Performance Indicators which included the targets for the existing year, comparison with previous years targets, targets for the following year, and achievements to date. The report also included commentary on performance of the Indicators.

Key points of progress and key areas of concern were brought to Members attention. Particular reference was made to the following key areas of progress relating to the Council's Corporate Ambitions of a Prosperous and Attractive Borough:-

Prosperous Borough

- Percentage of Industrial Properties let (CPP302)
- Housing Benefit Overpayments (HB) (BV79(a) (bi) (biii))
- Number of Concessionary Travel Permits Issued in accordance with the agreed criteria (LP27)
- Overall success rate of young people who have completed an apprenticeship programme with Sedgefield Borough Council (CPP23)

Attractive Borough

- The Tonnage of Household Waste sent by the Authority for Composting or Treatment by Anaerobic Digestion (BV082)
- The Percentage of Decisions delegated to officers as a proportion of all decisions (LP139)
- Average time take to determine all planning applications (LP124)
- Percentage of minor Commercial and Industrial applications decided within 8 weeks (BV109)
- Standard Land Searches Completed within 10 Days (LP143)

Members then considered progress on each Performance Indicator and identified areas of concern in relation to the Council's Corporate Ambitions of Prosperous and Attractive Borough, with a view to inclusion in the Committees Work Programme.

The following Indicators were highlighted as areas of concern :-

Prosperous Borough

Social Inclusion

Number of Fraud Investigations per 1,000 caseload (BV706(c))
Number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1,000 caseload (BV76(d))
Speed of processing (average time for all new claims) (BV078(a))
Speed of processing (average time for a change) (BV078(b))
Housing Benefit Overpayments Performance Indicators (BV079(bii))

It was considered that the area of Housing Benefits needed to be considered by the Committee particularly in relation to staffing levels and that performance was below targets set for 2007/2008.

Increased Skills Levels of Local People

Number of People achieving NVQ Level 2 through Train 2 Gain (CPP29)

Concern was raised that current performance of 6 people was significantly lower than the 2007/08 target of 72 people to achieve NVQ Level 2 through Train 2 Gain.

Attractive Borough

A cleaner, greener, sustainable environment

Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up-to-date character appraisal (BV219(b))

Members expressed concern that a target had been set to achieve 20% of conservation areas within the local authority area to have an up to date character appraisal and that 2006/07 year end performance was 6.7% and current performance was 6.6%.

Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections household waste (LPI01)

Concern was raised that year end performance for 2006/07 had deteriorated from the 2005/06 performance outturn and that current performance was not achieving the target set for 2007/08.

Improved Design and Quality of Towns and Villages

Percentage of Applicants considering Building Control Service very good or better (LPI32)

Percentage of Building Control plans approved/responded to within three weeks (LPI34)

Members expressed concern that both Building Control Indicators were currently performing below target set for 2007/08.

Concern was also raised regarding local Plan Indicator 35 Percentage of Complaints relating to alleged breaches of planning Control resolved in 12 weeks. It was however noted that Building Control Section had indicated that performance would be on target by end December 2007.

Increased involvement in Cultural Activities

Number of People Spectating or Participating in a Cultural Activity (CPA02)

Members were informed that performance against this indicator was 7451 people and not 2774 as indicated in the report. However concern was expressed regarding the definition of the indicator and how supporting information was collected.

The Committee considered that priority needed to be given to the area of Housing Benefits.

AGREED : That the information be noted and areas of concern be highlighted in the Work Programme.

P&A.14/07 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Work Programme for Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members identified Performance Indicators to be addressed in the Work Programme. It was highlighted that Housing Benefit Performance Indicators would be identified as a priority.

Members requested that a report be presented to the Committee detailing progress and impact of the Local Improvement Plan.

- AGREED :**
1. *That the Work Programme be noted.*
 2. *That the following items be placed on the Committees Work Programme:-*
 - Progress towards Housing Benefits Best Value Performance Indicators BV 76c, BV 76d, BV 78a, BV 78b, BV 79b(ii) relating to the Prosperous Borough Community Value 'Reduced Social Inclusion'.
 - Progress towards Corporate Plan Performance Indicator CPP 29, which relates to the Prosperous Borough Community Value 'Increased Skills of Local People'.
 - Progress towards BVPI 219(b) and Local Plan Indicator LP1 01 which relates to the Attractive Borough Community Value 'A Cleaner, Greener, Sustainable Environment'
 - Progress towards Local Plan Indicators LP132 and LP134 relating to the Attractive Borough Community value 'Improved Design and Quality of Towns and Villages'.
 - Progress towards Corporate Plan Performance Indicator CPA02 relating to the Attractive Borough Community Value 'Increased involvement in Cultural Activities'.
 3. *That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee detailing progress to date and impact of the Council's Local Improvement Programme.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Liz North 01388 816166 ext 4237 email: enorth@sedgefield.gov.uk

Item 8b

SEDGFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Tuesday,
20 November 2007

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor A. Gray (Chairman) and

Councillors D. Farry, T.F. Forrest, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Haigh, T. Hogan and
B.M. Ord

In Attendance: Councillors G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, D.M. Hancock, J.E. Higgin,
B. Lamb, Mrs. E. Maddison, J. Robinson J.P, A. Smith and T. Ward

Apologies: Councillors B.F. Avery J.P, D.R. Brown, V. Chapman and Ms. I. Jackson

SL.16/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
No declarations of interest were received.

SL.17/07 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th October, 2007 were confirmed as a
correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**SL.18/07 HALF YEARLY REPORT ON COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY
CORPORATE COMPLAINTS STAFF**
Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (for copy see
file of Minutes) outlining complaints/issues received by the Corporate
Customer Relations staff in the Chief Executives department during the
period 1st April, 2007 to 30th September, 2007.

It was explained that the Borough Council had adopted a revised
Complaints Policy aimed at providing residents and other users of the
Borough Services with the opportunity to comment on and criticise those
services or service delivery. The Policy provided for the publication of a
half yearly and Annual Report on complaints handling.

The Committee was pleased to note that the number of complaints/issues
dealt with by Corporate Complaints staff had decreased from 394 in the
first six months of 2006/2007 to 195 in the same period for 2007/08 – a
decrease of 199 (51%). This could be attributed to Service Departments
and the Customer Services Centre being able to deal with substantially
more complaints to the customers satisfaction at the first point of contact
and avoid issues being referred to Corporate Complaints staff.

The report identified the number of complaints received within each
Service area and the nature of the complaint.

The main area of complaint (37%) related to services provided by the Housing Department. However, the total volume of complaints about those services fell from 153 to 73 with justified complaints falling from 16 to 9, a reduction of 43%.

In respect of Housing Maintenance Service, it was noted that there had been a continuing decrease in the number of complaints from 66 to 45 with the number of justified complaints decreasing from 14 to 6. The reason for the justified complaints was work not being carried within target.

It was also noted 15,135 jobs were issued in the period and justified complaints represent 0.05%.

Members were informed that although 18 complaints had been made in relation to the Housing Management Service only 2 complaints were found to be justified.

With regard to complaints made about capital improvements, it was noted that of the ten complaints received only one had been found to be justified.

It was noted that ten complaints had been made against the Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates Services with only 1 regarding Benefits being justified.

In relation to the Development Control Service, six complaints had been received with one being found to be justified.

It was explained that Corporate Complaints staff aimed to respond to 100% of the complaints and enquiries within 10 Working days and achieved 97.5% in the first half of the current year compared with 98.9% in the first half of 2006/2007. Procedures had been changed to ensure that all complaints received at least a 'holding response' if it was not possible to fully resolve a complaint within target. 78% of issues were, however, responded to within 1 working day.

The Committee was also advised of the Complaints Procedure whereby complainants had the right to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman if they had exhausted the Council's Complaints Procedure.

In 2007/08 10 cases to date had been investigated and decided by the Ombudsman. The Council was not found guilty of maladministration in any of the cases.

It was pointed out that there were no complaints made relating to any of the six strands of the Equity and Diversity Standard for Local Government.

During discussion of this item a query was raised regarding criteria for determining whether a case was justified. It was explained that as a general rule a complaint was considered justifiable if the Council was found to be not providing a service in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.

Reference was made to a complaint which was contained in the Ombudsman's report relating to the repair of a central heating system. It was explained that the issue had been resolved and the tenant had been compensated as suggested by the Ombudsman. Systems had also since been put in place to ensure that the chances of a similar situation arising again were minimised. It was suggested that this issue be brought to the attention of Healthy Borough with Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

A query was raised regarding the complaint received against Licensing and whether it was related to taxi licensing. It was explained that as part of the new regime a new policy had been introduced to protect taxi owners and members of the public. The complaint related to the policy.

AGREED :

- 1. That the half year report be received and the full year report for 2007/08 be prepared by consideration at a future meeting.*

- 2. That Healthy Borough with Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the issue relating to the complaint highlighted in the Ombudsman's report*

SL.19/07

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Consideration was given to a report measuring performance against corporate health element of the Corporate Plan covering the period 1st April, 2007 to 30th September, 2007. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The report provided data on 21 Performance Indicators of which five were key to the Council's aims and objectives. The report did not include figures that were calculated on an annual basis.

Members expressed their satisfaction with the following key points of progress :-

- Calls to main switchboard answered within 30 seconds
- Corporate Employee Turnover
- Number of Current Vacant Posts which had been advertised and had remained vacant for six months or over.

The Committee then broke into workshop session to give detailed consideration of performance information.

The following issues were identified for inclusion on the Committee Work Programme for further in-depth examination:-

- **Percentage of Council Tax Collected in the Year (BV009)**
Concern was raised regarding the target of 95% which was lower than most other authorities. It was considered that an explanation was needed with a view to the target being lifted.
- **Number of Working Days/Shifts Lost to the Local Authority due to Sickness Absence (BV012)**
It was noted that sickness absence was improving but sickness remained in the bottom quartile and below target by 2.7 days. All sickness cases were being addressed by new procedures and plans in place to reduce long term absenteeism via rehabilitation, redeployment, ill-health retirement and dismissal processes. Short term absences were being addressed through structured notification processes, return to work interviews and reference point reporting on a monthly basis to Heads of Service triggering formal investigations. In normal circumstances resultant improvements in sickness levels could be expected 6 – 12 months from the implementation of the new procedures. However, given Local Government Re-organisation it was uncertain whether an improvement would be realised.
- **Percentage of Non Council Housing Capital Projects within 5% of Budgeted Cost (CPC03) and Percentage of Non Council Housing Capital Projects within 5% of Projected Timescale (CPC04)**
Further information was requested in relation to these areas for which no information was yet available as at Quarter 2.
- **Percentage of Complaints Responded to in 10 Working Days (LPI20)**
Concern was expressed that the performance was 2.56% under target. Members however recognised that as approval had been given to appoint two further staff to the Council Tax Section this should, ultimately improve the turnaround times for answering correspondence in the section. The procedure had been amended to ensure all complaints received at least a holding response within 10 working days if it was not possible to fully resolve their complaint within target.

This was also linked to :-

Response or Holding Response to Letters within 10 Working Days across the Authority (LPI22)

Which was performing 11% under target due to the high volume of Council Tax mail. Members again recognised that as approval had been given to appoint two further staff to the Council Tax Section this should improve the outturn figure

The Committee suggested however that these Indicators (LPI120 and 122) could be considered as part of the Work Programme when the Annual Report on Customer Complaints was submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2008.

- AGREED :*
- 1. That the key points of progress be noted.*
 - 2. That areas of concern be incorporated in the Committee's Work Programme.*

SL.20/07

WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Work Programme for Strategic Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members had identified Performance Indicators to be addressed in the Work Programme. It was highlighted that Council Tax Collection Performance Indicator would be identified as priority.

Members requested that a report be presented in relation to the Housing Maintenance Service and in particular the monitoring of jobs processed.

- AGREED :*
- 1. That the Work Programme be noted.*
 - 2. That the following items be placed on the Committee Work Programme:*
 - > Progress towards Council Tax Collection Performance Indicator (BV009)*
 - > Progress towards Best Value Performance Indicator (BV012) relating to sickness absence.*
 - > Progress towards Corporate Plan Performance Indicators (CPC03 and CPC04) relating to Non Council Housing Capital Projects.*
 - > Progress towards Local Performance Indicators LPI20 and LPI22 relating to Complaints Response time.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Liz North 01388 816166 ext 4237 email:enorth@sedgefield.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Item 9a

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 2 FORUM

West Cornforth Community
Centre

Tuesday,
6 November 2007

Time: 6.30 p.m.

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

Councillor Mrs. K. Conroy	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. P. Crathorne	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor D. Farry	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T.F. Forrest	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.E. Higgin	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Hodgson	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B. Lamb	– Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J. Robinson, JP.	– Durham County Council
Councillor G. Porter	– Durham County Council
G. Muncaster	– Bishop Middleham Parish Council
N. Wiffen	– Bishop Middleham Parish
M. Errington	– Chilton Town Council
Councillor W.R. Wilson	– Cornforth Parish Council
Councillor Mrs. E. Martin	– Ferryhill Town Council
W. Benson	– Durham Constabulary
M. Taylor	– Chilton West Residents Association
J. Weston	– Dean Bank Residents Association
D. Bradley	– Dean Bank Residents Association
G. Hall	– Ferryhill Station Residents Association
C. Heal	– Chilton Partnership
T. W. Garrett	– Ferryhill Partnership
M.D. Watson	– F.A.A.
B. Sheppard	– Ferryhill and Dean Bank Literary Institute
B. Catterall	– Local Resident
D. Waistell	– Local Resident
R. Greenwell	– Local Resident
S. Drew	– Local Resident
G. Barker	– Local Resident
B. Gibson	– Local Resident

Apologies: Councillor B.F. Avery, J.P. - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T. Brimm – Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor D.A. Newell – Sedgefield Borough Council

AF(2)15/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy and A. Hodgson indicated that they would be declaring an interest in Item 6 – Application – Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute- Improvements to the Community Centre. The interest was personal and prejudicial as Members of Sedgefield Borough Cabinet.

AF(2)16/07 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th September were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

AF(2)17/07 POLICE REPORT

Inspector W. Bentham attended the meeting.

He explained that he was the newly appointed Inspector for the area having recently worked in Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe areas.

It was reported that in relation to crime figures there had been a reduction of around 15% reported incidents.

The crime figures reported were as follows :-

	<u>July :</u>	<u>August :</u>	<u>September :</u>
Vehicle Crime	9	11	12
Violent Crime	30	31	29
Burglary (Dwelling)	7	7	6
Burglary (Other)	5	2	11
Rowdy Nuisance	142	112	159
Sexual offences	3	2	2
Criminal Damage	43	59	51
Damage accidents	12	15	13
Minor injuries	3	1	4
Serious injuries/ death	0	1	0

It was noted that an operation had recently been held in relation to drug dealing in Dean Bank. Arrests had been made and an amount of drugs had been seized. More cases would be forthcoming as a result of that operation.

Discussion was held regarding incidents of anti-social behaviour in various locations throughout Area 2 and Inspector Bentham assured the Forum that the Police were taking steps to deal with the problem. He explained that they were actively targeting a number of offenders to issue Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. It was, however, recognised that the problem would never been totally eradicated.

Discussion was also held regarding the sale of alcohol to underage youths. Inspector Bentham made reference to Operation Bottleneck, a project which was being run in the West End of Newcastle. He reported that funding was available to run such a project in the area, and within the next few weeks, following the publication of publicity material, etc., a similar project would be starting in the area.

AF(2)18/07

COUNTY DURHAM PCT

Councillor Conroy that she had held discussions with County Durham PCT regarding attendance at Forum meetings. The PCT had indicated that they were unable to send a representative to every meeting of every Forum. However, if there was a specific problem or issue they would endeavour to send the appropriate person to the Forum meeting. It was noted that there was to be a meeting with the PCT on 30th November regarding the proposed Chilton Health Centre.

AF(2)19/07

NAMING OF DEVELOPMENT LAND AT CHURCH LANE, FERRYHILL - BESPOKE HOMES (NE) LTD

Consideration was given to a report of the Acting Building Control Manager (for copy see file of Minutes) relating to the naming of the above-mentioned site.

It was suggested, that as the development was adjacent to St. Lukes Church, it be named St. Lukes Place.

AF(2)20/07

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - DEAN BANK AND FERRYHILL LITERARY INSTITUTE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

NB : In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Member's Code of Conduct Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy and A. Hodgson declared personal and prejudicial interests in this item and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (for copy see file of Minutes) regarding the above.

B. Sheppard, Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute, was in attendance to present the application.

The Forum was reminded that the Area 2 Forum had been allocated £836,000 of LIP Capital Resources between 2006 and 2009. A total of £278,700 had been allocated for the year 2007/8. A number of projects had been supported to the value of £249,855 and there was some additional underspend resulting from last year which would be available to the Area Forum for additional project activities.

It was explained that the project aimed to provide a two storey extension to provide a learning suite. This would involve the re-alignment of the public/emergency staircase. A total of 19.8 sq.mts. additional space would be provided. The project would also create a raised stage in the main hall.

The Forum agreed to support the project.

AF(2)21/07 MAKE A CHILD SMILE

Reference was made to a charity event which had been held to raise money for the above charity. It was agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to the organisers, Mr. and Mrs. D. Foster.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Miss E. A. North Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240,

Item 9b

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 3 FORUM

Fletcher Room,
Parish Hall,
Sedgefield

Wednesday,
14 November 2007

Time: 7.00 p.m.

- Present:**
- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Councillor J. Burton (Chairman) | – | Sedgefield Borough Council and |
| Councillor D.R. Brown | – | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Councillor D. Chaytor | – | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Councillor T. Ward | - | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Sergeant B. O'Connor | - | Durham Constabulary |
| Councillor J. Williams | - | Fishburn Parish Council |
| Councillor R. Lumsden | - | Fishburn Parish Council |
| J. Irving | - | Fishburn Parish Council |
| Councillor S. Sutherland | - | Sedgefield Town Council |
| Councillor S. Hannon | - | Sedgefield Town Council |
| L. Swinbank | - | Sedgefield Town Council |
| Councillor B. Thompson | - | Trimdon Parish Council |
| Councillor L. Burton | - | Trimdon Parish Council |
| L. Oliver | - | Trimdon Parish Council |
| L. Remington | - | Groundwork East Durham |
| D. Waters | - | Sedgefield Community Association |
| S. Appleton | - | Skerne Play Park Association |
| G. Norton | - | Local Resident |
| A. Oliver | - | Local Resident |
- Apologies:**
- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Councillor Mrs. L. Hovvels | - | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Councillor J. Robinson J.P | – | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Councillor J. Wayman J.P | – | Sedgefield Borough Council |
| Julia Bowles | – | Sedgefield Residents Association |

AF(3)14/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
No declarations of interest were received.

AF(3)15/07 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September, 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

AF(3)16/07 POLICE REPORT
Sergeant B. O'Connor was present at the meeting to give details of the crime figures and local initiatives in the area.

It was reported that the crime statistics were as follows :-

<u>Type of Crime:</u>	<u>Sedgefield:</u>	<u>Fishburn:</u>	<u>Trimdon Village:</u>	<u>Trimdon Grange/ Trimdon Station:</u>
Theft	7	0	7	3
Criminal Damage	10	1	11	3
Burglary (Dwelling)	2	0	0	2
Burglary (Other)	4	0	2	2
Assault	6	3	3	1
Vehicle Crime	0	6	2	3
Rowdy Nuisance Calls	45	11	37	12
Total Incidents Reported :	287	93	126	79

The total reported incidents were down by 10% whilst the detection rate was up by 9%.

It was reported that in the Sedgefield area arrests had been made in respect of public order and criminal damage offences. Directed patrols had been conducted over recent weekends. Joint patrols had been carried out with Neighbourhood Wards and PCSO targeting areas such as St. Edmunds Churchyard and Wykes Close.

Arrests also had been made in respect of criminal damage/public order offences which had occurred around the Co-op Store, Church Road area in Trimdon Village and in relation to Trimdon Grange, it was noted that the nuisance calls related mainly to the area of Harpers Corner.

Discussion was held regarding the car boot sales held at Sedgefield Racecourse and concern was expressed at cars parking on yellow lines. It was explained that as from 1st December, the PCSO would be working on a Sunday and would target that area.

Reference was also made to traffic management issues on Bradbury and Morden. It was explained that a meeting was to be held with Traffic Management and Parish Councils on 19th November.

AF(3)17/07

ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL TRIMDON AND FISHBURN

Leah Remington from Groundwork East Durham was present at the meeting to give a presentation relating to the above. (For copy of presentation see file of Minutes).

She outlined the work which Groundwork East Durham undertake. Groundwork East Durham worked through partnership to bring about social, economic and environment regeneration. They also used local environment action to engage communities and aimed to deliver sustainable development in targeted communities.

It was explained that the project had been commissioned by Sedgefield Borough and involved development of a community-led environmental

appraisal for Fishburn and the Trimdons. The aim of the appraisal was to prioritise environmental improvements and sites.

A multi-agency steering group had been set up to guide and inform and a variety of consultations had taken place to highlight priorities and issues.

The outcomes of the appraisals were

- community-led identification and prioritisation of key sites,
- project proposals and draft costings,
- a blueprint for improvement and
- community ownership.

The types of environmental improvements which would be included in the projects related to open public spaces, improved street lighting, traffic calming measures and play areas. It was noted that the projects would not include maintenance improvement suggestions and improvements to privately owned properties.

The Forum were informed that the submission of the Environmental Appraisal for Fishburn was due in January and for Trimdon in March 2008.

AF(3)18/07

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to be held on 9th January 2008.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Liz North Tel 01388 816166 ext 4237 email enorth@sedgefield.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank