

CABINET

Thursday, 11 September 2008

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 31st July 2008. (Pages 1 - 6)

KEY DECISION

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL REGENERATION AND PARTNERSHIP PORTFOLIOS

4. GROWTH POINT

Report of Director of Neighbourhood Services. (Pages 7 - 22)

MINUTES

5. AREA 5 FORUM

Minutes of meeting held on 22nd July 2008. (Pages 23 - 28)

6. 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
3rd September 2008

Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong (Chairman)

Councillors Mrs. K. Conroy, V. Crosby, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Hodgson, Mrs. L. Hovvells, 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

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Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
31 July 2008

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong (Chairman) and

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

In

Attendance: Councillors V. Chapman, Mrs. P. Crathorne, G.C. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray,
B. Haigh, Ms. I. Jackson, B. Lamb, A. Smith and T. Ward

CAB.20/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members had no interests to declare.

CAB.21/08 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.22/08 SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW (KEY DECISION)

The Lead Member for Planning and Development presented a report regarding the above. (For copy see file of Minutes)

It was explained that in October 2007, the Council in partnership with Chester-le-Street and Derwentside District Councils had commissioned Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners and Storeys:SSP to undertake a review of employment land, in accordance with the best practice guide 'Employment Land Reviews' issued by the Government in 2004. The purpose of the review was to help the authorities assess the suitability of sites for employment development, safeguard strategic sites in face of competition from higher valued uses such as housing and identify those sites that were no longer suitable for employment development.

The review had now been completed and would form part of the evidence base for the preparation of the new Unitary Council's Local Development Framework and the determination of planning applications by the Councils and in due course, the Unitary Council.

Members were given details of the review's key findings.

RESOLVED : *That the key findings and recommendations be acknowledged and the Employment Land Review be published.*

**CAB.23/08 EARLY INTEGRATION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
ACTIVITY ACROSS COUNTY DURHAM AND CESSATION OF
CURRENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (KEY DECISION)**

The Lead Member for Planning and Development presented a report seeking agreement to the early integration of all District and County Council work on the production of the Local Development Framework in anticipation of the forthcoming creation of a unitary authority for County Durham. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that at the vesting day in 2009, the new Unitary Council would assume its role as the single Local Planning Authority for the County and would need to embark upon the production of a single Local Development Framework.

It had therefore been agreed by the County Durham Districts Forum that an early start should be made on the production of a new county Local Development Framework, which in the medium term would be beneficial for establishing a 'county-wide' perspective for inclusion in the production of an Integrated Regional Strategy and assisting with the housing review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

It was pointed out that the Department of Communities and Local Government had published draft regulations for consultation on 18th June 2008, which proposed that in areas affected by local government restructuring the Implementation Executive or Shadow Council leading the transition to unitary status became the Local Planning Authority, except in relation to development control – i.e. decisions relating to planning applications would continue to be undertaken by existing districts. The County Council would be required to submit a revised Local Development Scheme to the Secretary of State six months before the reorganisation date – 30th September 2008, which would replace all the existing Local Development Schemes.

Members noted that the report, which was being referred to all eight councils in County Durham, also sought approval for the creation of an interim team across the County and the interim appointment of a Strategic Planning Manager.

RESOLVED : That the following be agreed :

- *Cessation of existing Local Development Framework activity with the exception of Area Action Plan and Supplementary Planning Document work.*
- *Early integration of the Local Development Framework function.*
- *The creation of an Interim Team across the County*
- *The interim appointment of a Strategic Planning Manager.*

CAB.24/08 SOUTH OF SPENNYMOOR MASTERPLAN (KEY DECISION)

The Lead Member for Planning and Development presented a report, which sought approval to commission a Master Plan for the development sites to the south of Spennymoor, particularly in relation to the Merrington Lane area and including the Electrolux and Thorn Lighting sites and the area of the former Greyhound Stadium. (For copy see file of Minutes)

The objectives for the Master Plan were to develop a new sustainable community, act as part of the evidence base for the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the Local Development Framework and focus on delivery and commercial reality.

It was envisaged that the Master Plan which was estimated to cost in the region of £75,000, would be fully financed through developer contributions.

RESOLVED : That the commissioning of a Master Plan for the development sites to the south of Spennymoor be approved.

CAB.25/08 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - NEWTON AYCLIFFE SPORTS CLUB (KEY DECISION)

Consideration was given to a report regarding a Local Improvement Programme application to provide at Newton Aycliffe Sports Club, a senior football pitch to a standard specified by the Northern League (Division 2), with floodlights, spectator and perimeter fencing and new self-contained changing rooms for two teams, plus officials. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The project met the Department for Communities and Local Government eligible 'Regeneration' definition and demonstrated links to the key LIP criteria of meeting elements of the Community Strategy. It had also been supported by Area 5 Forum.

Members noted that the applicant had requested £299,770 of LIP funding, which was 92% of the total capital costs of £342,770 excluding VAT.

RESOLVED : That the application for LIP funds be approved.

CAB.26/08 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - JUBILEE FIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Consideration was give to a report regarding a Local Improvement Programme application to upgrade the sports hall and lounge/dining rooms at Jubilee Fields Community Centre to enable the centre to become a more viable enterprise, through better utilisation of existing space (For copy see file of Minutes).

The project met the Department for the Communities and Local Government eligible 'Regeneration' definition and also demonstrated links to the LIP criteria of meeting elements of the Community Strategy and community consultation. It had also been supported by Area 4 Forum.

Members noted that the applicant had requested £75,000, which was 100% of the total capital project cost, however, Sedgefield Borough Council Enterprise Facilitator was working with the applicant on producing a business plan and identifying future possible funding. The Community Association would manage and maintain the facility. The revenue costs would be funded by income from room hire charges funding streams and local fundraising.

RESOLVED : That the application for LIP funds be approved.

CAB.27/08 PUBLIC SECTOR EFFICIENCY

Consideration was given to a report detailing the progress being made in respect of the Gershon Efficiency agenda and the achievement of efficiency targets set by the Department of Communities and Local Government (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was noted that the Council's overall target set by the Department of Communities and Local Government for efficiency savings to be achieved by the end of 2007/08 was £1.209m, which was based on a baseline outturn expenditure of £16.104m in 2004/05.

Members' attention was drawn to the table set out in Paragraph 3.13 of the report which showed the total savings achieved in each year from 2004 - 05 to 2007- 08. It was noted that the total of efficiency gains for the period was £4.223m. Full details of the savings were set out in Appendix C attached to the report.

RESOLVED : That the progress made by the Council in relation to the efficiency agenda and achievement and monitoring of efficiency savings be noted.

CAB.28/08 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Consideration was given to minutes of the following meetings:

Healthy Borough with Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee	- 24 th June 2008
Healthy Borough with Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee	- 1 st July 2008
Prosperous and Attractive Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee	- 8 th July 2008

(For copies see file of Minutes)

With regard to the meeting of the Healthy Borough With Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st July 2008, Members supported the views and concerns set out in the Minutes on the consultations exercises 'A Big Conversation' and 'Seizing the Future' and agreed that an appropriate response be forwarded to County Durham PCT and County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust and a copy sent to Durham County Council's Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED : That the Committees' recommendations be noted and appropriate action be taken.

CAB.29/08 AREA FORUMS

Consideration was given to minutes of the following meetings:

- Area 1 Forum - 16th June 2008
- Area 2 Forum - 24th June 2008
- Area 3 Forum - 2nd July 2008
- Area 4 Forum - 8th July 2008

(For copies see file of Minutes)

RESOLVED : That the Minutes be received.

CAB.30/08 EMPLOYMENT ISSUES PANEL

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2008. (For copy see file of Minutes)

RESOLVED : That the Minutes be received.

Published on 1st August 2008

Any key decisions contained in these Minutes will be implemented on Monday 11th August 2008 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

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Item 4

KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET

11 September 2008

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**Planning and Development Portfolio and Social Regeneration and
Partnerships Portfolio**

GROWTH POINT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the progress of the Durham New Growth Point bid, set out the implications of its inclusion in the confirmed list of New Growth Points, outline the next steps and request agreement to continuing to develop the proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:-

- i) Members note the content of this report.
- ii) In light of the timescales prescribed by DCLG, authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holders for Planning & Development and Social Regeneration & Partnerships, to approve the submissions of the Community Infrastructure Pro-Forma and the Programme of Delivery.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The New Growth Points Programme forms part of a series of Government measures since 2001 to provide more housing; originally focussed on relieving housing pressures in South East England. In October 2006, 29 locations across the East, South East, South West, East Midlands and West Midlands were named first "New Growth Points" (NGP). The Housing Green Paper 2007 included an additional round of the New Growth Points Programme and, for the first time, welcomed bids from Northern England.
- 3.2 Initially, it was expected that in the North East invitations to bid would be focussed on existing Housing Pathfinders in the urban centres.

However, at a late stage Government Office North East made it clear that bids were welcomed from all sub regions and at a County Chief Executive's meeting last year it was agreed that the development of a bid be managed through the Housing Neighbourhoods Partnership Board. Accordingly, a bid was prepared in very short order, principally involving the district councils of Sedgefield, Easington and Wear Valley.

3.3 In October 2007 the Durham Housing and Neighbourhoods Partnership submitted a bid covering 'South and East Durham' to Communities and Local Government (CLG). Reference to the bid was included in the report to Cabinet on "Draft Revision of Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East: Secretary of State's Further Proposed Changes." In July 2008, CLG announced that the Durham bid was one of 20 successful second round bids eligible to share £100m through the Growth Fund. This was confirmed with a letter to The Chief Executive on 23 July 2008 along with further outline guidance.

3.4 **Summary of the bid**

The Durham NGP bid aims to create 14,500 net additional homes before 2016 in the districts of Easington, Sedgefield and Wear Valley. The bid is linked to the Coalfield Housing Market Renewal Programme and the recognised priority areas.

3.5 Durham NGP is centrally located in County Durham in order to be "City Region neutral". It focuses on two growth 'corridors':

- a. The A19 corridor: encompassing the towns of Peterlee and Seaham;
- b. The Bishop Auckland to Darlington Corridor: encompassing the towns of Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe, Shildon and Spennymoor – including Chilton and Ferryhill.

3.6 Although the primary purpose of the bid is housing growth, the new housing will be linked to town centre regeneration and new job creation via the accelerated development of nine employment and mixed-use development sites including Durham Gate, Spennymoor. The programme will improve the environmental, economic and social sustainability of these existing settlements. It will also link with ongoing masterplanning in Spennymoor, Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee and Bishop Auckland town centres and will lead to transport, healthcare and education improvements in the two corridors. These matters will be considered and revised as necessary in the "Programme of Development" which Government will require as part of the next steps (see below).

3.7 **Funding**

3.8 The CLG announcement of Durham's successful growth point bid was accompanied by a proposal to make £100m available for NGPs through the "Growth Fund". Following a recent consultation, the government will release final details of the Growth Fund in Autumn 2008. Outline guidance suggests New Growth Points will be able to access "unringfenced block capital grants" from this fund in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

3.9 In April 2008, CLG also released bidding guidance for the £300m 'Community Infrastructure Fund 2' (CIF). Although £100m of this is reserved for the Thames Gateway, the bidding guidance clearly states that the remaining £200m is available for Growth Areas, Growth Points and Eco-towns. CLG bidding guidance outlines the principal purposes of this fund:

"CIF is designed to complement mainstream transport funding..."
and

"...will fund the type of schemes that are vital locally to unlocking large housing development sites, enabling the acceleration of housing development and improving the sustainability of major locations of housing growth."

3.10 Therefore Durham NGP could share in £300m of funding. Furthermore, although both funding streams are available to new 'eco-towns', ongoing opposition in other parts of the country may dissuade the Government from taking forward eco-town proposals; there is no eco-town proposal in our region. If this happens and no alternatives are brought forward, there is a possibility that the share of funding for NGPs could increase.

3.11 Achieving the Durham NGP programme will require significant private investment and with the ongoing credit crunch and a downturn in commercial and housing property markets this is likely to cause obstacles.

4. **Next steps**

4.1 The next steps will become clearer once CLG finalise details of the £100m Growth Fund for NGPs in Autumn 2008. However, the CLG confirmation letter (attached at Appendix 1) outlines the following key points:

a. The partnership between the Government and each NGP will be referred to as the "Partnership for Growth" and is intended to be a long-term partnership.

b. NGP is not a statutory designation and proposals will be subject to consultation, testing and examination through the statutory planning process.

c. If the levels of growth proposed for NGPs are significantly below those of the Regional Spatial Strategy the Government may need to

“review whether the partnership should continue”.

d. The initial funding allocation for the Durham bid is £100,000, to be used for working up a “Programme of Development” and its first stage, and Expression of Interest. These must be prepared for each NGP and updated as NGP proposals advance through the planning system and infrastructure commitments are made.

e. The Government Guidance suggests a confirmation of the Programme of Delivery by the end of 2008, presenting time pressures for the working up of further detail for the Durham New Growth Point. Key dates as part of this development process are the submissions of pro-formas for schemes to be considered under the Community Infrastructure Fund by 15 September 2008 and submission of a Programme of Development by 27 October 2008.

f. NGPs should be exemplars of sustainable development including the provision of education and health facilities and provide an opportunity to reduce the carbon footprint of new housing.

g. The new Housing and Communities Agency will be closely involved in the delivery of the NGPs.

h. All infrastructure costs should be met through existing programmes such as DfT, CLG, Regional Funding Allocations, and growth funds, which suggests funding may be available through the CIF.

4. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Human Resources

The development of the initial bid and the requirements for the programme of development are being undertaken by a cross authority group supported by the relevant technical capabilities. There are no further Human Resource requirements at this stage of the programme.

4.2 Financial Resources

Sedgefield has been nominated as the Accountable Body in receipt of funding by the Durham Partnership and will administer the initial allocation of £100,000 made available to develop the Programme of Development and applications for Community Infrastructure Funding.

The resources available nationally for the New Growth Point programme are £100 million for the Growth Fund (Capital or Revenue) and £200 million for the Community Infrastructure Fund (Capital only)

5. **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 The Growth Point programme has been developed through a partnership of Local Authorities (Sedgefield, Easington, Wear Valley and Durham County Council), linking in with the Durham Housing and Neighbourhoods Group.

5.2 Guidance issued recently identifies the requirement for broader links with key service provider stakeholders and reference to a number of

consultees in the planning process. Discussions with these organisations have now been initiated

6. **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Local Government Reorganisation

The Durham NGP represents an opportunity for positive development in the County, based on an integrated approach to housing, employment, transport. The implementation of the Durham NGP will fall after April 2009 and hence the new authority will now need to take a more leading role in its development. The JIT (20 August 2008.) have received a report on the progress with the Growth Point Resources available through the Growth Fund and the Community Infrastructure fund will allow an acceleration of key strategic schemes across the South and East of County Durham.

Policy Implications

The Programme of Delivery is required to demonstrate alignment with existing policy frameworks. At a national level recognising the Sub national Review of Economic Development and Regeneration and changes to the planning system, at a sub regional level, working beyond the targets established through the Regional Spatial Strategy and at a Sub Regional and local level, integrating with a range of policies and strategies including the Local Area Agreement, Community Strategies and site specific masterplans.

Risk Management

The development of the Programme of Delivery and the associated financial information will be assessed by DCLG with reference to the management of Risk.

Sustainability

NGPs should be exemplars of sustainable development including the provision of education and health facilities, sustainable transport solutions and provide an opportunity to reduce the carbon footprint of new housing.

Social Inclusion

The development of significant Housing Growth as outlined in the initial Growth Point Submission included reference to the delivery of significant levels of affordable housing. The provision of associated improvements to Health and education facilities and the need to examine sustainable transport opportunities all assist in improving Social Inclusion.

7. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

None as a direct consequence of this report.

8. **LIST OF APPENDICES**
Appendix 1 DCLG Letter 23/7/08.

Contact Officer **Graham Wood**
Telephone Number 01388 816166 Ext. 7754
E-mail address gwood@sedgefield.gov.uk

Wards: **Low Spennymoor and Tudhoe Grange, Middlestone,
Tudhoe, Ferryhill, Broom, Chilton, Shafto St Mary's,
Woodham and Thickley**

Key Decision Validation: This report constitutes a key decision by virtue of its impact on two or more wards.

Background Papers:

Communities and Local Government confirmation letter dated 23/7/08 (attached at Appendix 1)

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"/>

Mr Brian Allen
Chief Executive,
Sedgefield Borough Council
Council Offices,
Spennymoor,
County Durham,
DL16 6JQ

23rd July 2008

Dear Mr Allen,

NEW GROWTH POINTS: PARTNERSHIP FOR GROWTH WITH GOVERNMENT-SOUTH AND EAST DURHAM

I am writing to follow up Caroline Flint's announcement on New Growth Points on 16th July (copy of written statement attached at **Annex A**). I am delighted that your authority was included in the confirmed list and the purpose of this letter is to set out how we propose to go forward. This letter sets out some of the points which we need to address on funding, as well as specific conditions (e.g. on environment and transport) arising from the cross-Government appraisal.

Partnership

The Minister announced in her Written Statement the 20 New Growth Points and set out our broad approach to a developing relationship between Government and each place, which we are calling **Partnership for Growth**. We have also published a document, to which your authorities have contributed, summarising each New Growth Point's ambitions and indicating what they expect to deliver in terms of re-shaping and regenerating places through sustainable growth. The document can be found on the DCLG website

(<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/partnershipsforgrowth>).

Planning Status

As you will be aware, New Growth Point is not a statutory designation. New Growth Point proposals will be subject to consultation, testing and examination through the statutory planning process, in particular the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Frameworks. If, once the process is completed, the RSS were to set out levels of growth significantly below those proposed in your NGP bid and our scheme criteria, we would need to review whether or on what basis our partnership should continue.

Funding

I am also pleased to confirm the initial funding allocation for your growth point or growth point partnership as set out in **Annex B** to this letter. Each partnership or individual local authority (where the growth point is predicated on one local authority

area) will be receiving revenue funding to support development of the Programme of Development which will be the programme management plan for the Growth Point going forward. You will need to agree with relevant partners and constituent local authorities in the partnership as to who the accountable body will be for receipt of this funding.

Your Government Office would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you in due course your emerging ideas for a Programme of Development and how future funding proposals fit into this, and the New Growth Points team here will shortly be visiting your authority with a view to discussing what this might look like building on the initial Expression of Interest.

Conditions arising from the cross-Government review

The Government's support for your authority/partnership as a New Growth Point is intended to be a long-term partnership. This is subject to a number of conditions, in addition to the need for confirmation for individual proposals as necessary through the statutory planning process. These include general conditions relating to the Government's objectives for sustainable communities, and specific conditions relating to the area covered by the growth proposals. The conditions are set out in **Annex C** to this letter.

Growth Delivery programme

The first elements of a Programme of Development will be based on the initial Expression of Interest and related material which will provide the basic terms of reference for our future discussions and any bids you may wish to make for future funding under this programme. The objective here will be to move to an "Agreed programme of development" which you would draw up as proposals advance through the planning system, and infrastructure commitments are made. The Programme of Development, together with delivery more generally, is an area in which we want to work closely with the emerging framework of the Homes and Communities Agency. Detailed guidance on developing a Programme of Development will be issued shortly and this should act as your reference point.

The discussions to date have tended to focus on how environment and transport issues need to be built in to growth plans as they develop. We are keen to encourage New Growth Points to be exemplars of sustainable development, including service provision in areas such as education and health.

I might also point out the importance of looking at realistic assumptions in terms of infrastructure investment. You will be aware that there has been ongoing cross Government work on looking at transport costs associated with growth, and I must stress the importance of all schemes having to be realistic in terms of cost, and ideally ensure that they have a degree of match funding from developers or other partners. We would also stress the need for all infrastructure costs to be met from already committed funding programmes at DfT and CLG or through bids into the Regional Funding Allocation and growth funds.

In the same way, celebrating and strengthening the cultural offer in New Growth Points is an important element of many of the bids. We would encourage you to

engage actively with regional offices of English Heritage, the Arts Council, Sport England, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and with the relevant Museums, Libraries & Archives Council Regional Agency to ensure that high standards of design and appropriate creative and cultural opportunities are realised.

These increased levels of growth also represent an unprecedented opportunity to reduce the carbon footprint of new housing, and move towards the Government's ambition of low/zero carbon development. With the more general objective of maximising the resource efficiency of housing, I strongly urge you to promote the use of the Code for Sustainable Homes, for all new build.

Next Steps

The Government Office will be in touch to discuss immediate actions, particularly regarding Programmes of Development. We are also hoping to organise a workshop/seminar in the early Autumn with local authority officers in New Growth Point locations. We will be developing the programme over the next few weeks and will be in touch further. Ahead of that event, we would like to suggest a series of officer-level meetings over the Summer period bringing together New Growth Points, to discuss the points in this letter as necessary, look at practical implementation issues and share experience.

Contacts

On taking forward particular schemes and projects please continue to liaise with your usual Government Office contact, Barry Errington. For any queries about the New Growth Points initiative as a whole, or national policy issues, please contact the New Growth Points Team as follows:

David Waterhouse – 020 7944 6791, email:

david.waterhouse@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Tim Hayward – 020 7944 5453, email: tim.hayward@communities.gsi.gov.uk

For detailed questions on finance issues, please contact:

Susan Candlish - 020 7944 8671, email: susan.candlish@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Tim Coburn – 020 7944 3727, email: timothy.coburn@communities.gsi.gov.uk

I am copying this to Barry Errington (Government Office North East), Daryl Brown (DEFRA), Claire McAllister (DfT), Richard Howell (Environment Agency), Andy Gale (Natural England), Ian Askew (Highways Agency) and to Phil Toal at the North East Regional Assembly. Please would you circulate this to your local partners, as necessary.

Yours sincerely



HENRY CLEARY

Annex A

Statement on Facing the Housing Challenge: Action Today, Innovation for Tomorrow

I am today launching a document entitled "*Facing the Housing Challenge: Action Today, Innovation for Tomorrow*". A copy will be placed in the library.

We know that the vast majority of people aspire to homeownership. This is more than an economic calculation – it represents their hopes and dreams for their families. Across government, we value and support these aspirations. And we are absolutely committed to making sure that everyone can find the housing that meets their needs.

So this time last year, we published a housing green paper, setting out our plans for the biggest housebuilding programme in decades. It set out our long-term plans to meet the housing needs of our aging, growing population, with a major increase in supply to address increasing demand, helping those families and first time buyers priced out of the property market.

More recently, however, the international housing market has experienced significant challenges as a result of turbulence in the global financial markets. People are finding it harder to get a mortgage; we have seen falls in house prices and house-builders are now experiencing difficult business conditions after years of extremely favourable circumstances.

But the long-term demographic trends remain the same. And without action now, we risk frustrating many more potential first time buyers and growing families in the future. We have set a target that we should be building 240,000 homes per year by 2016, and we remain absolutely committed to that. However, we must also be practical and realistic, acknowledging the difficulties faced by the house building industry and those in their supply chain and continuing to do everything possible to promote long-term stability and fairness in the housing market.

So one year on, we are publishing this document to set out our next steps in this housing delivery programme, helping to strike the right balance in responding to both current conditions and long-term challenges.

We invest around £6 billion per year in housing and regeneration programmes. Our priorities for these resources are to:

- Provide greater help for first time buyers
- Help existing homeowners facing difficulties due to problems in the international financial markets
- Keep housing supply, particularly affordable housing supply, as high as possible during the current difficulties, in order to keep on track to meet our targets

- Maintain capacity and create the right conditions for recovery and longer term growth.

We are therefore setting out a package of measures in this document to achieve these objectives. These include:

- The pilot of a “Rent to HomeBuy” Scheme, led by the Housing Corporation, which will aim to help prospective buyers who are unable to take advantage of current shared ownership schemes, perhaps because they cannot find a suitable mortgage. The scheme will enable eligible households to rent a new build property, at less than market rates, for a pre-specified period, with the option to buy a share in the home at the end of that time.
- Plans from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Newcastle City Council, Nottingham City Council and Manchester City Council to launch the first pilot local housing companies. These have the potential to deliver up to 10,000 new homes. They represent a new model of working which combines local authority land assets with private sector investment, enhancing delivery of new homes and communities. This represents just one of the ways that local authorities will play a central role in delivering the housing the country needs.
- Confirmation that more funding, beyond the £200 million already allocated from the Affordable Housing Budget, could be made available to purchase high quality unsold stock, in the right locations, for the right price. This would help deliver our demanding affordable housing targets, while also supporting housebuilders.
- Proposals to support delivery of up to 75,000 homes in twenty more towns and cities in the next stage of the Growth Points Programme. These will combine increased housing with new jobs, town centre regeneration, and higher design and environmental standards. We will invest £100 million in helping these areas to realise their ambitions for sustainable growth. Further details of the New Growth Points can be found in the Partnership for Growth document, being published today, which will be placed in the library.
- Provisional distribution of the £510 million Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, to support those local authorities who are taking action to meet housing needs, and reward those who are preparing plans and identifying land supply for delivery. We will keep this under review for the next three years to ensure that it remains an effective incentive for delivery.
- Work to develop models for mortgage rescue, led by the National Housing Federation, Council of Mortgage Lenders, housing associations and local authorities. Some councils and local authorities already offer support to homeowners experiencing difficulties in repaying their mortgages – sometimes through hardship loans or schemes which enable particular groups to stay in their home as part-owners. We will work with these organisations and consider the practicality and viability of offering such support more widely.
- New consumer advice and information for those concerned about mortgage repayments from the National Housing Advice Service.

- The appointment of Baroness Margaret Ford to work for Partnerships UK in identifying and releasing surplus public sector land for housing delivery, particularly land owned by central government departments and their agencies

Alongside this document, I am publishing an open letter which sets out our response to the Callcutt Review of Housing Supply. We have accepted a number of the recommendations from John Callcutt. These include the creation of a zero-carbon unit to co-ordinate and guide the programme of work to deliver zero-carbon housing from 2016, and further work to develop skills within the housebuilding industry.

I am also publishing a summary of the Pomeroy Review of Private Sector Shared Equity. Brian Pomeroy was tasked with examining how the private sector shared equity market is developing and what the private and public sector might do to facilitate its development. The review found that there were no major institutional barriers which were preventing a shared equity market from developing and there remains an interest in developing suitable shared equity products when conditions improve. The full text has not been published as it contains confidential information, but the summary sets out the main findings. A copy has been placed in the library.

Finally, effective regional and local planning for the medium and long term is essential if we are to reach the target of 240 000 homes per year from 2016. The National Housing and Planning Advice Unit recently provided the government with advice on the numbers it felt should be considered in regional strategy reviews. I am today writing to all Regional Assembly Chairs, the North West Regional leaders forum, and the Mayor of London with guidance on how we expect the advice from the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit to be used.

“Facing the Housing Challenge: Action Today, Innovation for Tomorrow” outlines a broad response to the impact of the disruption in international financial markets on the housing market. This package will both help people facing difficulties today, and lay the foundations to help meet the long term housing needs of the country.

However, it is not the end of the process. We will review progress and reflect on new approaches, incentives or support mechanisms which will both help address the current difficulties and deliver our longer-term programme. And we will take a proactive approach wherever it is clear that we can do more to support consumers and industry.

SOUTH AND EAST DURHAM GROWTH POINT FUNDING

B

Revenue Funding 2008/9

The amount of unringfenced revenue funding allocated to your Growth Point or Growth Point partnership for development of the Programme of Development is:

£100,000

SOUTH AND EAST DURHAM GROWTH POINT CONDITIONS

General

- The levels of growth being confirmed through the statutory planning process and included in the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework, with the public consultation, testing, Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessments (under the Habitats Directive) and examination in public these entail.
- Continuing to work with all relevant agencies, including the Highways Agency, the Environment Agency, and Natural England, in the development and assessment of options to ensure schemes are sustainable, do not result in unacceptable environmental impacts, help to improve environmental quality and are realistic in terms of infrastructure, particularly transport.
- Every Growth Point will consult the Environment Agency and Natural England to confirm that all necessary environmental studies and impact assessments will be undertaken to secure appropriate avoidance or mitigation measures, particularly with regard to potential impacts on, and opportunities to enhance, nationally and internationally designated sites and landscapes, protected species and ecosystem functionality.
- Every Growth Point must prepare and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy to protect and enhance existing key environmental assets and to provide new green spaces designed to deliver a wide range of environmental and social benefits. Where appropriate individual conditions of Growth Point status will identify locally specific issues for the strategy to address. Growth Points will consult Natural England to ensure that their GI Strategies are acceptable.
- We have identified a number of NGPs where there are air quality management areas (AQMAs) and included conditions for the locations. In some locations however, this has not been possible. A review of growth proposals should therefore be carried out to identify where AQMAs are may be affected by development. Where the case an air quality assessment must be carried out to provide a baseline for air quality, and to ensure that new development does not exacerbate air quality problems in existing Air Quality Management Areas and to identify mitigation measures.
- Studies must consider cumulative effects with other planned growth such as existing and planned growth points. Where NGPs adjoin each other local authorities should collaborate over the studies such as Water Cycle and GI strategies and their implementation.
- Pursue a proactive approach to affordable housing provision across the growth point to ensure that there is a balanced offer of market and affordable options to achieve sustainable mixed communities.

Transport

- Develop and test the implications of growth:
Model, assess and test the transport impacts for potential growth locations and develop cost effective options to deal with those impacts;
- Use existing networks:
Plan to exploit existing walking, cycling and public transport networks to ensure that the most sustainable locations for growth are selected;
- Identify travel to work patterns:
To minimise any increase in long-distance commuting or pressure on road or rail networks by the appropriate alignment of housing and employment opportunities;
- Think 'Smarter Choices':
ensure that the design and location of new developments enables access to employment opportunities and key services by bicycle, walking and public transport; rigorously test policies to influence travel behaviour and mode choice (ie: 'smarter choices') and apply the existing planning requirements for travel plans for new residential and other developments to encourage sustainable travel behaviour;
- Identify funding sources:
Recognise that selection as a New Growth Point does not represent a commitment by Government to deliver the transport interventions that are either identified in proposals or as options when growth proposals have been subject to transport assessments. The delivery of transport interventions will be subject to decisions by local transport authorities, regional prioritisation and/or funding from developer contributions. While the Department for Transport and its agencies are ready to engage with local partners in assessing impacts and options in relation to growth, there is no guarantee that transport interventions will be prioritised, approved, funded and delivered by 2016 (including where authorities may be relying on Transport Innovation Fund funding to deliver transport to support growth);
- Recognise the functions of National Networks:
Note that the Department for Transport will ensure that the service levels of the strategic road and rail networks are not compromised by ill-planned growth and that this may require the introduction of restraints on access to those networks or on growth at specific locations.

Environment

- In line with PPS25, carry out a detailed Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which includes consideration of surface water management and other sources of flooding to inform LDDs, assists in applying the sequential approach, and ensures flood risk has been considered fully when deciding on the precise locations of growth.
- Subject to results of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, produce a Surface Water Management Plan for the area and incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems for any drainage system in the area to improve the flood management situation.
- Complete a holistic Water Cycle Study for the Growth Point area to include determining what upgrades to the sewage treatment works and sewerage network infrastructure are necessary to sustain the proposed levels of growth, and to ensure that the highly sensitive limestone aquifer underlying sites at Bishop Auckland, Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, Chilton and Coundon is protected from contamination. Durham Housing and Neighbourhoods Partnership Board must work closely with the Environment Agency and water companies on the investment implications arising from the study's findings, and ensure the study's findings inform LDDs.
- Carry out site specific investigations of any potentially contaminated locations to determine the type and extent of the contamination and ensure that appropriate remediation measures are put in place. Remediation of contaminated land could create pathways for pollution to reach the sensitive water environment in the area and this must be planned for and prevented.
- Ensure that the Green Infrastructure Strategy protects and improves landscape features and semi-natural habitats in the area; conserves and enhances key habitats, especially magnesian limestone grassland; takes account of and supports the implementation of the Durham Rights of Way Improvement Plan; and takes account of links to Durham Heritage Coast, the Magnesian Limestone Natural Area Partnership and The Great North Forest. Opportunities must be taken to create more wetland habitats on sites with watercourses. Appropriate links should be made between the Water Cycle Study and the Green Infrastructure strategy. It may be appropriate for South East Durham and Tees Valley to work together on their Green Infrastructure strategies.

Item 5

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 5 FORUM

Town Council Offices,
School Aycliffe Lane,
Newton Aycliffe

Tuesday,
22 July 2008

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor V. Crosby	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. L. M.G. Cuthbertson	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor P. Gittins J.P.	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G.C. Gray	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. J. Gray	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B. Haigh	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T. Hogan	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. E.M. Paylor	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Warburton	- Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor M. Dixon	- Durham County Council
Sergeant G. Milne	- Durham Constabulary
Councillor Mrs. V. Rawe	- Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor Mrs. A. Clarke	- Middridge Town Council
J.D. Clare	- Greenfield School
J. Rodwell	- Agnew Community Association
M. Robson	-- Burnhill Residents Association

In

Attendance: H. Dent and G. Garrigan - Sedgefield Borough Council

Apologies: Councillor Mrs. S. J. Iveson - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. I. Hewitson - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor H.J. Hutchinson - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B. Hall - Great Aycliffe Town Council
Councillor Mrs. B.A. Clare - Great Aycliffe Town Council

AF(5)1/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
No declarations of interest were received.

AF(5)2/08 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

POLICE REPORT

Sergeant G. Milne outlined the crime figures for the area for April, May and June 2008, which were as follows:

<u>Type of Crime :</u>	<u>April 2008</u>	<u>May 2008</u>	<u>June 2008</u>
Violence Against a Person	12	21	20
Robbery	0	0	0
Burglaries	13	13	11
Criminal Damage	38	41	31
Theft of Vehicles	3	2	1
Theft from Vehicles	3	5	2

It was noted that crime incidents for the year to date were down by 23.6% and anti-social behaviour incidents had also decreased by 6.7%.

Members were then given an update of actions taken in respect of the neighbourhood priority areas, identified at the last meeting of the Forum.

Town Centre

The areas around Greenwell Road and Dalton Way have had extensive patrols, both plain clothes and uniform, and groups of youths had been challenged, with any alcohol seized and anti-social behaviour forms submitted. Off licences had also been visited and staff had been made aware of local issues and had agreed to challenge purchases of alcohol.

It was noted that a substantial amount of alcohol had been seized from a large group of youths on school leaver’s night.

With regard to graffiti in the town centre, it was noted that a number of youths had been arrested.

It was suggested that the Town Centre should continue to be a priority area and further actions be concentrated around the Town Park/Tesco and Dalton Way.

Baliol Green/Oak Tree

It was reported that the police had been of the view that the anti-social behaviour problems in the above area were associated with a problem tenant in Baliol Green, who was attracting groups of youths. The tenant had been visited by the Police and Tenancy Enforcement and since that visit, the number of problems had reduced. It was also noted that the Council’s Streetscene department had been contacted to clear up the debris left in the area.

It was suggested that a future priority for action should be the old railway line from Blue Bridge to Travellers Green where there were problems with youths drinking alcohol.

Skipton Close/Hawes Place

There had been no rowdy nuisance calls in July from the above area. The current problem areas appeared to be Garburn Place and Honister Place where there had been incidents of criminal damage and the riding of mini motors was also causing a nuisance.

It was noted that the area would be included in a Street Safe initiative, which would commence at the end of August.

Avon Court

The above area had been extensively patrolled, by both the Police and Community Support officers and there had been a reduction in the number of incidents from 22 in February /March to 6.

It was suggested that a future area for action should be the school premises in Byerley, St. Francis, Greenfields and Horndale, the evangelical church Blackton Close and the area around Greenfield Nursing Home.

It was also noted that a number of drugs warrants had been executed in Newton Aycliffe and quantities of drugs had been seized and persons prosecuted.

Reference was made to Operation Summer Nights, which would be targeting anti-social behaviour and youths drinking alcohol. There would also be increased patrols of schools as educational premises were often victims of criminal damage during school holidays.

- AGREED:*
- 1. That the areas identified for future action be supported.*
 - 2. That the Police arrange to publicise their successful initiatives/actions in local newspapers.*

AF(5)4/08

STREETS SAFE

Helen Dent Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Manager attended the meeting to give an update on the forthcoming Streetsafe operation.

Streetsafe operations were aimed at tackling issues that impacted on a community's quality of life, such as criminality, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues.

It was reported that four joint operations were undertaken within the Borough each year. The operations involved the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, DVLA, Sedgfield Borough Council Neighbourhood Wardens, Environmental Health, Streetscene, Licensing, Leisure Services, Youth Engagement Services and Durham County Council Education in the Community.

It was explained that the Crime Reduction Partnership did not use a matrix to select an area as the focus would always be on the same 2 areas in the

Borough. Instead an index of vulnerable localities was used. Members noted that the area selected was around Malham Crescent and included the following:

Airton Place
Arncliffe Place
Askrigg Close
Aysgarth Close
Bakewell Place
Bates Close
Booth Walk
Brockett Close
Fox Place
Hedley Close
Hawes Place
Kestral Court
Lorraine Walk
Marrick Close
Pateley Close
Reeth Place
Sampson Place
Scott Place
Skipton Close
Stainforth Close
Rylstone Close
Thornton Close

Burnhill Way Methodist Centre -
Turbinia (Public House) -
Fomer Bells Store
Aycliffe Chop Suey House

Newton Aycliffe Cemetery – Stephenson Way
Funeral Parlour – Stephenson Way
Town Cemetery – Stephenson Way

The operation would commence on Tuesday 26th August and last for 4 weeks. The operation would involve a 'Have Your Say' day, clean up the area days and various youth activities, including a football tournament.

The clean up your area days were scheduled for Friday 12th and Saturday 13th September when all unwanted items such as white goods and furniture would be taken away free of charge.

It was intended that the 'Have Your Say' day would be held in Burnhill Way Methodist Church Hall, however, the date was still to be confirmed.

The Forum welcomed the initiative, however, a number of Members expressed concern that whilst the operation was ongoing, some youths who caused anti-social behaviour problems, would probably move to other areas of the town.

It was noted that the results of the Streetsafe operation would be reported to a future meeting of the Forum.

AGREED : That the information be noted.

AF(5)5/08

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update of project activity as part of Sedgefield Borough's Local Improvement Programme. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was reported that 10 further applications had been received prior to the closing date for new applications of 31st July 2008.

AGREED : That the content of the report be noted and that further reports be brought to the Area Forum as progress on particular projects develops.

AF(5)6/08

COUNTY DURHAM PCT

Members expressed concern that regarding the lack of information on the provision of health services within Sedgefield Borough, in particular in Area 5. They requested that representatives of County Durham Primary Care Trust should attend the Area 5 Forum meetings on a regular basis.

Specific reference was made to the Health Commission, which had been established by the Local Government Association and its call for a major strengthening of arrangements to hold health services to account at a local level.

It was reported that in an opinion poll for the Commission, more than half of the respondents did not know what a Primary Care Trust was or did, in spite of the fact that PCTs were responsible for commissioning local health services and controlled more than 75% of the NHS budget.

AGREED : That a representative of County Durham PCT be asked to attend meetings of Area 5 Forum on a regular basis.

AF(5)7/08

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 30th September 2008 at 7.00 p.m.

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 01388 816166 ext 4240 email ggarrigan@sedgefield.gov.uk

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