

Public Document Pack

25 October 2007

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the Executive will be held in the **Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Monday, 5th November, 2007 at 3.00 pm**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Templeman', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

R TEMPLEMAN

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for Absence
 2. Minutes of the Meeting held 1 October 2007 (Pages 1 - 8)
 3. Public Speaking
 4. To Receive Declarations of Interest
 5. Forward Plan (Pages 9 - 26)
 6. Executive Decision Tracker (Pages 27 - 40)
 7. Development of a Customer Service Centre within the Civic Centre (Pages 41 - 44)
- Report Of Customer Relationship Manager

8. Referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels

- (i) Partnership and Efficiency (no references)
- (ii) Regeneration and Housing (no references)
- (iii) Leisure and Neighbourhood (no references)

9. Exclusion of Public and Press. To RESOLVE:

“That, in accordance with Regulation 21 (1) (b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded during the transaction of the following business because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.”

10. Land Matters (Pages 45 - 74)

Report Of Head of Regeneration

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the Meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Chester-le-Street on Monday 1 October 2007 at 3.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor L Ebbatson (Leader of the Council)
Councillor S A Henig (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Value for Money)
Councillor S C L Westrip (Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services)
Councillor M Potts (Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-being)
Councillor S Barr (Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Partnership Working)
Councillor C J Jukes (Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning)

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), L Chambers (Director of Resources), I Forster (Assistant Chief Executive), C Potter (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), A Hutchinson (Head of Planning and Environmental Health, M Walker (Head of Regeneration), J Lulic (Community Development Manager), A Ainsley (Acting Head of Housing Services), L Howley (Acting Team Leader, Environmental Health), D Bell (Regeneration Contracts Officer), A Stephenson (Executive Assistant) and K Fletcher (Democratic Services Assistant).

68 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

69 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 3 SEPTEMBER 2007

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held 3 September 2007 be agreed as a correct record, subject to Councillor Henig's name being included on the list of attendees.

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the meeting held 3 September 2007, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members be agreed as a correct record, subject to Councillor Henig's name being included on the list of attendees."

70 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no questions or representations received from the public.

71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Barr declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in relation to Item No 15 – Land Matters as he is a Ward Councillor for the area detailed within the report.

72 FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Leader introduced the Forward Plan and Work Programme.

Discussion took place with regard to those items included within the document and Members of the Executive agreed the current programme.

It was noted that a revised date for consideration of the Review into Environmental Enforcement in relation to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environments Act 2005 was required.

RESOLVED: “That the Forward Plan and Work Programme be noted.”

73 DECISION TRACKER

Members considered the Decision Tracker and were updated on the progress of a number of developments including: Neighbourhood Management; Procurement Strategy; Proposals for a New Youth Development Programme; Surplus Land Proposals; Sacriston Community and Sport Trust Grant Funding; Review into toilet provision in the Town Centre; and Sacriston Area Development Framework.

The Head of Regeneration advised that he was confident that the scheme for the new Youth Development Programme would be delivered within the four priority areas previously agreed by the Executive and that he would circulate information to Members on the indicators and measurable outcomes for the scheme.

In relation to Surplus Land Proposals, it was agreed by Members that the financial position of available resources for surplus land proposals would be incorporated within the Mid-Term Financial Strategy, to be considered at the November meeting of the Executive.

The Chief Executive referred to Sacriston Community and Sport Trust Grant Funding and advised that building works had now commenced and the programme was on schedule. It was agreed by Members that this current item be removed from the Decision Tracker but a further item be included to allow for updates to be provided when necessary.

In relation to the review of public toilet provision within the Town Centre, Members agreed to remove all points of this item with the exception of the investigation into a community toilet scheme. It was agreed that an update be provided at the November meeting of the Executive following discussions at the Business Association meeting this month.

It was agreed that Items 10, 17, 18, 22 (in part) and 25 be removed from the Decision Tracker.

RESOLVED: "That the Decision Tracker be noted, amended and updated accordingly."

74 REVIEW OF CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Consideration was given to a report from the Assistant Chief Executive detailing a review and proposals for corporate priorities.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised that the existing priorities had been in place for over two years and needed to be reviewed. He identified the two key proposals would be to: (1) revise the corporate priorities of the Council and (2) revise the improvement plan following CPA Judgement.

The Assistant Chief Executive highlighted the impact of Local Government Reorganisation on the priority setting process.

He referred to Appendix 1 of the report and advised that the report suggested the continuous development of corporate priorities through the Executive and Corporate Management Team. He confirmed that a report would be presented to the December meeting of the Executive to agree the corporate priorities, with a view to take forward the priorities as part of the budget process and for final agreement by Council in March 2008.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendation to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED:

- "1 That the process for considering revising Council priorities and proposals as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed.
- 2 That the relevant decisions to be taken and appropriate timescales be included within the Forward Plan and Work Programme."

The Assistant Chief Executive left the meeting at 3.33pm

75 REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Resources detailing the findings of a review of the Council's current governance arrangements.

The Director of Resources advised that the current governance arrangements were last reviewed in 2003 based on 'best practice'. She confirmed the current review had been undertaken against the new CIPFA/SOLACE framework which defined six core principles of good governance, which were outlined in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

She advised that the six core principles had a series of supporting principles, each of which translated into a range of specific requirements and should be reflected within the Council's new corporate governance code.

Discussion took place with regard to the need to 'flag up' the assessment of the effectiveness of scrutiny and that an action point could be created to address this within the code.

The Director of Resources advised that this matter should be discussed with the appropriate Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny and the Leader confirmed that she would raise this matter at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED:

- "1 That the areas for action to ensure the Council meets the requirements of the new governance framework be noted.
- 2 That the Corporate Governance Steering Group be responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the detailed action plan.
- 3 That a verbal update on progress be provided at the November meeting of the Executive.
- 4 That the Leader discuss the effectiveness of Scrutiny in relation to the new governance framework at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board."

76 COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTH – ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Development Services to update Members on the commissioning process for an Intervention Programme under the Department of Health's Communities for Health Programme.

Councillor Westrip confirmed a meeting had been held to discuss the proposal to deliver the project from Mind.

He confirmed that a new action plan would be drawn up by Mind and presented to the Board this week for approval and that the action plan considered by Members of the Executive would be updated to reflect these changes.

Councillor Westrip suggested that he and the Director of Development Services be delegated authority to process the Action Plan due to time and budget constraints. The Leader suggested that the recommendation to the report be reflected to amend this.

It was proposed and seconded that the amended recommendation to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED:

- “1 That the report and action plan be noted.
- 2 That delegated authority be granted to Councillor Westrip and the Director of Development Services to agree the commissioning of the work referred to within the report and action plan with the successful bidder, subject to it being within budget. Further more a SMART Action Plan be created for the work to be carried out and be brought back to the Executive for information via the Decision Tracker. “

77 REVIEW OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Planning and Environmental Health detailing a review of Private Sector Housing Policy.

The Head of Planning and Environmental Health advised that the main purpose of the Policy was to target financial assistance effectively in order to reduce the number of vulnerable households living in non-decent private sector owner-occupied housing. It was highlighted that the review also took into account the effectiveness of the current Waiting List System.

She highlighted the current situation within the district and of action to be taken to ensure that the Council remain on target to reduce the number of vulnerable households living in non-decent housing.

The Leader queried the current grants afforded to vulnerable households and the Head of Planning and Environmental Health and Acting Team Leader, Environmental Health provided clarification to Members.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED:

- “1 That further capital funding bids for the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10 are made to the Capital Working Group in order to meet the Council’s target of 70% vulnerable households living in decent homes by 2010.
- 2 That the amendment to the Waiting List System as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report be agreed.
- 3 That Security Grants be removed from the Policy but can be considered as part of a future review if an appropriate scheme is delivered.
- 4 That the existing mechanisms for policy review as well as performance standards and monitoring be continued.
- 5 That officers be authorised to participate in the development of the Regional Loans Scheme which will be the subject of a future report to Members.”

78 COMMUNITY FACILITIES REVIEW – BASELINE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Regeneration, which summarised the position and knowledge at this current stage of the review regarding Community Facilities in Chester-le-Street.

The Community Development Manager advised that work had commenced on the review during July 2007 and that a Steering Group had now been established for the review.

He advised of the consultation process, which had taken place to date and highlighted the content of the appendices.

The Leader referred to the appendices and raised issues in relation to the need to identify those premises which had a long term lease; the need to make clear that the annual revenue costs for Bullion Hall was not from the District Council but generated from voluntary services; and the need for libraries to be included within the review.

Councillor M Potts left the meeting at 4.02pm

Detailed discussion took place with regard to the information which should be derived from the review and it was highlighted that wider stakeholder consultation be deferred until further investigation work had taken place.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendations to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED:

- “1 That progress made so far in conducting the Community Facilities Review, including the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group, as attached at Appendix 1 be noted.
- 2 That the vision statement for community facilities in the District, as included at Appendix 1 be agreed.
- 3 That the baseline information on community facilities as attached at Appendix 2 be noted.
- 4 That the Head of Regeneration be authorised to identify any early wins that can be brought forward for consideration by the Executive that can contribute to the agreed vision for community facilities within the Council’s existing policy and funding framework and reported back to the Executive in December 2007.
- 5 That the Head of Regeneration be authorised to continue with the further progress in developing a strategic approach and action plan for community facilities, as outlined in Section 5 of the report.
- 6 That wider stakeholder consultation be deferred until further investigation work on community facilities had been undertaken.”

79 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: “That, in accordance with Regulation 21(1)(b) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded during the transaction of the following business because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.”

80 REGENERATION QUARTERLY REPORT

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Regeneration to provide progress in delivery of the regeneration strategy and specifically capital projects that contribute towards it.

The Head of Regeneration advised the report highlighted some of the main achievements or issues over the last quarter and that 18 of the 40 agreed actions within the Regeneration Strategy had now been completed, 19 were on target and of the 3 which were behind target measures had been put in place to ensure targets would be met.

The Head of Regeneration proceeded to update Members on the content of the Appendices.

It was proposed and seconded that the recommendation to the report be agreed.

RESOLVED: "That progress on the regeneration projects as set out in the Regeneration Projects Quarterly Report as set out in Appendix 1 (capital projects) and Appendix 2 (regeneration strategy) be noted."

Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor Barr declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Ward Councillor, left the meeting at this point and did not return.

81 LAND MATTERS

Consideration was given to a report from the Regeneration Contracts Officer relating to requests made from residents within Henley Avenue, regarding the open plan area to the front of their properties.

The Regeneration Contracts Officer advised of consultations which had taken place within Pelton Fell. He confirmed that requests had been made by residents for the second phase of the Poets Estate Environmental Improvement Scheme, which included: provide clear defined front gardens; provide parking within gardens; and improve the quality of open spaces.

Discussion took place regarding the options available for the scheme and it was proposed and seconded that the recommendation to the report be amended to reflect the discussions held.

RESOLVED:

- "1 That the Executive agreed not to gift the land in question at this time.
- 2 That further discussions take place with residents in Henley Avenue with a view to agreeing a comprehensive scheme, uniform to all properties with owner-occupiers paying, at cost, costs incurred in improving the frontage to their properties."

The meeting terminated at 5.05pm



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme



November 2007

About this document

Chester-le-Street District council is committed to continuous improvement. We want to make sure that we engage people in the decisions we make wherever we can. We want to let people know what decisions we are going to make and when.

The council's Executive, which is made up of the Leader and five Executive Members have powers to make certain decisions on behalf of the council. This document aims to go further than what the law requires us to do and let people know as far in advance what decisions the Executive is to make on the councils behalf. Where possible and in relation to what are called key decisions, it will let you know how you can make representations and who they can be made to. This document will be published every month at the Civic Centre and on the council's website at www.chester-le-street.gov.uk.

This document is in two parts:

Part One: Chester-le-Street District Council's formal Executive Forward Plan

Part Two: the Executive's Decision Work Programme for the next year

Part One

The Executive Forward Plan is a statutory document which the council must produce every month covering a four month period. It is published fourteen days before it comes into effect. This is the first day of each month. It includes:

- a list of all 'key decisions' the councils will make on the council's behalf;
- details of the nature of the decision;
- details of the decision taker, which in the councils case is normally the council's Executive;
- when the decision is to be made;
- who are the principal consultees and the means by which consultations will be undertaken;
- a list of documents to be considered by the decision maker; and
- details of how and by when representations can be made.

What are 'key decisions'?

'Key decisions' are defined as executive decisions which are:-

- decisions likely to result in the District Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the District Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
- significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the Council

Part Two

The Executive's work programme is not a statutory document which the council must produce. It is advance notice of all other important decisions the Executive will take either on behalf of the council or in making recommendations to the council. It includes:

- a list of the non 'key decisions the councils will make;
- details of the nature of the decision;
- details of the decision taker, which in the council's case is normally the council's Executive as a group;
- when the decision is to be made;
- who are the principal consultees and the means by which consultations will be undertaken;
- a list of documents to be considered by the decision maker; and
- details of how and by when representations can be made.

Who are the Executive?

The Executive is made up of the Leader of the Council and five other Executive Members as follows:

Cllr. Linda Ebbatson	Tel: 0191 387 2090
Leader of the Council with responsibility for Human Resources, Equalities, and Young People	E-Mail: lindaebbatson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Cllr. Simon Henig	Tel: 0191 387 2090
Deputy Leader and Resources and Value for Money Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: simon.henig@sunderland.ac.uk
Cllr. Chris Jukes	Tel: 0191 389 1136
Regeneration and Strategy Planning Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: chris.jukes1@btopenworld.com
Cllr. Maureen Potts	Tel: 0191 370 0828
Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: maureenpotts@aol.com
Cllr Simon Westrip	Tel: 0191 387 3512
Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: simon.westrip@bigfoot.com
Cllr Steve Barr	Tel:0191 388 9907
Community Engagement and Partnerships Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: steve@link1970.fsnet.co.uk

How do I find out when the Executive is meeting?

Information about the time and venue for a particular meeting of the Executive may be obtained from the agenda available from the Reception Desk at the Civic Centre, from the District Council's website or from the Executive Assistant. Public Speaking is allowed at Executive meetings so long as you comply with the council's procedures. To find out more contact Democratic Services.

How do I contact Members of the Executive or the Council Chief Officers?

Contact details for Members of the Executive and for the Council's Chief Officers are set out in this Forward Plan.

If you have any queries about the Forward Plan, please contact the Executive Assistant at the Civic Centre on 0191 387 2010 or e-mail the Executive Assistant at: amandastephen@chester-le-street.gov.uk.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part One: Executive Forward Plan



November 2007



Executive Forward Plan

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
LSTV issues	Executive	Revised date November 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Development of a Customer Service Centre within the Civic Centre	Executive	Revised date November 2007	Craig Etherington 0191 3872213	Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to Craig Etherington Customer Relationship Manager or by email to craigetherington@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Demand responsive bus services (Personalised community transport options) Findings of Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Executive	Revised date November 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Land Matters	Executive	November 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Land Matters	Executive	December 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Improvement Plan	Executive	December 2007	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Review of the Community Partnerships Report from Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Executive	December 2007	Nigel Cummings	OSMB Relevant Executive Members Key Stakeholders & Partners	In writing or by telephone to the Scrutiny Officer or by email to nigelcummings@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Leisure Options Review	Executive	December 2007	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Leisure Options Working Group	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Irrecoverable Housing Debt Quarterly Report	Executive	December 2007	Paul Stephens 0191 3872494	Director of Resources Income Management Team Leader	In writing or by telephone to Paul Stephens Acting Director of Community Services or by email to paulstephens@chester-le-street.gov.uk



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part Two: Executive Work Programme



November 2007



Executive Work Programme

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy	Executive	Revised date November 2007	Linda Chambers 0191 3872300	Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone, to the Director of Resources or by email to lindachambers@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Heart of the Village Pelton Fell Supplementary Planning Document	Executive	Revised date November 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Relevant Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Revised Organisational Development Strategy	Executive	November 2007	Alison Swinney 0191 3872012	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Managers Trade Union representatives	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Organisational or by email to alisonswinney@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Mid Year Financial Monitoring	Executive	November 2007	Linda Chambers 0191 3872300	Corporate Management Team OPSS will be considering monitoring reports for the services within their respective remits	In writing or by telephone, to the Director of Resources or by email to lindachambers@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Empty Property Strategy	Executive	November 2007	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Contaminated Land Strategy	Executive	November 2007	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Communities for Health – action plan	Executive	December 2007	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Portfolio Holders LSP Partners	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Review into Environmental Enforcement in relation to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 - Cost Benefit Analysis Report	Executive	December 2007	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Portfolio Holder, Corporate Management Team	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Community Facilities Review – Baseline Report	Executive	Revised date December 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance April to September 2007	Executive Corporate Performance Report and covering report	December 2007	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Internal consultation e-mail	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Employee Survey Results	Executive	December 2007	Alison Swinney 0191 3872012	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Employees Trade Unions	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Organisational or by email to alisonswinney@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Housing Strategy	Executive	December 2007	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Sacriston Area Development Framework	Executive	January 2008	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive member Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Regeneration Quarterly Report	Executive	January 2008	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Bad Debt report Quarterly Report	Executive	January 2008	Linda Chambers 0191 3872300	Head of Revenue and Benefits Accountancy Manager Internal Auditor	In writing or by telephone, to the Director of Resources or by email to lindachambers@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
2008/9 Budget and Capital Programme	Executive	January 2008	Linda Chambers 0191 3872300	Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone, to the Director of Resources or by email to lindachambers@chester-le-street.gov.uk
2008/9 Budget and Capital Programme	Executive	February 2008	Linda Chambers 0191 3872300	Corporate Management Team OSPs	In writing or by telephone, to the Director of Resources or by email to lindachambers@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance April to December 2007	Executive Corporate Performance Report and covering report	March 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Internal consultation	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Regeneration Quarterly Report	Executive	April 2008	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Enforcement Policy	Executive	June 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Portfolio Holders, Corporate Management Team	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Regeneration Quarterly Report	Executive	July 2008	Martin Walker 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
<p>Review of Industrial/Business Sites</p> <p>Findings of Overview and Scrutiny Ad Hoc Panel</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Martin Walker 0191 3872233</p>	<p>Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Ad-hoc scrutiny panel on industrial estates Industrial Estate tenants</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Head of Regeneration or by email to martinwalker@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>

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EXECUTIVE DECISION TRACKER

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
1	4 July 2005	<p><u>Poets Estate, Pelton Fell – Environmental Improvement Strategy (EIS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EIS for the Poets Estate with the exception of the demolition and refurbishment of Area 4 were endorsed ▪ Agreed with the principle of prioritising investment from the Capital Programme to support the implementation of the EIS for the Poets Estate ▪ The scale of that investment will be subjected to a Full Council report that will consider the needs of the local community against the availability of resources and other Council investment priorities ▪ The site of the existing Village Hall is declared surplus to requirements and the Regeneration Manager is authorised to prepare development options for the site. 	Included within quarterly regeneration report, January 2008	Ongoing	Work started on site on 26 th February and is nearing completion.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
2	4 July 2005	<p><u>Pelton Fell Neighbourhood Regeneration Partnership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Integrated Regeneration Strategy for Pelton Fell as summarised in Annex A is endorsed with the addition of physical and emotional well being included in statements of health ▪ The creation of a Pelton Fell Neighbourhood Regeneration Partnership is agreed with the provision that the interests of the whole District are protected ▪ Agreed that Council funds are used to support the appointment of a Project Co-ordinator for the Pelton Fell Neighbourhood Regeneration Partnership as described in the report 	Included within quarterly regeneration report, January 2008.	On target	<p>Key future milestones:</p> <p>Phase 1 new build: ongoing.</p> <p>Scheme complete: 2009.</p>	Martin Walker
3	5 September 2005	<p><u>Neighbourhood Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street clean card and in your ward profile rolled out a week beginning 12 March 2007. ▪ Pride in our neighbourhoods information leaflet to be distributed in June 2007. ▪ Formal evaluation to take place on first two phases. 	Revised date December 2007 Executive.	Progressing	<p>September 2007 Update:</p> <p>Review of Ward profiles to be undertaken.</p> <p>Key milestones for the project not agreed as yet.</p>	Tony Galloway

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
4	6 February 2006	<p><u>Development Framework Principles for the Heart of Pelton Fell</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That the Executive confirm the support given to the Pelton Fell Community Association to date and the principle of them seeking to establish the community facility, but it be recognised that the Council is unable to commit to any additional funding and that in order for them to move forward they be required to produce a sustainable business plan which is viable. ▪ That the Officers report back with advice on supplementary planning policy to secure the long-term protection of the Pelton Fell Village Heart.” ▪ Agreement subject to business plan, to support the Pelton Fell Community Group requests as agreed. ▪ Negotiations to take place for the purchase and disposal of land. Report back to Executive prior to any acquisition. ▪ A written report was received at the August 2007 Executive. It was agreed the Head of Regeneration be authorised to commission a detailed public consultation process on the development framework principles in August and September 2007. 	Written report to Executive November 2007.	Progressing	Negotiations under way with landowners and prospective interested parties in the village.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
5	6 March 2006	<p><u>Heart of the Village Pelton Fell Supplementary Planning Document</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That the Council proceeds to establish a Supplementary Planning Document to secure the long term protection of the Pelton Fell village heart. ▪ That the Supplementary Planning Document is based on the development framework principles for the heart of the village, prepared for the Council by Douglas Wheeler Associates in September 2005 and endorsed by the Executive at its meeting on 6 February 2006. ▪ That the Council undertakes consultation on the Supplementary Planning Document and conducts sustainability appraisal of its provisions in accordance with the latest Government regulations as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 on Local Development Frameworks. ▪ That officers report back to the Executive in the September 2006 on the progress that has been made prior to the formal adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document. ▪ Negotiations to take place with landowners prior to formal development. ▪ Report to be submitted in June 2007, prior to formal consultation on the Supplementary Planning Document. 	Written report to November 2007 Executive.	Progressing	Negotiations under way with landowners and prospective interested parties in the village.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
6	3 April 2006	<p><u>Procurement Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That the Executive recommend to Council approval of the Procurement Strategy and action plan ▪ That the timescales for completion of the actions set out in the action plan be noted and agreed by Corporate Management Team 	Verbal update to November 2007 Executive.	Progressing	<p>July 2007 update: Procurement Strategy to be discussed at Executive Briefing on 22 October 2007.</p> <p>Partnership has been extended to include Durham City, Easington and Sedgefield Councils.</p>	Linda Chambers

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
7	5 June 2006	<p><u>Regeneration of Priority Villages using Single Housing Investment Programme Round Two (SHIP 2) and other opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Framework of activities to be undertaken and regular reports be brought back to Executive as part of the Quarterly Regeneration Projects board ▪ Monitoring via the quarterly Regeneration Report, cross referenced with work of the Capital Programme Working Group and the Director of Resources Financial Monitoring Reports ▪ A strategic bid for regeneration is worked on with the Durham Coalfields Housing Renewal Programme and an Area Development Framework is considered as a priority ▪ Update provided in quarterly regeneration report in April 2007 and progress noted. 	Included within quarterly regeneration report, January 2008.	Ongoing	July 2007 update: Update included in the quarterly regeneration report.	Martin Walker
8	3 July 2006	<p><u>Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP 1)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental improvements to be carried out at Front Street, Grange Villa and traffic calming measures be incorporated ▪ Appointment of a Community Regeneration Officer agreed. ▪ Agreed that the space next to the chapel between Stone Row and Pine Street to provide top quality open space and a play area for younger children is agreed. 	Scheme now complete. Included within quarterly regeneration report, January 2008.	Ongoing	July 2007 update: Update included in the quarterly regeneration report.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
9	7 August 2006	<p><u>Development of a Customer Service Centre within the Civic Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is to be deferred in light of Local Government Review and on the recommendations from CMT. 	Formal report in November 2007 Executive.	Progressing	August 2007 update:	Craig Etherington
10	3 October 2006	<p><u>Medium Term Financial Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring reports to be included on the Forward Plan ▪ Agreement strategy to be reviewed twice a year although recognised that this may need to be more frequent during the housing transfer. ▪ Agreement that only amended sections will be considered by Executive in the future. Key financial issues to remain part of the report. 	<p>Report to be submitted to November 2007 Executive.</p> <p>To include Surplus Land Proposals.</p>	Progressing	Report submitted to March 2007 Executive.	Linda Chambers

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
11	6 November 2006	<p><u>Proposals for New Youth Development Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal for a youth development work programme following the termination of ERIC project ▪ A report was submitted to the Executive in August 2007. It was agreed that the four priority locations for the Council's youth development work programme will be Grange Villa & West Pelton, Pelton, Kimblesworth & Plawsworth and Chester Central and the Head of Regeneration be authorised to proceed to make necessary arrangements for the establishment of the programme. ▪ A verbal update of the indicators and measurable outcomes to be provided at the September 2007 Executive. ▪ A report is to be presented to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Panel in March 2008 that includes clear indicators of the measurable outcomes of the projects. 	Request to be deleted.	Progressing	Report submitted to August 2007 Executive.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
12	8 January 2007	<p><u>Surplus Land Proposals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To explore and develop a wide range of options for the land at Stone Row, Grange Villa and undertake further consultation with local community representatives ▪ To send a letter to the communities involved in discussions advising how the decisions of the Executive had been reached ▪ To produce a further report on the last at East Parade identifying alternative options for the land use. 	Update to be included within Medium Term Financial Strategy report November 2007.	Ongoing	July Update. Update included in surplus land matters report.	Martin Walker
	2 July 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That the disposal stages have been reached and progression to the next stages of the following disposals were agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The re-marketing of the site at East Street (Site 2), Grange Villa and Gray Avenue, Chester-le-Street ▪ Consideration of the Mafeking Terrace site as part of the consideration of the Sacriston Area Development Framework; ▪ The expenditure of £1000, from within existing budgets, on urban design work to enable further more detailed consultation with the residents of Grange Villa. ▪ That the land shown edged in black at Appendix 1, be acquired by 'Deed of Gift' subject to the Council paying the landowners reasonable legal costs. ▪ That a further report be presented to Members at a later date regarding the allocation of Section 106 monies and installation of play equipment. 				

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
13	9 February 2007 1 October 2007	<p><u>Land Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Head of Regeneration be authorized to undertake options appraisal for Gibside shops. ▪ The Executive agreed not to gift the land to the front of properties at Henley Avenue to owner occupiers at their request at this time. ▪ Further discussions are to take place with residents in Henley Avenue with a view to agreeing a comprehensive scheme, uniform to all properties with owner-occupiers paying, at cost, costs incurred in improving the frontage to their properties. 	November 2007 Executive.	Ongoing	June 2007 update: Consultation process underway. Now in receipt of land valuations.	Martin Walker
14	2 April 2007 1 October 2007	<p><u>Communities for Health Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action plan to be devised to indicate time scales and outcomes ▪ Press release to be drafted regarding the launch of the programme. ▪ A written report was submitted to the August 2007 Executive. Members gave their approval 'in principle' to the Commissioning proposal. ▪ Delegated authority was granted to Councillor Westrip and the Director of Development Services to agree the commissioning of the work referred to within the report and action plan with the successful bidder, subject to it being within budget. ▪ A SMART Action Plan to be created for the work to be carried out and be brought back to the Executive for information via the Decision Tracker. 	<p>Verbal report November 2007 Executive.</p> <p>Written committee report December 2007 Executive with detailed action plan.</p>	Ongoing	Report submitted to August 2007 Executive.	Tony Galloway

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
15	2 April 2007	<p><u>Review of Industrial/Business Sites (findings of Overview and Scrutiny Ad Hoc Panel)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further investigations to be conducted into the future of employment site provision. Dependent on this data and alternative site provision, including the Sacriston workshops, consideration be given to disposing of the industrial estates portfolio with generated receipts being recycled into future employment site provision. 	Report to February 2009 Executive	Ongoing	Report submitted to September 2007 Executive.	Martin Walker
	3 September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Management and Maintenance Plan was noted and further actions to be taken were approved. ▪ Further report into the Councils Industrial Portfolio will be considered once the LDF Core Strategy, identifying potential alternative employment sites, has been adopted and approved. 				

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
16	4 June 2007 1 October 2007	<p><u>Review of Community facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Head of Regeneration was authorised to lead the review of community facilities in the District ▪ Discussions are currently underway with Legal and Financial consultants with regards to communal rooms in the context of the LSVT. <p>▪ The Head of Regeneration was authorised to identify any early wins that can be brought forward for consideration by the Executive that can contribute to the agreed vision for community facilities within the Council's existing policy and funding framework and reported back to the Executive in December 2007.</p> <p>▪ The Head of Regeneration was authorised to continue with the further progress in developing a strategic approach and action plan for community facilities, as outlined in Section 5 of the report.</p> <p>▪ The wider stakeholder consultation was deferred until further investigation work on community facilities had been undertaken.</p>	Report to December Executive 2007.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Martin Walker
17	4 June 2007	<p><u>Report into the review into Leisure Services for Young People</u></p> <p><u>Outcomes requiring action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Portfolio holder for community engagement and partnership working investigate greater partnership working. 	December 2007 Executive.	Ongoing	A detailed report on progress will be reported to the December Executive	Ian Forster/Chris Potter/Nigel Cummings

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
18	4 June 2007	<p><u>Report into the review of Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005</u></p> <p><u>Outcomes requiring action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost benefit analysis of the recommendations to the report to be undertaken 	December 2007 Executive	Ongoing	Report to be submitted to September Executive	Tony Galloway
19	6 August 2007	<p><u>Review into public toilet provision in Town Centre - Report from Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further investigation is to be carried out into the viability of a community toilet scheme or similar innovative approach within Chester-le-Street town centre to increase current public toilet provision. 	Verbal update to November 2007 Executive	Ongoing	Further investigations to be carried out.	Martin Walker
20	6 August 2007	<p><u>Sacriston Area Development Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A written report was submitted to the August 2007 Executive. The Area Development Framework for Sacriston was approved as the basis for future regeneration of Sacriston. The Head of Regeneration was authorised to progress the regeneration of Sacriston through developing a detailed action plan for the delivery of the priority proposals identified within the report. 	January 2008 Executive	Ongoing	Action plan has been drafted.	Martin Walker

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
21	3 September 2007	<p><u>District Play Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on big lottery funding November Executive. 	<p>Verbal update November 2007 Executive</p> <p>Report to full Council November 2007</p>	Ongoing		Tony Galloway
22	1 October 2007	<p><u>Updates Community Resource Centre at Sacriston</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular updates to be given to Executive on the progress on the Community Resource Centre 	<p>Verbal update November 2007 Executive.</p>	Ongoing		Tony Galloway
23	1 October 2007	<p><u>Corporate Governance Framework Action Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular updates to be given to Executive on the progress of the Corporate Governance Framework action plan 	<p>Verbal update December 2007 Executive.</p>	Ongoing		Ian Forster



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to: Executive

Date of Meeting: 5 November 2007

Report from: Customer Relationship Manager

Title of Report: Development of a Customer Service Centre within the Civic Centre

Agenda Item Number: 7

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for the Executive to reconsider the development of a customer service centre within the Civic Centre following the decision on Local Government reorganisation in County Durham. It is not felt that it is now appropriate to carry out the works from a value for money point of view.
- 1.2 Members are recommended not to proceed with the proposals previously agreed by the Executive

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The Chief Executive, Asst Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Service Team Managers, Action Learning Set (Accommodation) and all employees affected by the proposals have been consulted throughout the design stage of the project.
- 2.2 The Executive also considered the proposals and agreed to go ahead with the tender process in January 2007. Regular verbal reports have been made to the Executive via the decision tracker.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 Customer Excellence is at the forefront of the Council's overall drive and ambition to achieve excellent status in the future. This was exemplified by the Corporate Plan and the Improvement and Recovery Plan. In particular the Improvement and recovery plan lists a number of actions associated with the creation of a corporate customer services team to become the main point of contact for enquiries within the civic centre. In addition access to services, specifically, is the driving force behind the modernisation agenda and a number of projects have been introduced to support the Council's drive for customer excellence.

- 3.2 However, with the onset of the Government's decision regarding local government reorganisation within County Durham, key issues have been reviewed and reprioritised based upon the financial commitments that the Council must make in light of this decision. The Executive agreed a process for revising priorities and proposals in the Corporate Plan at their meeting in October. Members have previously agreed to receive a formal report at its November meeting so it could formally re-consider an earlier decision to progress the proposals prior to the future of Local Government in the County being known.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

In 2005, the Council identified £200,000 for a modular extension to the civic centre to replace the obsolete portacabins currently used by employees. At the request of the Executive in January 2007, the tender exercise was completed and costs compiled for the project. This amounted to a minimum cost of £360,000, well above the initial budget identified. At the time of the original decision it was felt that the proposals were necessary. Now in the light of clear uncertainty over the future of the Civic Centre it is not considered that the works would represent value for money even if they could be completed within original estimates.

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

4.3 Personnel Implications

Personnel affected by the creation of the customer service centre were consulted throughout the design and tender stages and have been informed of progress and key decisions taken.

4.4 Other Services

A number of initiatives associated with the new design were at the request of other service providers in order to help improve customer services. Those teams were also kept informed of progress and key decisions.

4.5 Diversity

The Council is committed to ensuring that citizens and other stakeholders are given full and equal access to its services. The customer service centre was developed to ensure that customers, regardless of their individual needs, received improved access to the customer services team, reception etc. In not carrying out the proposals the current facilities would remain and no further improvements to customer access would be undertaken.

4.6 Risk Implications

The creation of the customer service centre would play a vital role, along with the creation of the customer services team, the introduction of a new telephony system and the roll out of the Durham e-government CRM system in ensuring that we meet our priorities and create an excellent customer service for our customers. Any decision made to abandon the project is done so, taking account of such risks.

4.7 Crime and Disorder Implications

There are no direct links to crime and disorder within this report.

4.8 Other Implications

None within this report

5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL

5.1 A key part of the Customer Excellence Strategy, Improvement and recovery plan and drive for efficiencies, within the Council, is the creation of a Customer Services Team. In addition to the introduction of the Durham e-govt CRM system and a new telecommunications infrastructure to be introduced in October / November 2006, The Customer Services Team has been established and plays a pivotal role in achieving customer excellence within the Council.

5.2 The creation of the One Stop Reception in January 2006 has shown that customers receive a more joined up service than previously with the 3 reception points. However, it has also shown that the very layout of the Civic Centre, i.e. multiple-levels, poor lighting, information displays and waiting areas do not meet the standards required to provide an excellent environment for our customers to do business with us. To meet these requirements the best way forward was felt to be the development of a customer service centre that would have become the focal point for face to face, telephone and web based enquiries that will also incorporate the cash handling facilities. In addition the design was considered to be the best way to ensure that Disability Discrimination Act requirements are also met.

5.3 As agreed at Executive in January 2007, a tendering exercise was completed and 4 tenders returned; the cheapest of which amounted to £360,000, almost twice the previously identified budget. In addition members also agreed to delay any proposed start date until June 2007, at the earliest, to allow for the CPA inspection and local elections to take place unhindered. Any further decisions were delayed with the onset of the Local Government Reorganisation.

- 5.4 It is not now felt that spending such a large amount of money on a facility that could have limited life is now appropriate. It would not deliver value for money. It is considered that the scheme should not now be progressed in view of this.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that members formally agree not to progress the customer service centre proposals.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO

- 7.1 Chester-le-Street Improvement and Recovery Plan.
7.2 Corporate Plan 2006
7.3 Customer Excellence Strategy 2006 -2008
7.4 Responses to consultation with Executive Members, Directors, Service Team Managers and employees.
7.5 Advice from Technical Services Personnel.

Craig Etherington
Customer Relationship Manager

Version 1.0 10th October 2007

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