

Public Document Pack

30 April 2008

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, 12th May, 2008 at 3.00 pm**

Yours sincerely

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

R TEMPLEMAN

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Meeting held 7 April 2008 (Pages 1 - 8)
3. Public Speaking
4. To Receive Declarations of Interest
5. Forward Plan and Work Programme (Pages 9 - 22)
6. Executive Decision Tracker (Pages 23 - 26)
7. Implementing the Transition Plan; Developing 'People and Place' (Pages 27 - 74)

Report Of Director of Corporate Services

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|-----|--|-------------------|
| 8. | New Power to establish Parish Councils (including Town Councils) | (Pages 75 - 88) |
| | Report Of Head of Legal and Democratic Services | |
| 9. | Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy | (Pages 89 - 116) |
| | Report Of Head of Corporate Finance | |
| 10. | DFG's Revised Policy | (Pages 117 - 122) |
| | Report Of Director of Development Services | |
| 11. | Department of Health NHS Life Check roll out | (Pages 123 - 128) |
| | Report Of Director of Development Services | |
| 12. | Communities for Health Project | (Pages 129 - 134) |
| | Report Of Director of Development Services | |
| 13. | Referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels | |
| | (i) Partnership and Efficiency | (no referrals) |
| | (ii) Regeneration and Housing | (no referrals) |
| | (iii) Leisure and Neighbourhood | (no referrals) |

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the meeting of Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Monday, 7 April 2008 at 3.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor L Ebbatson (Leader of the Council)

Councillor S A Henig, (Portfolio Holder for Resources and Value for Money)
Councillor C J Jukes, (Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning)

Councillor M Potts, (Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-being)

Councillor S C L Westrip, (Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services)

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), I Herberson (Head of Corporate Finance), J Henderson (Acting Head of Resources Directorate), G MacCallam (Environmental Services Manager), M Keenlyside (Environmental Strategy Co-ordinator), L Dawson (Acting Head of Regeneration), A Kinsey (Housing Strategy Officer), M Mansbridge (Asset Management Assistant), J Bradley (Assistant Solicitor), N Cummings (Scrutiny Officer) and D Allinson (Democratic Services Assistant)

Also in Attendance: Councillor D M Holding (Chairman of Partnership and Efficiency OSP)

156. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor S Barr.

157. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 3 MARCH 2008

The Leader made reference to Minute number 153 – Partnerships for Futures and queried when the nominations for a Member representative would be considered. It was noted that this would take place at the Council Meeting in May 2008.

RESOLVED: “That the minutes of the meeting held 3 March 2008, copies of which had previously been circulated to Members be agreed as a correct record.”

158. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no questions or representatives received from members of the public.

159. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

160. FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Leader introduced the Forward Plan and Work Programme. The Director of Development Services made reference to two items he wished to add to the Forward Plan for consideration in May, which included a Life Check Programme from the Department of Health, and the Communities for Health Programme. Members agreed to these additions.

It was agreed that the Taxi Licensing Policy item on the Work Programme should be deferred for consideration until July 2008.

RESOLVED: "That the Forward Plan and Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly."

161. EXECUTIVE DECISION TRACKER

At this point Councillor C Jukes entered to the Meeting at 3.10pm

Members considered the Decision Tracker and the Leader referred to a number of items that were to be amended on the Tracker as follows:-

Item 1 - Poets Estate, Pelton Fell – Environmental Improvement Strategy

Item 2 - Pelton Fell Neighbourhood Regeneration Partnership

It was agreed that these items be removed from the tracker and be incorporated into the Quarterly Regeneration Update Report.

Item 3 - Neighbourhood Management

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker as this was to be included within the Council's single priority arrangements which were currently being drafted.

Item 5 - Procurement Strategy Action Plan

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker and be included in the Quarterly Corporate Performance Report.

Item 6 - Regeneration of Priority of Villages using Single Housing Investment Programme Round Two

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker and be included in the Quarterly Regeneration Report. It was also suggested that a summary on what had been delivered through the SHIP investment be provided to Executive in June and a state of the District report be produced to Council in June.

Item 7 - Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP 1)

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker and be included in the Quarterly Regeneration Update Report

Item 8 - Medium Term Financial Strategy

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker and be included within the Work Programme in light of the Local Government Review.

It was noted that the Section 151 Officers had been in discussions with the County Treasurer on a written statement to allow for business as usual. The Leader suggested its existence should be formally acknowledged within the Authority.

Item 10 - Review of Industrial/Business Sites

It was agreed that this be deleted from the tracker as this issue would be subsumed when looking at business assets for the new Authority.

Item 11 - Review of Community facilities

The Leader went through each of the bullet points listed under this decision and suggested that a number of them be deleted. It was noted that a report was due to come to Executive next month on this item.

She advised that several of the issues would link to the single priority and would be considered under the 'Strengthening Partnerships' project or possibly the scrutiny work programme.

In relation to the last bullet point under this decision the Chief Executive confirmed that it had been agreed to extend the lease terms to give CVS and Bullion Hall greater security of tenure.

Item 14 - Review into public toilet provision in Town Centre

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker as this would be incorporated into the action plan for single priority around Town Centre Development.

Item 15 - Sacriston Area Development Framework

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker but that updates continue to be provided to Members through the Land Matters reports.

Item 16 - Updates Community Resource Centre at Sacriston

The Chief Executive gave a verbal update in relation to Item No. 16 – Community Resource Centre at Sacriston which despite a problem in relation to the demolition process was still scheduled to be completed by the end of May.

Item 17 - Corporate Governance Framework Action Plan

It was agreed that this item be deleted from the tracker.

RESOLVED: "That the Decision Tracker and the amendments be noted."

162. REVIEW INTO ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT IN RELATION TO THE CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENTS ACT 2005 - COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS REPORT

The Director of Development Services referred to the report on Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 a copy of which was circulated at the Meeting.

He made reference to Appendix 2, which listed an Action Plan to address the recommendations suggested by the Leisure and Neighbourhood OSP following the detailed investigation into the new powers available under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The report also highlighted the implications of this work in relation to the Local Government Review and the resulting work stream on Neighbourhood Services, which has representation from Officers of the Council.

The Director of Development Services referred to Appendix 3 of the report, which showed a table comparing the current charging rates with the Scrutiny Panels recommendations. It was agreed that the current charging rates should be retained.

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

RESOLVED:

- “1. That the progress made in implementing the action plan from the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be noted.
2. That the Executive approve the use of the baseline information and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to be fed into the Local Government Review process and
3. subject to approving the outcomes and recommendations of the Enforcement Action Learning Set, agree for those recommendations to be used to inform the Local Government Review work stream on Neighbourhood Services in preparing for the new Unitary Authority.”

163. HOUSING STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Regeneration to seek approval of the Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy Officer proceeded to give a background on the report, which had been reviewed and amended following the transfer of stock to Cestria Community Housing. An updated copy of the Housing Strategy document was circulated to Members.

The Housing Strategy Officer spoke in relation to the revised Housing Strategy and how this would set the overall direction for improving the quality and choice of housing in Chester-le-Street and ensure the housing needs and aspirations of the district were identified. He also outlined the four Strategic

Objectives, which had been set to achieve real outcomes for local residents. Particular reference was made to the affordable housing requirement.

The Leader referred to the Housing Strategy document, which she felt, had been very well researched. She suggested that the Executive go through this document page by page and raise comments where necessary.

Comments and amendments were put forward by Members and discussion ensued on a number of issues all which were addressed and noted by the Housing Strategy Officer.

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

RESOLVED: “That the Executive approve the Housing Strategy, subject to the amendments made at the Meeting and agree that this be taken forward to the Council Meeting for approval.”

164. REFERRALS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

Review into Community Partnerships

Consideration was given to the findings of the Partnership and Efficiency Overview Scrutiny Panel following the review into Community Partnerships as set out in appendix 1 of the report.

The Chairman of the Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Councillor David Holding presented the report to the Executive and gave a background to the review, which was undertaken to investigate the value of Community Partnerships and future challenges to community engagement. He highlighted the key issues within the report for information and drew Members attention to the recommendations, which were set out in Section 10 of the report.

The Leader made reference in particular to the visit to Gateshead and the knowledge that was obtained from them on community partnerships. Councillor Holding explained that although they had better resources their Community Partnerships operated in a similar way to ours. He advised that it would have been useful to have been able to look at other Authorities however this was not possible due to the timescales of the review.

The Leader advised that the Local Strategic Partnership was currently looking at Leicester’s experience in community participation and referred to the challenges ahead. She advised that this review contained useful information and gave an opportunity to learn about the Local Strategic Partnership and Community Partnerships.

Councillor Holding addressed queries from Councillor Westrip on whether this investigation had included strong and prosperous communities, community

call for action and Neighbourhood Management. He also spoke in response to his query on how training would work in practice and the role for Members.

The Leader suggested that the recommendations which were set out in Section 10 of the report should be taken forward through the 'Strengthening Partnerships' single priority Action Learning Sets.

She referred to the Action Learning Sets and scrutiny arrangements that were currently being looked at which would be closely linked to the transition action plan and would include links for Councillors to become involved in.

The Leader gave thanks to Councillor Holding and Nigel Cummings the Scrutiny Officer for the work they had put into this review.

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

RESOLVED: "That the contents of the Review into Community Partnerships report be noted and the recommendations contained in section 10 of the report be taken forward through the 'Strengthening Partnerships' single priority Action Learning Set."

165. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS. TO RESOLVE:

RESOLVED: "That in accordance with Regulation 21 (1) (b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 200, 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 to the Local Government Act 1972."

166. WRITE-OFF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Corporate Finance to seek the Executive's approval to write-off irrecoverable debts.

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

RESOLVED: "That the Executive authorise the write-off of the debts detailed in section 5.2 of the report."

167. PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TO EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Consideration was given to a report from the Environmental Services Manager to seek the Executive's approval to deliver goods and services to external partners as set out in the Local Government Act 2003. The Director of Development Services gave a background to the report and highlighted in particular the estimated services to external partners, which were listed in Section 5 of the report.

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

RESOLVED:

- “1. That approval be granted for the provision of the delivery of services to external partners as set out in Section 5.1 of the report.
2. That authority be granted to the Director of Development Service to approve the delivery of goods and services to the external partners listed in 5.1 of this report.”

168. REGENERATION QUARTERLY REPORT

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Regeneration to provide the Executive with a regular quarterly report on progress on the delivery of the regeneration strategy, and specifically capital projects that contribute to it.

The Acting Head of Regeneration spoke in relation to the report and highlighted some of the main achievements and issues that had arisen in the last quarter. She drew Members attention in relation to Appendix 1 of the report, which showed progress on capital schemes, and Appendix 2, which showed progress towards the wider Regeneration Strategy.

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

RESOLVED: “That the Executive notes the progress on the regeneration projects as set out in the Regeneration Projects Quarterly Report, as set out at Appendix 1 (capital projects), and Appendix 2 (regeneration strategy).”

169. LAND MATTERS

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Regeneration who briefed the Executive in relation to various land matters.

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

RESOLVED:

“Easement at Lingey House Farm, Sacriston

- 1) That an Easement be granted subject to the applicant being responsible for all the Council’s costs associated with the disposal of land in accordance with the Council adopted Land Disposal Policy and procedures.

Dedication of land at Fenton Close, Chester-le-Street for highway purposes

- 2) That approval be granted to dedicate the land for footway link purposes and that the District Council retains the sub soil.”

The meeting terminated at 5.35 pm



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme



May 2008

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.

9 April 2008

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part One: Executive Forward Plan



May 2008

9 April 2008

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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)
Adoption of People and Place Delivery Plan	Executive	May 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team Legal Services	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Land Matters	Executive	May 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Communities Facilities Working Group Report	Executive	May 2008	Jorge Lulic 0191 387 2232	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Community Development Manager or by email to jorgelulic@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)
Land Matters	Executive	June 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Portfolio Holder Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Bad Debt report Quarterly Report	Executive	July 2008	Ian Herberson 0191 3872343	Head of Revenue and Benefits Accountancy Manager Internal Auditor	In writing or by telephone, to the Head of Corporate Finance or by email to ianherberson@chester-le-street.gov.uk



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part Two: Executive Work Programme



May 2008

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)
New power to establish Parish Councils (including Town Councils)	Executive	May 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130 Chris Potter 0191 3872011	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk or to Head of Legal and Democratic Services or by email chrispotter@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy	Executive	May 2008	Ian Herberson 0191 3872343	Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone, to the Head of Corporate Finance or by email to ianherberson@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)
DFG's Revised Policy	Executive	May 2008	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
Department of Health NHS Life Check Roll Out	Executive	May 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Communities for Health Project	Executive	May 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Empty Property Strategy	Executive	Revised date June 2008	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)
Employee Survey Results	Executive	Revised date June 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Employees Trade Unions	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Training and Development Plan	Executive	Revised date June 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Employees Trade Unions	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance Report April 2007 to March 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	June 2008	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

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)
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
Taxi Licensing Policy	Executive	Revised date July 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder	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	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@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)
Corporate Performance Report April 2008 to June 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	September 2008	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
Corporate Performance Report July 2008 to September 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	December 2008	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
Corporate Performance Report October 2008 to December 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	March 2009	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

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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	6 February 2006 3 December 2007	<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. ▪ Negotiations to take place for the purchase and disposal of land. Report back to Executive prior to any acquisition. ▪ The revised plans for the Heart of the Village, Pelton Fell will be presented to the people of Pelton Fell for consultation. 	June 2008	Progressing	Negotiations under way with landowners and prospective interested parties in the village.	Leila Dawson
2	7 April 2008	<p><u>Medium Term Financial Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed to receive up to date reports as per forward plan including financial issues arising from Local Government Review as appropriate. 	May 2008	Progressing	Report submitted to May 2008 Executive.	Ian Herberson

	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Progress/ Key Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Officer Lead</u>
3	1 October 2007 3 December 2007	<p><u>Review of Community facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. The wider stakeholder consultation was deferred until further investigation work on community facilities had been undertaken. It was agreed at the April 2008 Executive that this should be linked to the single priority People and Places. That it be recommended to Council that the Council open discussions with the CVS about Bullion Hall, with a view to extend the lease on existing terms. Delegated authority for resolving this matter was granted to the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning. A verbal report will be provided to the Executive once a resolution has been identified. 	New date required	Ongoing	Ongoing	Leila Dawson
4	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. 	May 2008	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ian Forster/ Chris Potter/ Nigel Cummings
5	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 	Verbal update May 2008 Executive.	On schedule	Ongoing	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>
6	13 December 2007	<p><u>Update of the Communities Facilities Working Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultations have taken place and there will be three stages for the review into Community Facilities. ▪ Terms of reference have been created for the Communities Facilities Working Group. 	May 2008	Ongoing	Ongoing	Jorge Lulic
7	7 April 2008	<p><u>Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed that a summary of SHIP investment and its impact would be presented at the June Executive. 	June 2008	Ongoing	Ongoing	Leila Dawson

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: Executive

DATE OF MEETING: 12th May 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Implementing the Transition Plan; Developing 'People and Place'

ITEM NUMBER: 7

1 Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 In March 2008 the council adopted its Transition Plan for 2008/2009. Since that time early progress has since been made on the implementation of plan. The purpose of this report is to update members on progress specifically on the '**People and Place**' Priority and to seek Members agreement to progress made on developing the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan
- 1.2 So far the following progress has been made. The council has:
- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
 - agreed the '**People and Place**' priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
 - set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
 - provided guidance and support to leads;
 - commenced the development of the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
 - set a date for a launch event on 13th May 2008
 - worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to agree a workshop to take place in May to agree a single Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which is to take place on 19th May 2008.
 - agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan.
 - agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees.

1.3 With specific regard to the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan progress has been made on developing the high level proposals. Work is not yet complete but progress to date on high level proposals forms Appendix 1 and Detailed plans to date form Appendix 2. Detailed current guidance, including proposed monitoring arrangements forms Appendix 3.

1.4 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Agree the high level actions for the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan identified in Appendix 1 and suggest any potential higher priority projects or other schemes where it is felt necessary;
- 3) Agree and provide comments on the 'work in progress' **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 2

2. Consultation

2.1 Executive Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, relevant Service Team Managers, Action Learning Set Members (including external stakeholders) have been engaged in the development of the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan

2.2 No other consultations were considered necessary at this stage including external consultations or engagement.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of **'People and Place'** priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan. This report tracks progress to date and puts forwards proposals to take forward the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority.

3.3 The Delivery Plan content identified in the appendices in this report address all four areas of the **'People and Place'** priority focus i.e.

- Partnerships for Futures;
- Investment in the Town Centre;
- Strengthening Partnerships; and
- Neighbourhoods

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications and value for money statement

The Transition Plan takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process. Specific resources have been made available for both the contribution to setting up the new organisation and the implementation of the '**People and Place**' priority. It is considered that the council has properly reviewed its priorities in the light of Local Government Re-organisation and its abilities to deliver services during the transitional period. The view is taken that in doing so the council will achieve value for money in a year of significant challenge. In delivering '**People and Place**' resources may need redirecting during the forthcoming year.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

The Transition Plan and the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan is the council's response to the challenges it faces in the final year of its existence. It is considered that the plan commits the council to working within its capacity to provide human and financial resources to help establish the council while delivering 'Business as usual'. It is considered that the Plan meets the guidance and recommendations provided by the Audit Commission set out in their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. The subject of this report is principally progress against this plan. It is not considered that the subject matter of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plans at this stage requires any consultation or approval of the County Council because the proposals have been part of the budget process. Should potential resource issues change e.g. further unbudgeted resources caught within the direction occur then appropriate consultation with the County Council will take place.

4.3 Legal

The Transition Plan includes a factual statement of legal guidance to managers and Members. This remains under preparation and will be added to the Plan when complete. It is considered that the Transition Plan provides vehicle to enable the council to work within its legal powers during the transition period.

4.4 Personnel

How the council supports its employees through the transition process is a key part of the Plan. The Transition Plan revises the Organisational Development Strategy commits the council to supporting its employees through the process and help them take advantage of opportunities that will occur in the new authority. A key part of this is the development of a '**People and Place**' Personal profile for all employees. It is important to note that the Transition plan and the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan are both living and developing documents and will be reviewed as a result of consultations

undertaken and progress made. The approach to **'People and Place'** is through an 'action learning set approach' which has been a key tool used to deliver the council's improvement programme over the last three years. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents.

4.5 Other Services

The Transition Plan and the **'People and Place'** priority have implications to all services delivered by the council.

4.6 Diversity

There are no specific diversity issues in respect of the Transition Plan. The Plan does not replace the Equality Plan which will continue to be implemented through the lifetime of the council. In terms of developing In the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan, action learning set leads are having regard to ensuring the projects are fully inclusive and projects regarding engagement with otherwise excluded groups and social cohesion are included within the delivery plan proposals.

4.7 Risk

There are clear risks to the organisation in failing to continue to maintain and improve on its progress in its remaining year. The council remains committed to improving its services although it faces difficult capacity challenges through the transition period. The council will be undertaking a strategic risk assessment once the delivery plans in relation to **'People and Place'** have been developed. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder. Actions agreed through the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority include proposals to positively address crime and disorder issues.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

The report does not relate to a key decision. It is considered that the information will be communicated to the community and stakeholders by inclusion on the web-site. The Transition Plan has already been made available to staff and Members through the intranet and a web site is being developed. The Transition Plan has been made available to the County Council. An Intranet site for 'People and Place' has been established and work is being undertaken to update the council's own website to communicate the new priority. Should Members adopt the delivery plan progress towards achieving the '**People and Place**' priority will be significantly promoted and communicated. A '**People and Place**' brand has been developed and this will be used to co-ordinate, communicate and celebrate achievements in the coming months.

5. **Background, Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

5.1 As a result of Local Government Reorganisation Chester-le-Street will cease to exist as a council from April 2009. In order to set a framework as to how the council will conduct its business during this final year a 'Transition Plan' has been approved by the council in March 2008 The Transition Plan aims to:

- state the Council's aims, objectives and priorities during the transition period;
- build on the councils learning and continue its improvement programme;
- set out revised corporate activity and funding arrangements for transition period;
- clarify corporate transition programme management arrangements;
- identify how we will support and motivate and support staff through the process;
- set out the values and principles by which the Council will operate during transition; and
- establish terms of engagement with 'County Durham Council' Change Programme

5.2 In doing so the Transition Plan incorporates a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. It also takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process and provides a summary of the budget agreed. It sets out the council's new single priority of '**People and Place**'. The Plan includes the council's Corporate Improvement Plan following its learning through Comprehensive Performance Assessment last year. The new priority of '**People and Place**' is being implemented through an 'Action Learning Set' approach, an approach which has brought the council significant success as part of its improvement journey to date. The Plan includes proposals to develop delivery plans to secure sustainable change to the people and places within the district and customer focused outcomes which can be used to influence the agenda of the new unitary council.

- 5.3 This Transition Plan is the overarching plan for Chester-le-Street District Council during the transition period, and as such sets out how services and projects will be facilitated, delivered and resourced. It is a rationalisation of the Council's Corporate Plan (incorporating the Best Value Performance Plan) 2007-2010, published in June 2007, and associated Medium Term Financial Plan, Organisational Development Strategy and Corporate Improvement Plan. As such, it represents the Council's contribution to the Districts Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Strategic Vision for County Durham
- 5.4 The council has already made progress in implementing the plan which is summarised as follows. The council has:
- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
 - agreed the '**People and Place**' priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
 - set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
 - provided guidance and support to leads;
 - commenced the development of the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
 - set a date for a launch event on 13th May 2008;
 - worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to agree a workshop to take place in May to agree a single Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which is to take place on 19th May 2008;
 - agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan; and
 - agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees and arrangements are now in hand to implement a launch..
- 5.5 In terms of the delivery of the '**People and Place**' priority the Action Learning Sets are working with Executive Members to develop the Delivery Plans. This remains work in progress and the delivery plans are continuing to be developed. Attached to this report are:
- Appendix 1 which sets out the headline Delivery Plan proposals;
 - Appendix 2 which sets out the 'work in progress' detailed delivery plans; and
 - Appendix 3 which sets out current Action Learning set guidance.
- 5.6 Should the delivery plans be further developed prior to the Executive meeting them members will be updated on content. Member's approval is sought for

the headline proposal in Appendix 1. Member's comments are sought on the 'work in progress' detail in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 is available for member's information.

6. **Recommendations**

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Agree the high level actions for the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan identified in Appendix 1 and suggest any potential higher priority projects or other schemes where it is felt necessary;
- 3) Agree and provide comments on the 'work in progress' '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 2

7. **Background Papers/Documents referred to**

7.1 Transition Plan March 2004

7.2 Corporate Plan 2007/2010 – June 2007

7.3 Budget reports to Council dated 28th February 2008

Ian Forster
Director of Corporate Services
24th May 2008
Version 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

People and Place

Appendix 1: Headline Delivery Plan Proposals



People & Place

April 2008



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS1
Theme	Partnership for Futures
Aim	To enable employers to identify the skills needs and vacancies they have within their organisations and match people into jobs who have the right skills. It is about better inter-agency working and strengthening partnerships between employers and educational establishments.
Lead	Jenny Johns
Executive Member	Councillor Steve Barr
Sponsor	Roy Templeman
Team	Janice Lunn – Chester-le-Street District Council Sue Parkinson – Chester-le-Street and City of Durham Enterprise Agency Jo Forster – Chester-le-Street Learning Partnership
Allocated Resource	£80,000 revenue £10,000 capital
Key Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise board meetings – agree objectives of Partnerships for Futures, operational arrangements and key priorities. • Update business plan/devise action plan • Recruit Executive Director • Implement pilot projects Summer 08 including Academy Project and delivery of Customer Care Training • Research workforce planning – identify gaps and fee structure for Partnerships for Futures



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS2
Theme	Investment in Town Centre
Aim	This reflects the need to invest further in the Town Centre to build on the investment already undertaken and achieve the sustainable benefits expected.
Lead	Rob McMullen
Executive Member	Cllr Chris Jukes
Sponsor	Leila Dawson
Team	Allyson Rose, Kath George, Chris Lonsdale, Michelle Smithson, William Martin.
Allocated Resource	£50,000 revenue £50,000 capital
Key Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise a series of events • Develop a Business Improvement District • Commission research to determine the future of the market • Dress the town with banners for the summer festival • Install locator boards • Extend canopies and provide better sheeting for market stalls • Install footfall counters on the front street • Provide better Xmas tree lights • Use coloured paving slabs or adhesive signs leading from Riverside to the town centre.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS3
Theme	Strengthening Partnerships
Aim	This is about filling the gaps on key partnerships to ensure sustainable change into the new organisation. This includes working on the potential for a new Town Council for Chester-le-Street.
Lead	Graeme Clark/Jeremy Brock
Executive Member	Councillor Linda Ebbatson
Sponsor	Ian Forster
Team	Jorge Lulic – Chester-le-Street District Council Colin Turnbull – Chester-le-Street District Council Chris Potter – Chester-le-Street District Council Bill Lightburn – Chester-le-Street District Council Julie Underwood – Chester-le-Street District Council Andy Stephenson – Chester-le-Street District Council Nick Tzamarias – Chester-le-Street District Council Jorge Lulic – Chester-le-Street District Council Sue Parkinson – Chester-le-Street and City of Durham Enterprise Agency Belinda Lewis - Chester-le-Street CVS Jo Forster – Chester-le-Street Learning Partnership Ron Batty and Sue Parkinson - Durham and Chester-le-Street Enterprise
Allocated Resource	£50,000 revenue £100,000 capital
Key Deliverables	<u>Project Above the Line at Present.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the 3rd sector in throughout the district via mutual support and better relationships. • The Potential for a Town Council in Chester-le-Street. • Support for the CLS Support and Activity Network – a

partnership which intends to bring together primary agencies involved in providing sport and physical activity across the district to create a shared vision and strategic approach.

- **Enhancing Community Cohesion in Pelton Fell, Sacriston and Grange Villa** -A project that will be centred around community centres in three villages, and will include a range of activities whose focus will be to involve and encourage people from all communities to work together with a common purpose, leading to improved relationships between them.
- **Celebrating the lives and achievements of the women of Chester-le-Street** -A project that will involve women living and working in the district in building a living history and archive. It will include the collation of, for example, art, photographs, written word and newspaper articles. In addition, it is intended to record the life experiences and achievements of women in our district and capture them on DVD.
- **A Federation of Residents and Community Groups** - A viable / well representative group of residents and community groups across the district, working collectively to achieve a common goal.
- **A 'It's a Knockout Type of Event in 2008/2009.**

Projects Below the Line

- **Action Packed Futures**. – event in riverside park based on sustainability and community participation.
- **County Durham Community Development Regional Network** - Development of a regional network that previously was not in existence, where community development workers can meet regularly to discuss issues of importance to them.
- **Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships** - Substantial crime reduction across the county, improving the quality of life for communities by building on achievements.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS4
Theme	Neighbourhoods
Aim	This is about making decisions on the scope for other village action plans based on appetite and ability to deliver within the remaining lifetime of the Council. It also includes sustaining existing community engagement.
Lead	Mike Keenlyside
Executive Member	Simon Westrip
Sponsor	Tony Galloway
Team	(Initial) Steven Craig; Nigel Cummings; Martin Briscoe; Colin Turnbull; Barbara Cruickshank; Andy Stephenson
Allocated Resource	£70,000 revenue £30,000 capital
Key Deliverables	A range of tangible and sustained activities based around the following themes:- Chester in Bloom Sustainable living Democracy and access to Services Respect and Anti Social Behaviour Neighbourhood Charters



Chester-le-Street
District Council

People and Place

Appendix 2: Work in Progress Detailed Delivery Plan Proposals



People & Place

April 2008

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: ALS 1 Partnerships for Futures

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks
Organise first board meeting	Board meeting: April 21 st To commission consultant to plan, facilitate and write up findings.	Jenny Johns	Who: all board members Cost implication: catering costs/room hire	Inability of all board members to attend.
Establish arrangements for project team	To be in place: April <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team: Jenny Johns/Janice Lunn/Sue Parkinson/Jo Forster/Enterprise Agency admin Identify team responsibilities and time to be spent working on project 	Board decision required	Who: Project team to organise and agree responsibilities and office arrangements Cost implication: to be identified.	Capacity of officers.
Devise budget plan	Budget Plan: Early May	Board decision required. Sue Parkinson/Jenny Johns to devise.	Who: Sue Parkinson/Jenny Johns/Board Cost implication: officer and partner time	No identified risks.
Update business plan and devise action plan	Updated business plan and action plan: Early May	Board decision required	Who: Project team to progress	No identified risks.

				Cost implication: Consideration to be given towards consultant to prepare.	
Establish terms of reference for board	Terms of reference in place: Early May	Board decision required	Who: Project team to progress Cost implication: officer and partner time	No identified risks.	
Recruit Executive Director	Advert: last week April/early May Selection, interview, appoint: May/June Start in post: Likelihood September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description/person specification • Agree interview panel • Agree initial length of contract • Agree interview date 	Board decision required	Who: Project team to progress Cost implication: Advertising costs/officer and partner time Source: National advert in Guardian/Times/Regeneration and Renewal	Failure to appoint.	
To establish database	Database in place: July/August <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key objectives of a database • Investigate feasibility of using Hanlon and the timescales/resources • Identify other software solutions and costs if Hanlon cannot meet Partnership for Futures requirements 	Jenny Johns/Jo Forster to research Board decision required	Who: Jenny Johns/Jo Forster to liaise with Tyne and Wear City Region Employment Consortium regarding Hanlon/Board Cost implication: Hanlon installation costs to be identified/officer and partner time	Lack of suitable database to meet Partnerships for Futures requirements if Hanlon is unsuitable.	
To implement next steps of project delivery	Delivery: May/June/July/August/September Proposals include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy project – 	Board decision required	Who: Project team to facilitate and take forward proposals working with employers/schools	Lack of interest /poor take up.	

	<p>Ambic/Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Beamish customer care training • Marketing activity • Research workforce planning – gaps and fee structure 			Cost implication: to be identified	
Identify funding streams for 08/09 activity	Research public sector funding including Single Programme and ESF.	Jo Forster/Janice Lunn	Who: Jo Forster/Janice Lunn Cost implication: officer and partner time	Lack of funds/inability to access funds could limit Partnerships for Futures activity.	
Schedule forthcoming board meetings	To be organised by: end of April Board to decide frequency of meetings	Enterprise Agency Admin	Who: Board/Admin Cost implication: catering costs/room hire/officer and partner time	Inability of all board members to attend.	
Agree role of project team with Executive Director when they come into post.	Agree roles and responsibilities.	Executive Director/Project Team	Who: Executive Director/Project Team Cost implication: officer and partner time	Capacity of officers.	

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: ALS 2 Investing in the Town Centre

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks
Organise a series of events in the town centre	The aim of organizing events is to increase footfall, dwelltime and the confidence of the business community; particularly retailers and market traders. The first will be held on Saturday 26 th April, which will bring groups of dance specialists and performers into the civic heart. A diary of events is being produced.	Rob McMullen	Approximately £35,000 of the revenue fund will be used. However sponsorship from businesses will be sought recouping at least 50% of the costs of running events.	Weather and rival events in the sub-region.
Develop a Business Improvement District for the Town Centre	This will take 1 year to complete – ending in a ballot of all businesses in the town centre on a BID business plan. If they agree to support the plan by numbers of votes cast and by ratable value then the BID will form a partnership responsible for £60k+. A new private sector led town centre development partnership will need to be formed to take this forward.	Rob McMullen and Town Centre Development Partnership.	Action learning set Cost: between £5k and £10k from Revenue Fund	Insufficient staffing resources to enable adequate communication to take place.

<p>Research to determine the future of Chester-le-Street market</p>	<p>This town is synonymous with the label 'Market Town'. However its market is failing. Targets for 2007 were to raise £203k revenue whereas it made only half that figure. Although evidence would suggest that the market is in decline one has to question whether this is a local phenomenon or are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces such as the credit squeeze, which seems to be damaging the confidence of shoppers – what should this and the new Council do in the light of such circumstances? The research should ask these questions but should also test whether the public sector should continue to manage what is a private sector activity. It should finally address questions relating to the sustainability of the market in five or ten years time and suggest a way to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability.</p>	<p>William Martin & Rob McMullen</p>	<p>Between £3k and £5k from revenue fund</p>	<p>Insufficient staffing resources to enable adequate communication to take place</p>
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Dress the Town with banners during the summer	Working with a company to dress the town with banners during the summer. This will enliven the town and enable local businesses to advertise that they are supporters of the town and its festival.	Rob McMullen	Initial seed funding for ten banners. (£2k from capital pot) that will raise awareness of advertising possibilities. Each banner will have the Festival Logo as it's main art work but it will also be used to raise awareness of the Business Improvement District Concept	The business community will not be interested in purchasing advertising space on banners
Install 4 Locator Boards in the Town Centre, which will enable shoppers to find the services or shops they want in the town.	This issue has been an ambition of the Business Association for years and it's members have already raised around £800 to produce four 'Welcome to Chester-le-Street' castings that will be placed on top of the boards, which have been designed and are ready to install.	Rob McMullen & Chester-le-Street Business Association.	Approximately £6000 Capital funding.	None foreseen
Extend the canopies of market stalls and provide better sheeting/covers for them	The existing stalls do not protect customers or traders during inclement weather. Estimates will be obtained during April/May to improve them.	William Martin	Not known	None foreseen
Install footfall counters for the front street	Footfall data form the basis of any success measure for town centres. Developers and new retailers need this information in order to make economic choices about whether to invest in that town. No town in	Rob McMullen	Around £9k for first year's license and setup.	Unable TO sustain funding in the new authority – yearly figure after first year = £6,675

	<p>Durham has an electronic means to do this essential work. Footfall cameras collect data that are transmitted to a central computer by via the Web. These can then be compared to data from similar towns – this may then be used to determine the effectiveness of the economy and town centre developments for example.</p>			
<p>Provide better Xmas tree lights with a bit more bling</p>	<p>We received many complaints last year that the Christmas Tree was insufficiently bright or 'magic' enough for the festive period</p>	<p>Rob McMullen</p>	<p>Around £3k</p>	<p>None foreseen</p>
<p>Use coloured slabs or adhesive footprints to lead shoppers from Riverside to Town.</p>	<p>To draw people from the riverside to the town centre and direct them to locator boards and businesses.</p>	<p>Rob McMullen</p>	<p>Not known yet – estimates to be found.</p>	<p>A supplier may not be found. The cost may be prohibitive.</p>

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: ALS 3 Strengthening Partnerships

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks
Potential for a Town Council	<p>May 08 – Report to Council to consider options for town/parish councils.</p> <p>June 08 – Consideration of approaches to Town/Parish Councils and a preferred way forward.</p> <p>August 08– Action Plan and Resource Plans to take forward Town/Parish Councils.</p>	Colin Turnbull / Chris Potter	£5,000 to investigate full resources needed to implement town/parish councils.	
Strengthening the 3 rd Sector	<p>May 08 – Consider plans to engagement with 3rd sector to provide an elevated organization, stronger in light of New Unitary and improving capacity with other partners.</p>	Roy Templeman/Linda Ebbatson	To be agreed.	<p>Resistance to Change.</p> <p>Engagement with partners.</p> <p>Lack of Funding. Timescales.</p>

<p>It's a Knockout Event</p>	<p>Sept 08 - Identify Partners. Oct 08 – Scope and agree type of event. Nov 08 – Agree Team Members. Dec 08 – Formulate the sustainability model and approach. Feb 08 – Practice Event. March 09 – Carry out the Event.</p>	<p>Ian Forster</p>	<p>£5,000 funding to enhance the next event.</p>	<p>Agreeing sustainability model.</p>
<p>Celebrating the lives and achievements of the women of Chester-le-Street.</p>	<p>30 April - Establish project group 7 May - Determine key activities / roles / responsibilities 11 May - Produce article in District News inviting women in the community to take part 31 Oct - Collect and collate archival material, including living history recordings 31 Dec - Produce CDs and DVDs, make widely available 31 Jan - Launch and publicise</p>	<p>Julie Underwood Linda Ebbatson</p>	<p>Financial: Room / venue hire (meetings, celebratory event/launch) Hospitality Travelling expenses Production of CDs and DVDs, packaging People: Time of project team Communication and PR Officer time – arranging publicity</p>	<p>Lack of interest within the community Lack of capacity of project leads Limited budget</p>

<p>Enhancing Community Cohesion in Pelton Fell, Sacriston and Grange Villa</p>	<p>31 May - Establish project group 7 June - Determine key activities / roles / responsibilities 15 July - Engage with people in the communities, develop community project teams 30 Sept - Community project teams to develop 3 project plans 31 Jan - Implement project plans 28 Feb - Complete, launch and publicise outcomes</p>	<p>Julie Underwood Linda Ebbatson</p>	<p>Financial: Room / venue hire (meetings, celebratory event/launch) Hospitality Travelling expenses Other expenditure, as will be detailed within project plans £25,000 currently identified to support this project. People: Time of ALS team (Chester-le-Street District Council) Communication and PR Officer time – arranging publicity etc</p>	<p>Lack of interest within the community Lack of capacity of project leads / ALS Insufficient time to complete activities</p>
<p>Federation of Residents Associations and Community Groups</p>	<p>May – 08 Setting up a Federation Sub Group July 2008 - Developing a Draft Action Plan Sept 2008 - Consult on Draft Action Plan</p>	<p>Steering Group - Jorge Lulic</p>	<p>People on Sub Group, officer time, room hire, promotion materials, administration, refreshments, subsistence, continued support of structures through the LGR process</p>	<p>LGR process, lack of engagement by Associations and residents, people leaving, capacity issues, officers time and availability</p>

<p>County Durham Community Development Regional Network –</p> <p>To establish a Community Development Workers network both regionally and county wide. A body that will represent the professionals working in the community development arena</p>	<p>Sept 2007 - County Durham CD initial consultation Jan 2008 - CD Regional Network Conference Feb 2008 - County Durham CD Steering Group May 2008 - County Durham CD Full Conference</p>	<p>Steering Group – Jorge Lulic</p>	<p>Administration, officer time and financial support</p>	<p>LGR, lack of resources, officer time, lack of involvement</p>
<p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</p>	<p>Refer to Partnership Plan 2008 – 2011 (please see attached) Jorge working on action plans at present.</p>	<p>Community Safety Partnership – Jorge Lulic & Jacquie Dent</p>		<p>LGR & LAA</p>
<p>Chester-le-Street Sports and Activity Network</p>	<p>Strengthen a recently established partnership in Chester-le-Street to develop and promote a shared vision and strategic overview that ensures effective planning and deliver of sporting and physical activities.</p>	<p>Bill Lightburn</p>	<p>Dependant on Development Worker – funding application currently with Sports England to fund this post for 3 years.</p>	

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: ALS 4 Neighbourhoods

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks
Chester in Bloom Improving a key aspect of your local area	Parish Council consultation and promoting the concept Aug – Sept	MK	£0	High expectations from participating Parish Councils
	Designing the model open space feature Oct	GM	£2500	Cost becomes prohibitive
	Tree and shrub planting with local residents Oct - Nov	MB	£5000 pr area in project	Low risk
	Large scale bulb planting Oct- Nov	MB SC	£4000 (purchase of mechanical bulb planter)	
	Dedication and 'opening' ceremonies Jan 09	Council	£500	Low risk
Millennium Greens	Consultation with Trustees Aug – Sept	MK SC	£0	High expectations from participating trustees
	Improvement works Oct - March	SC MB	£5000 (2 areas)	
	Handover to Trustees March 2009	Council	£500	

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: Neighbourhoods

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks
Respect and Anti Social Behaviour Consultation with young people. Completion of questionnaire	15.4.08 – 24 Young people involved in consultation process regarding questionnaire; their suggestions now incorporated + pro-forma currently being prepared for delivery to school – end 25.4.08 Park View to be pilot school.	BC Police CSO's	Venue located. Transport arranged £110.00 LA to be invoiced.	Permission from parents – obtained in advance. Venue risk assessed.
Information leaflet	Young people to devise their own ASB awareness leaflet. Meeting arranged 22.4.08	JDent BC	SSC Funding already secured to produce:- 4000 leaflets £470.00 2 banners £420.00	Funds required to produce posters for schools
Visits + Surgeries	Visits arranged to other schools to roll out questionnaire + to identify/ agree suitable area within schools for future surgeries:- Hermitage – 29.4.08 Pelton Roseberry – 2.5.08	BC Police CSO's Schools	Information Stands Schools/LA £200.00 per school/approx. SSC Funding	No area available within schools No incentive for completion of questionnaires.

	Fyndoune – TBA Roll out ASB DVD to stimulate discussions.		secured to cover cost of DVD £200.00	
Completion of questionnaires	Questionnaires to be analysed. Prevention, intelligence, enforcement and education action plan updated.	BC Police Multi-agencies involved.	To be identified thru analysis.	
Develop Information Wallet	Every young person within school supplied with an wallet and card to store relevant information.	BC JDent	SSC Funding already secured to produce:- 1000 Wallets £1127.93 1000 Info Cards £1000.00	Not enough wallets or cards to give out. Further funding required to produce numbers required.
Crime and Safety Awareness Event	Multi-agency safety event for 150 young people from CLS schools. The day to include drama, fun, music and role-play. 23.10.08	BC JDent	SSC Funding already secured to pay for event: 150 pupils £2500.00	No funding secured for venue. Requesting quotes from DCCC approx cost £700/day for hire of rooms. £5.00 p yp packed lunch £10.00 pp buffet for facilitators
ASB Website + Hotline contact numbers	Consult and involve young people in the production of a general information website for young people within CLS.	BC/LA/IT Police Multi-agency	Enquires already made re: website:- £0.00 IT Section	None foreseen Regular info review to reflect change in details etc.
ASB/Respect DVD	All schools involved in the writing, production and marketing of a CLS Schools DVD	LA Schools Police	Multi-agency Approx. £12k. Source - unknown	Lack of funding.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

People and Place

Appendix 3: Current Action Learning Set Guidance



People & Place

April 2008



Chester-le-Street
District Council

‘People and Place’

Developing the Delivery of the new Corporate Priority



Action Learning Set Guidance Notes

April 2008 (Version 2)



Chester-le-Street District Council

Background

During the transition to a new Unitary Authority we, as a Council, have committed to protect our communities and to ensure that there is as little disturbance as possible to our customers, partners and other stakeholders.

The work of the Council previously was detailed in a Corporate Plan which identified seven priorities for the Council to work to. As a result of Local Government Reorganisation, we have had to review our ambition and in order to do this we have decided to focus on one single priority which we are calling '**People and Place**'. This single priority focuses on ensuring that the work we do now ensures a demonstrable benefit to our communities which can be sustained by and supported by the new Unitary Council, whilst leaving a legacy behind as a District Council.

The single priority '**People and Place**' consists of four key elements of delivery:

- **Partnerships for Futures**
- **Investment in the Town Centre**
- **Strengthening Partnerships**
- **Neighbourhoods**

Following the previous successes of Action Learning Sets within the Council, it has been agreed that the delivery of the four elements above will be via an Action Learning Set approach. These Action learning sets will focus on the development and delivery of schemes which will make a lasting and sustainable difference for both people and place which can be transfereed into the new unitary council

Action Learning Sets

The Corporate Management Team and Executive have agreed the Action Learning Set approach is the way forward to ensure delivery within the required timescales of the People and Place priority and the four identified elements.

Delivering the aims of Action Learning Sets

The aims of the Action Learning Sets will be delivered by a team of employees comprising of a mix of leaders, managers, supervisors and front line delivery staff, as well as member representation. Each Action Learning Set will be supported by a:

- Sponsor :** A direct link for the team to Corporate Management Team.
- Lead:** A person appointed to lead and ensure that the priority is achieved.
- Member:** Executive representative
- Coordinators:** This to be led by Ian Forster supported by Kathryn Glasper and Sue Pearson

The Process

The identified lead for each Action Learning Set will be tasked to identify key team members, co-opted members and any external/stakeholder involvement. An Executive Member will also be allocated to each Action Learning Set. The mechanism for identifying Action Learning Set members will be based on who actually delivers the services, who can contribute to improving the service delivery and who outside the council has a role to play in the delivery of the priority. The Action Learning set ought therefore to comprise of those individuals who can actually deliver the agreed activities or can ensure that other teams deliver on the council's behalf.

Each Action Learning Set team will put into practice the skills and competencies they have gained from their day to day work and training undertaken. In particular the teams will, as a first stage, develop a delivery plan. A mechanism to plan this could be in the style of a 'well formed outcome' approach for their projects. Principles will include:

- **Outcomes** - setting out clearly what the team wish to achieve and how it will make a sustainable difference
- **Evidence** - predetermined outcomes and benchmarks to understand when the task has been achieved
- **Ownership** - establishing the shared ownership of the team to the task
- **Resources** - What resources the team has, what is needed and how it might be achieved

- **Front Line Councillor engagement** – How local members can be involved in the implementation of agreed delivery plan
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement** – How local people and partners may be engaged
- **Communication** – how can we market proposals and publish their success and achievements under the banner of ‘People and Place
- **First Step** – what will be done first and by when

Delivery Plans

Each Action Learning Set will be required to produce a ‘do-able’ delivery plan. To be ‘do-able’ the plans, proposed schemes, projects and activity must be:

- **Sustainable** – resulting to some lasting benefit to people and places
- **Measurable** – where success can be evidenced and there are clear community outcomes
- **Achievable**- ensuring that the resources are available
- **Realistic** – ensuring that they can be achieved alongside our commitments to Local Government Reorganisation
- **Timely** – being put in place so outcomes can be realised within the lifetime of the council.

A significant amount of work has already been put in to things which can be potentially considered as part of the delivery plans. Information on these is available to the Action Learning Sets. In some cases such as Partnership for Futures significant progress has already been made. Key to success will be:

- a very quick planning process with early agreement on each delivery plans;
- a focus on delivery of schemes on the ground with people in the council ‘getting out more’ to deliver;
- keeping things simple , ensuring that Action learning sets keep focused and don’t try to do too much;
- liaising with other action learning sets to deliver cross cutting actions e.g. linking arts and culture with the town centre investments, thus maximising use of resources;
- sound risk and project management; and
- motivating people and making it fun

Delivery Plans will engage Executive Members who will help ensure that they receive the early support of the Executive to allow the plans to be delivered.

Support to Action Learning Sets

Each Action Learning Set will have a CMT sponsor to help develop and implement their delivery plans. The 2008/2009 budget process included a financial allocation attached to each of the four priority sub-areas. There should also be existing resources within the

delivery teams and additional resources may be made available through redirected resources during the course of the financial year. The co-ordination team of Ian Forster, Kathryn Glasper and Sue Pearson will also be able to look to answer queries or try to help resolve issues that the Action Learning Sets cannot resolve themselves

Launch Day

Once the teams have been identified a Launch Day will be held mid-April. The lead and team members will be responsible for presenting high level proposals within their identified Delivery Plans for their '**People and Place**' priority. The day will also be used for the teams to work up detailed proposals and to identify any immediate issue. A key element of the day will be celebratory to help motivate those involved in the Action learning sets and those people who could be engaged in delivery.

Delivery and Monitoring

It is for the team to decide on how it will deliver their priority. This includes:

- requirements/outputs of priority;
- allocation of work;
- timescales for achievement ;
- how the team meets;
- the content of meetings;
- how tasks are project managed; and
- report back to coordinators.

Regular meetings (possibly two weekly) will be held with Action Learning Set Leads in order to report on progress. In addition to this a monthly report to Executive on progress will be produced and submitted by the Lead Coordinator, Ian Forster.

Cutting Out Bureaucracy

The onus is on getting on and doing rather. Sometimes we can be swamped in bureaucracy and every effort will be made to keep paperwork to a minimum. That being said there needs to be strong evidence and monitoring base to what is done and this will need to have corporate and consistent approach. There will therefore have to be some paper work to complete in the planning stage and throughout the monitoring process. This will involve:

- an action learning set summary, completed once at the outset of the action Learning Set
- a standard delivery plan template completed once to develop and agree outcomes of the action learning set
- A key project description for individual schemes, projects or proposals completed once at the commencement of each agreed project

- A Progress Monitoring Sheet, completed monthly to assist Monitoring by the Executive

These templates form part of the information pack.

Next Steps

It's now over to you. Thank you and good Luck!



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Summary of 'People and Place' Action Learning Sets

ALS Ref	ALS1
Theme	Partnership for Futures
Aim	This is about getting young people into the jobs that exist and ensure that they have the skills. It is about better inter-agency working and partnership.

ALS Ref	ALS2
Theme	Investment in Town Centre
Aim	This reflects the need to invest further in the Town Centre to build on the investment already undertaken and achieve the sustainable benefits expected.

ALS Ref	ALS3
Theme	Strengthening Partnerships
Aim	This is about filling the gaps on key partnerships to ensure sustainable change into the new organisation. This includes working on the potential for a new Town Council for Chester-le-Street. It also includes developing arts and culture partnerships.

ALS Ref	ALS4
Theme	Neighbourhoods
Aim	This is about making decisions on the scope for other village action plans based on appetite and ability to deliver within the remaining lifetime of the Council. It also includes sustaining existing community engagement.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS1
Theme	Partnership for Futures
Aim	This is about getting young people into the jobs that exist and ensure that they have the skills. It is about better inter-agency working and partnership.
Lead	Jenny Johns
Executive Member	To be determined
Sponsor	Roy Templeman
Team	To be identified
Allocated Resource	£80,000 revenue £10,000 capital
Key Deliverables	To be picked from detailed delivery plan when complete and agreed



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS2
Theme	Investment in Town Centre
Aim	This reflects the need to invest further in the Town Centre to build on the investment already undertaken and achieve the sustainable benefits expected.
Lead	Rob McMullen
Executive Member	To be determined
Sponsor	Leila Dawson
Team	To be identified
Allocated Resource	£50,000 revenue £50,000 capital
Key Deliverables	To be picked from detailed delivery plan when complete and agreed



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS3
Theme	Strengthening Partnerships
Aim	This is about filling the gaps on key partnerships to ensure sustainable change into the new organisation. This includes working on the potential for a new Town Council for Chester-le-Street. It also includes developing arts and culture partnerships.
Lead	Graeme Clarke/Craig Etherington/Jeremy Brock
Executive Member	Cllrs Steve Barr/Maureen Potts
Sponsor	Ian Forster
Team	To be identified
Allocated Resource	£50,000 revenue £100,000 capital
Key Deliverables	To be picked from detailed delivery plan when complete and agreed



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Summary

ALS Ref	ALS4
Theme	Neighbourhoods
Aim	This is about making decisions on the scope for other village action plans based on appetite and ability to deliver within the remaining lifetime of the Council. It also includes sustaining existing community engagement.
Lead	Mike Keenlyside
Executive Member	To be determined.
Sponsor	Tony Galloway
Team	To be identified
Allocated Resource	£70,000 revenue £30,000 capital
Key Deliverables	To be picked from detailed delivery plan when complete and agreed

'People and Place' Delivery Plan: Neighbourhoods

Headline Project/Proposal	Key actions including timescale	Lead	Resources Who, costs, source	Key risks



Chester-le-Street
District Council

'People and Place' Action Learning Set Key Headline Project Summary

ALS Ref	
'People and Place' Theme	
Key headline proposal scheme	
Key milestones including timeline	
Key desired outcomes including timeline and KPI's where appropriate	
Lead	
Executive Member	
Front line councilor engagement	
Community/stakeholder engagement	
Key deliverables	
Key Risks and risk management actions	
Resources	
Comments	



Chester-le-Street
District Council

***'People and Place'* Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report**

ALS Ref	
<i>'People and Place'</i> Theme	
Milestone and outcome achievement	
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	
Issues to be resolved and who by	
Successes to communicate and celebrate	
Comments	



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Proposed Timetable

Date	Key Milestone	Responsible	Comments
March			
By 14/3/08	Allocate Lead officers for Action Learning Sets	Ian Forster	
18/3/08	Meet with Lead officers to discuss requirements of Action Learning Sets	Ian Forster/ coordinators/Leads	Date established meeting time and location to confirm
By 28/3/08	Allocated Lead officers to identify team members and report back to coordinators	Leads	
28/3/08	Transition Plan being submitted to Council for approval	Ian Forster	
April			
By 11/4/08	Leads to agree High level Delivery Plans	Leads	
By 18/4/08	Agreement on High Level Delivery Plans	All	
May			
By 02/5/08	Leads to agree Detailed Delivery Plans	Leads	
13/5/08	Executive to agree Detailed Delivery Plans	Ian Forster	Aim for 6 May with deadline for report to be confirmed
By 13/5/08	Launch Event – presentation of Delivery Plans	Coordinators/Leads/Team Members	Date confirmed Beamish Hall



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Chester-le-Street District Council

REPORT TO:	EXECUTIVE
DATE OF MEETING:	12 May 2008
REPORT OF:	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
SUBJECT:	New powers to establish parish councils People and Place – Potential for a Town Council for Chester-le-Street
ITEM NUMBER:	

1 Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is firstly to raise awareness about the new powers of the Council to establish parish councils under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the Act') which was enacted on 30 October 2007 and secondly to consider whether or not to recommend that a 'community governance review' should be voluntarily undertaken by the Council at this time.
- 1.2 Districts councils, unitary county councils and London borough councils (principal councils) have since 13 February 2008 power to undertake 'community governance reviews' and to make decisions as to whether to implement recommendations. The Secretary of State therefore no longer makes such decisions. The Council has indicated that it will give consideration to a town council for Chester-le-Street. This is a proposal within the council's '**People and Place**' priority currently under development. Under new legislation progress can only be made following a 'community governance review'. It appears that the council cannot progress proposals for a town council unless it has conducted a 'community governance review'. Such a review could be undertaken on a specific community or neighbourhood area or on the full administrative boundary of the council. The council could be required to undertake a 'community governance review' in specific circumstances.
- 1.3 There is an expectation in the statutory guidance entitled 'Guidance on community governance reviews' ('the Guidance') that any such 'community governance review' should take no longer than 12 months to complete.
- 1.4 Para. 23 of the Guidance makes clear the intended outcome which is '...to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.'

1.5 There has been interest expressed by communities in establishing parish councils in communities not served by an existing one as well as a town council for Chester-le-Street. As the Council has decided to give consideration to the potential for a Town Council it is felt that a 'do nothing' option would be an inappropriate course of action at this stage. In order to address the **'People and Place'** priority proposal it is felt that members ought to be minded to undertake a review with a limited scope for the potential for a new Town Council. This ought to be done in partnership with the County Council. The implications in terms of human and financial resources remain unknown and what ever approach members adopt it is suggested that a further report ought to be brought back to the Executive with a view to making a further, more informed decision on implications and the detail of how the issue can be progressed.

1.6 Members are recommended to:

1. note the new powers
2. decide whether or not to recommend that the Council voluntarily undertakes a 'community governance review' and, if so, determine its scope with a view to a further report being brought back to the Executive to determine how progress can be made.

2. Consultation

2.1 This report is being placed before Members of the Executive in order to begin the consultative process on whether or not to voluntarily undertake a 'community governance review' under the Council's duty to periodically consider such matters. Early consultation with Durham County Council would need to take place.

2.2 Should a decision be taken on a 'community governance review', the Council is required under section 79 of the Act to notify Durham County Council of their intention to undertake a review and of its terms of reference. Furthermore, section 93 of the Act requires the Council to consult with interested stakeholders such as with local people and organisations and including other local authorities which have an interest in the review.

2.3 Letters have been received from North End Residents Association and Chester-le-Street Residents Association requesting that the council forms a local Town Council. Other communities have raised the issues of parishes not currently served by parish councils in the district.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

3.1 The Transition Plan sets out the Council's new single **People and Place** priority. It has already been agreed, and supported by the Executive and Scrutiny Panels, that the current priorities will be retained for the purposes of this year's plan. The Plan however, makes it clear that during the year

the Council will re-address its priorities and decide upon new ones in order to develop next year's budget. This is in the light of change in the district and within the organisation.

3.2 The plan significantly takes into account the recently publicised Comprehensive Performance Assessment result.

3.3 The need to consider whether to voluntarily conduct a 'community governance review' has a direct impact on the following areas of the **People and Place** priority:

- Partnerships for Futures
- Investment in the Town Centre
- Strengthening partnerships and
- Neighbourhoods

3.4 A specific strand of the Strengthening Partnerships part of the **'People and Place'** priority is to consider the potential for a Town Council in Chester-le-Street. This has been considered as an earlier item on the agenda of this Executive.

3.5 Para. 45 of the Guidance states: 'Communities and Local Government is working to help people and local agencies create cohesive, attractive and economically vibrant local communities, building on the Government's Sustainable Communities strategy.' It continues at para. 46 to note that 'an important aspect to approaching sustainable communities is allowing local people a say in the way their neighbourhoods are managed...' Para. 56 observes that "'Place' matters in considering community governance and is a factor in deciding whether or not to set up a parish.'

4. Implications

4.1 Financial and Value for Money Statement

4.1.1 The cost of a community governance review is a variable as it depends upon the scope of the review and its terms of reference e.g. would it be focused on a specific community or neighbourhood or on the whole administrative area of the District Council. The cost of implementation is likewise a variable as it depends upon how ambitious the proposals are (e.g. how large the offices, how many staff, what services etc). A new parish council will not be able to function without its set up costs being made available prior to its first precept being agreed, levied and collected. Costs will include consultation costs and costs of publication. It is therefore impossible to accurately quantify the costs before formulation has taken place of any particular proposals. The set up costs may therefore be considerable and there will be a need to discuss the resource implications with Durham County Council.

4.1.2 Whether or not any recommendation represents value for money will be dependent upon what that recommendation comprises.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

4.2.1 The focus for the Council up to 31 March 2009 is of relevance to the new organisation. The County Council must by law be notified of and consulted on any community governance review. This is particularly important due to Local Government Reorganisation and the successful bid of Durham County Council. The County Council's bid suggests that the new unitary authority may be responsible for the creation of a new Town Council for Chester-le-Street. Paragraph 5.58 of the bid suggests:

'Town and Parish Councils are a key part of the infrastructure in many neighbourhoods. Working with the County Durham Association of Local Councils and local community interests, the new unitary council would use its power to establish town and parish council's in line with the association's policy objective of full parishing of the County. This could involve the creation of new town councils in places such as Consett, central Chester-le-Street and Durham City centre, capable of providing very local place-shaping and potentially acting as the cornerstones of co-operation for wider clusters of town and parish councils.'

In the absence of a mechanism for the set up costs incurred before establishment of any new Town Council to be recovered, then the resource implications will need to be discussed with Durham County Council.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 deals with 'Parishes'. There are two ways in which a 'community governance review' may be triggered, namely by either a 'community governance petition' by the requisite number of local electors or by the Council.

4.3.2 The Council is required under section 100(4) of the Act to 'have regard to' the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. In other words, there must be good reason to depart from it. The Guidance itself at para.5 makes clear that 'This guidance is not an authoritative interpretation of the law (as that is ultimately a matter for the courts)...'

4.4 Personnel

There are specific personnel issues as a result of this report. Staff resources would need to be identified and there will be a human and financial resource issue to consider.

4.5 Other Services

The undertaking of a community governance review clearly relates to all Services within the Council and has implications for improvement in Service Delivery.

4.6 Diversity

It is not considered that a Diversity Impact Assessment is required as part of the production of this report. Such assessments will be considered as part of any individual proposal.

4.7 Risk

4.7.1 Para. 26 of the Guidance says that '[p]rincipal councils will want to keep their community governance arrangements under review, and they should ensure that they consider on a regular basis whether a review is needed...'

4.7.2 To regularly decide whether a review is needed or not helps reduce the risk of community governance arrangements ceasing to keep up with the needs and aspirations of local communities.

4.7.3 The Council is currently at risk of having no option but to carry out a community governance review if it receives a valid community governance petition for the whole or part of the council's area. Para. 41 of the Guidance makes clear that a petition must satisfy certain conditions. Firstly, it must be signed by the requisite number of local electors as determined against three statutory thresholds.

<u>Area with 499 or less local electors</u>	At least 50% of that electorate
<u>Area of between 500 and 2,500 local electors</u>	At least 250 of that electorate
<u>Area of more than 2,500 local electors</u>	At least 10% of that electorate

Secondly, the petition must specify 'the area to which the review relates, whether on a map or otherwise, and refer to identifiable fixed boundaries.' (para. 43 of the Guidance). Thirdly, the petition 'must specify one or more proposed recommendations for review'. (para. 43 of the Guidance). 'These recommendations can be about a variety of matters including:

- the creation of a parish;
- the name of a parish;
- the establishment of a separate parish council for an existing parish;
- the alteration of boundaries of existing parishes;
- the abolition of a parish;
- the dissolution of a parish council;
- changes to the electoral arrangements of a parish council; and
- whether a parish should be grouped under a common parish council or de-grouped'.

- 4.7.4 There are two exceptions to this duty to conduct a community governance review upon receipt of a valid petition but these do not presently apply to the District Council.

Para.24 of the Guidance makes clear that ‘...the duty to conduct a review does not apply if:

- a) the principal council has concluded a community governance review within the last two years which in its opinion covered the whole or a significant part of the area of the petition; or
- b) the council is currently conducting a review of the whole, or a significant part of the area to which the petition relates.’

4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The Council’s Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

All other corporate implications have been taken into account. It is considered that the decision whether or not to voluntarily undertake a community governance review at this time is a matter of policy and ought to be agreed at Full Council. This report does not therefore refer to a key decision.

5. Background, Position Statement and Options Appraisal

Background

- 5.1 The Local Government White Paper entitled ‘Strong and prosperous communities’ published in October 2006 recommended greater local devolution i.e. ‘that local communities should be able to take more responsibilities for local issues affecting their area. Key to this approach is community empowerment, and the ability of various existing organisations themselves to see through specific projects to tackle local issues...’ (para.137 of the Guidance). Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables this.
- 5.2 The driving force behind the new powers is ‘help people and local agencies create cohesive, attractive and economically vibrant local communities. The aim for communities across the country is for them to be capable of fulfilling their own potential and overcoming their own difficulties, including

community conflict, extremism, deprivation and disadvantage. Communities need to be empowered to respond to challenging economic, social, and cultural trends, and to demographic change.’ (para. 54 of the Guidance).

5.3 At the present time there are eleven parish councils in the District of Chester-le-Street, namely Bournmoor Parish Council, Edmondsley Parish Council, Great Lumley Parish Council, Kimblesworth and Plawsworth Parish Council, Little Lumley Parish Council, North Lodge Parish Council, Ouston Parish Council, Pelton Parish Council, Sacriston Parish Council, Waldrige Parish Council and Urpeth Parish Council. The rest of the area is unparished.

5.4 The options are:

(1) not to undertake a voluntary community governance review at the present time or,

(2) to undertake a community governance review before being made to do so by the receipt of a valid community governance petition. If this option is considered the most appropriate then the following must be considered:

- should the scope of the review be based on an area specific to the potential Town Council for Chester-le-Street;
- should the scope of the review be far wider and look either to other communities where issues have been raised or the whole administrative boundary.

To decide on the most appropriate course of action it is necessary to understand what a community governance review (formerly a parish review) entails.

The Legislation and Guidance

5.5 A community governance review involves looking at the forms of corporate governance. This is no “one size fits all” vehicle. Para.33 of the Guidance states that ‘[w]hen undertaking the review they must have regard to the need to secure that community governance **reflects the identities and interests of the community** in the area under review, and the need to secure that community governance in that area is **effective and convenient**.’ Para. 35 of the Guidance states ‘[p]rincipal councils must consider the wider picture of community governance in carrying out their reviews...’

5.6 *Non-parish forms of community governance*

5.6.1 Para. 135 of the Guidance states: ‘In conducting a community governance review, principal councils must consider other forms of community governance as alternatives or stages towards establishing parish councils...’ There are ‘other types of viable community representation which may be more appropriate to some areas than parish councils, or may

provide stages building towards the creation of a parish council. There is sometimes evidence locally of an existing community governance infrastructure and of good practice which are successfully creating opportunities for engagement, empowerment and co-ordination in local communities.'

5.6.2 Examples of non-parish forms of community governance include area committees of principal councils, neighbourhood management programmes, tenant management organisations, area or community forums, residents' and tenants' associations and community associations.

5.6.3 Section 93(5) of the Act states that 'In deciding what recommendations to make [in the community governance review] the principal council must take into account any other arrangements...that have already been made or that could be made for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in respect of the area under review.'

5.7 *Parish form of community governance*

5.7.1 Parish councils have the advantage of democratic accountability. Para. 136 of the Guidance notes that 'what sets parish councils apart from other kinds of governance is the fact they are a democratically elected tier of local government, independent of other council tiers and budgets, and possess specific powers. This is an important distinction to make. Parish councils are the foundation stones for other levels of local government in England. Their directly elected parish councillors represent local communities in a way that other bodies, however worthy cannot since such organisations do not have representatives directly elected to those bodies.'

5.7.2 The Act helps to highlight the importance of parish councils. Para.122 of the Guidance notes: 'The Local Government White Paper underlined the Government's commitment to parish councils as an established and valued form of neighbourhood democracy with an important role to play in both rural, and increasingly urban, areas. Para. 49 of the Guidance states: 'Parish councils continue to have two main roles: community representation and local administration. For both purposes it is desirable that a parish should reflect a distinctive and recognizable community of place, with its own sense of identity. The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance.'

5.7.3 What can be the Style of a parish council?

Legislative provision refers to parish councils. However, parish councils can adopt alternative styles so that whilst legally they are still parish councils in substance a different style can be chosen. Before the Act the choice of "town" status was merely available as an alternative style. Since the Act there is on offer a further choice of alternative styles for a parish: community, neighbourhood and village. The important point to note is, as para. 106 of the Guidance, makes clear '...for as long as the parish has an

alternative style, it will not also be able to have the status of a town and vice versa.’ The decision as to be alternative style depends upon whether the review relates to a new parish or existing parishes. It is for existing parishes to decide whether to have one of the alternative styles with the review making recommendations as to whether the geographical name of the parish should be changed. It is for the principal council, ‘in the first instance, to make recommendations as to the geographical name of the new parish, and as to whether or not it should have one of the alternative styles.’ (see para.110 of the Guidance).

5.7.4 Should there be grouping or degrouping of parishes? A community governance review can recommend the grouping or degrouping of parishes by principal councils. As para. 112 of the Guidance observes ‘...unless they already exist as functioning parish councils smaller new parishes of less than 150 electors will be unable to establish their own parish council under the Act.’ ‘Grouping or degrouping needs to be compatible with the retention of community interests. It would be inappropriate for it to be used to build artificially large units under single parish councils’ (para.113 of the Guidance).

5.7.5 Should parishes be abolished and dissolved? Para.116 of the Guidance states: ‘While the Government expects to see a trend in the creation, rather than the abolition, of parishes, there are circumstances where the principal council may conclude that the provision of effective and convenient local government and/or the reflection of community identity and interests may be best met, for example, by the abolition of a number of small parishes and the creation of a larger parish covering the same area...’. But it is further noted at para. 117 of the Guidance that ‘...The area of abolished parishes does not have to be redistributed to other parishes, an area can become unparished. However, it is the Government’s view that it would be undesirable to see existing parishes abolished with the area becoming unparished with no community governance arrangements in place.’

5.8 How does one assess whether to voluntarily undertake a review? The Council has the discretion under the Act to undertake a community governance review at any time it wishes and to assess whether to do so para. 28 of the Guidance states ‘[p]rincipal councils should use their knowledge and awareness of local issues when deciding whether to undertake a review...’

5.9 Para. 26 of the Guidance suggests that ‘it would be good practice for a principal council to consider conducting a review every 10 -15 years – except in the case of areas with very low populations when less frequent reviews may be appropriate.’

5.10 Examples of when a review should be avoided are given in the Guidance. Para. 28 states ‘...principal councils should avoid starting a community governance review if a review of a district, London borough or county council electoral arrangements is being, or is about to be, undertaken.

Ideally, community governance reviews should be undertaken well in advance of such electoral reviews, so that the Boundary Committee for England in its review of local authority electoral arrangements, and the Electoral Commission, can take into account any parish boundary changes that are made. The Electoral Commission can provide advice on its programme of electoral reviews.'

- 5.11 The timetable of any community governance review must allow a reasonable time for the formulation of terms of reference, consultation of interested stakeholders, for consideration of the evidence following that consultation, for the decision to be made and (if it is for a community governance order to be made) for implementation (including publication) (see para.38).
- 5.12 What should the terms of reference be? If the Council is to voluntarily undertake a community governance review, it must decide the terms of reference and these must be published. If any modifications are made to the terms of reference, these must also be published. As para. 21 of the Guidance states '...the Government expects terms of reference to set out clearly the matters on which a community governance review is to focus. The local knowledge and experience of communities in their area which principal councils possess will help to frame suitable terms of reference. The terms should be appropriate to local people and their circumstances and reflect the specific needs of their communities.' One obvious constituent of the terms of reference is the area under the review. Para. 23 of the Guidance states 'Local people may have already expressed their views about what form of community governance they would like for their area, and principal councils should tailor their terms of reference to reflect those views on a range of local issues...'
- 5.13 What consultation? Section 79 of the Act requires the Council to notify the County Council of any intention to undertake a review and of the terms of reference. Following notification, section 93 of the Act requires consultation with the County Council and other local authorities which have an interest in the review. Para. 33 of the Guidance states '...principal councils will need to consult local people and take account of any representations received in connection with the review...' It will need to consult with other local bodies or organizations such as local businesses, local public and voluntary organizations including local residents' associations. In undertaking a review section 93(5) requires the Council to take these bodies into account.
- 5.14 What are the criteria for undertaking a community governance review? The statutory criteria in section 93 of the Act are set out in para. 51 of the Guidance. The community governance review within the chosen area under review must ensure that the community governance will be 'reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient.' The Council when considering the statutory criteria must 'take into account a number of influential factors, including the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.' (see para.52 of the Guidance).

5.15 What recommendations and decisions on the outcome of community governance reviews? The Council must make recommendations as to:

- (a) whether a new parish or any new parish should be constituted;
- (b) whether existing parishes should or should not be abolished or whether the area of existing parishes should be altered; or
- (c) what the electoral arrangements for new or existing parishes, which are to have parish councils, should be' (see para. 91 of the Guidance).

The Council may also make recommendations 'about:

- (a) the grouping or degrouping of parishes;
- (b) adding parishes to an existing group of parishes; or
- (c) making related alterations to the boundaries of a principal council's electoral areas.' (see para.92 of the Guidance).

In deciding what recommendations to make the Council must have regard to the section 93 criteria (see above at para.5.14 to this report) and must also take account any other arrangements (apart from those relating to parishes and their institutions) that have already been made, or that could be made, for the purposes of community representation or community engagement. (see para.93 of the Guidance).The Council must also take into account any representations received. The recommendations should be supported by evidence which demonstrates that the recommended community governance arrangements would meet the statutory criteria. The Council must publish its recommendations. In making its decision as to whether or not to give effect to its recommendations, the Council must have regard to the statutory criteria (see para.51 of the Guidance). The Council must publish its decision and the reasons for its decision.

5.16 What about implementation? Implementation is by way of a 'community governance order'. The Guidance states that any 'community governance order' should take effect from 1 April following the date it is made. If therefore the community governance review results in a 'community governance order', the commencement of a community governance review needs to take into account that the Guidance at para. 30 states: 'Reorganisation of community governance orders....creating new parishes, abolishing parishes or altering their area can be made at any time following a review. However for administrative and financial purposes (such as setting up the parish council and arranging its first precept), the order should take effect on 1 April following the date on which it is made'. The Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008 No. 626 deals with the setting of precepts for new parishes. The Guidance continues 'Electoral arrangements for a new or existing parish council will come into force at the first elections to the parish council following the reorganisation order. However, orders should be made sufficiently far in advance to allow preparations for the conduct of those elections to be made. In relation to a new parish council, the principal council may wish to consider whether, during the period between 1 April and the first elections to the parish council, it should make interim arrangements for the

parish to be represented by councillors who sit on the principal council.’
Para. 31 of the Guidance states ‘...where a new parish council is to be created, if the next election to the ward or division are not scheduled to take place for some time, the principal council is able to modify or exclude the application of sections 16(3) and 90 of the Local Government Act 1972 to provide for the first election to the parish council to be held in an earlier year, with councilors serving a shortened first term to allow the parish council’s electoral cycle to return to that of the unitary, district or London borough ward.’

- 5.15 Para. 37 of the Guidance states that the process of a community governance review should be completed within 12 months (calculated from the date of receipt of a valid community governance petition or from the date of the start of the community governance review). ‘Principal councils are required to complete the review, including consequential recommendations to the Electoral Commission for related alterations to the boundaries of principal area wards and/or divisions, within 12 months of the start of the community governance review (or on receipt of a valid community governance petition...)’

The Options

- 5.16 The potential options were set out in paragraph 5.4. As the council has decided to give consideration to the potential for Town Council it is felt that the ‘do nothing’ option would be an inappropriate course of action at this stage. At this point in time it is felt that Members ought to be minded to undertake a ‘community governance review’ although the scope is at issue. Anything other than a focus on the area affected by a new Town Council for Central Chester-le-Street could have significant resource issues for the council and may not be achievable within the lifetime of the council without significant redirection of resources and impact on service delivery elsewhere. This should only be done in conjunction with the County Council in view of the impact of Local Government Re-organisation, the need for up front resources to be made available and the sustainability of any proposals arising out of the review.
- 5.17 In order to address the **‘People and Place’** priority proposal it is felt that members ought to be minded to consider undertaking a review with a limited scope for the potential for a new Town Council. As it is felt that this ought to be done in partnership with the County Council the implications in terms of human and financial resources remain unknown. Whatever approach members adopt it is suggested that a further report ought to be brought back to the Executive with a view to making a further, more informed decision on implications and the detail of how the issue can be progressed.

6. **Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that:-

1. the new powers to establish parish councils are noted
2. decide whether or not to recommend that the Council voluntarily undertakes a 'community governance review' and, if so, determine its scope with a view to a further report being brought back to Executive to determine how progress can be made.

7. **Background Papers/ Documents Referred to**

- 7.1 Guidance on community governance reviews issued by the DCLG
- 7.2 Council Transition Plan March 2008
- 7.3 Report to Executive 12th March 2008 Implementation of the Transition Plan

Chris Potter

Head of Legal & Democratic Services

29 April 2008

Version 3.0

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APPENDIX

STEPS TO BE NORMALLY TAKEN WITHIN 12 MONTHS

START OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (by either a community governance petition or by voluntary decision by the Council)

DECIDE TERMS OF REFERENCE

UNDERTAKE CONSULTATION

MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

MAKE DECISION

IF CHANGED ARRANGEMENTS, MAKE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ORDER

IMPLEMENTATION

NB. ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	12 May 2008
Report from:	Head of Corporate Resources
Title of Report:	Review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
Agenda Item Number:	9

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report advises the Executive of the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.

2. CONSULTATION

Corporate Management Team has been consulted on the report and involved in updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

3. CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy underpins the Council's Corporate Plan. The financial strategy aims to provide the means by which we intend to achieve our vision and priorities as stated in the Corporate Plan, and result in priority based budgeting.

3.2 The Strategy covers a rolling three year period so that the authority can plan ahead. Key to the management of the Strategy is our budget prioritisation process whereby bids for growth can be ranked and we ensure that the use of resources is linked to the Council's overall vision and priorities. In effect, the Medium Term Financial Strategy provides the framework for the overall management of the Council's resources and the annual budget process for the next three years.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial and Value for Money

The financial implications are detailed throughout the Strategy. All service areas are subject to value for money assessments; action plans coming out of the assessments inform the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The value for money assessments and action plans will be monitored as part of our service plan monitoring processes.

4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications.

4.3 Personnel

The financial and service planning process, as outlined in the Strategy, involves workforce planning which clearly has personnel implications.

4.4 Other Services

The implementation of the Financial Strategy has implications for other services.

4.5 Diversity

Although the revenue budget does not make any central financial provision for equalities and diversities work, the corporate training plan and budget makes specific provision for equalities training and service plans embed equality into service delivery.

4.6 Risk

The financial strategy is supported by a risk assessment.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

The Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 requires the Council to consider all of its budgets, policies and plans in the light of their contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder.

4.8 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The Council's data quality policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.9 Other Implications

There are no other implications arising from the contents of the report.

5. THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 5.1 When the Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved in October 2006, it was agreed that it would be monitored by the Executive and, as a minimum, progress would be reported every six months - when the revenue budget and capital programme is set for the forthcoming year and when the final accounts for the preceding year are closed. It was noted, however, that the Strategy would be reviewed outside these processes when required, particularly when the exact impact of major financial changes, such as those relating to the housing stock are more certain.
- 5.2 The updated financial strategy appended to the report incorporates the effect of the 2006/07 outturn, the provisional 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 settlements, the 2008/09 budget decisions, the impact of housing stock transfer and the implications of "Business as Usual" decision-making in the light of Local Government Review.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Executive is requested to consider and approve the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.

AUTHOR NAME: Ian Herberson
DESIGNATION: Head of Corporate Finance
DATE OF REPORT 29 April 2008
VERSION NUMBER: 1.0

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MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2008/09 TO 2010/11

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1. SUMMARY

Key Headline figures from the proposals included in the medium term financial plan are as follows:-

	2008-09 £000	2009-10 £000	2010-11 £000
<u>General Fund Revenue Budget</u>	8,247	8,437	8,636
<u>Financed by</u>			
Government Grant	5,121	5,147	5,173
Council Tax	3,096	3,260	3,433
Collection Fund Surplus	30	30	30
Funding for Revenue Budget	8,247	8,437	8,636
Council Tax - Band D (£)	181.17	190.23	199.74
Council Tax - Band A (£)	120.78	126.82	133.16
Council Tax Increase (%)	2.9%	5.0%	5.0%
<u>General Fund Reserves</u>	390	1,828	1,468
<u>Housing Revenue Account Reserves</u>	1,798	0	0
<u>Capital Programme Spend</u>	1,800	1,350	1,350
<u>Financed by</u>			
Specified Capital Grant	150	150	150
Capital Receipts	1,200	1,200	1,200
Capital Receipts-VAT Shelter	450	0	0
Supported Borrowing	0	0	0
Funding for Capital Programme	1,800	1,350	1,350

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Chester-le-Street District Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy underpins the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Financial Strategy aims to provide the means by which we intend to achieve our vision and priorities as stated in the Corporate Plan, and result in priority based budgeting.

The Strategy covers a rolling three year period so that the authority can plan ahead; it includes expenditure forecasts and projected funding. These are based on assumptions which could change over time; and the Strategy will be reviewed so that the authority is able to respond to any changes.

Key to the management of the Strategy will be our budget prioritisation process whereby bids for growth can be ranked and we ensure that the use of resources is linked to the Council's overall vision and priorities.

The Strategy therefore:-

- Addresses the Council's vision and priorities as stated in the Transition Plan
- Covers a rolling three year period
- Includes clear assumptions for projections and estimates
- Shows links with other resource management strategies and takes a holistic view of the Council's finances
- Details our financial management arrangements
- Includes prioritisation processes
- Identifies risks and actions proposed to manage risks; and
- Identifies monitoring and reporting arrangements

In effect, the Medium Term Financial Strategy provides the framework for the overall management of the Council's resources and the annual budget process for the next three years.

This strategy is intended to be used for all stakeholders:-

▪ For the Executive and Council	- to decide how the available financial resources will be used
▪ For Managers and staff	- to reinforce their roles in the financial management arrangements
▪ For residents	- to show how the Council's financial strategy impacts upon service provision
▪ For taxpayers	- to demonstrate how the Council looks after public resources
▪ For partners	- to share the Council's vision and help identify opportunities for joint working

Financial planning and service planning is part of the same process, with clearly linked time scales. The financial planning and budget process is about linking budgets to policies.

Similarly, the service planning process requires services to consider their proposals to make efficiency savings over the next three years, and their plans to procure services in the future.

The Organisational Development Strategy sets out workforce planning guidance and this is incorporated in the service planning process, clearly identifying that workforce development planning is an integral part of business planning.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy provides a resource plan to underpin the delivery of the Council's local strategies and plans.

The medium term financial plan will be delivered through the implementation of the annual budget strategy and through following the agreed key financial principles.

The Council established its key financial management principles when it first considered the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and when it adopted its new financial procedure rules in May 2005. The financial procedure rules were revisited when the Council reviewed its Constitution in May 2006, but no changes were required.

Reserves

The Council has agreed that ongoing revenue expenditure should not be dependent on contributions from the general fund balance. It has reviewed the need for all earmarked reserves which resulted in some funds being returned to the General Fund. The Financial Strategy now includes the specification of a minimum general fund balance.

Additional Income

Additional income should be treated corporately and used to fund the Council's agreed priorities.

Fortuitous Savings

Similarly, such savings must be treated corporately.

Efficiency Savings

Savings resulting from managers' actions will be shared. Half will be retained in the service and reinvested in service improvements. The other half will be treated corporately. Together with the venture fund this acts as an incentive to bring forward innovative ideas for service improvement and/or new ways of working.

Service Specific Funding

Service specific funding should be allocated to the relevant service, even if it does not have to be ring fenced to the service.

However, the service manager must show what impact the funding is having on service delivery and the implications of the cessation of the funding.

The use of the additional funding should not result in any ongoing financial implications which continue after the funding has ceased, unless these have been agreed as budgetary growth.

Time Limited Funding

As with service specific funding, this should not result in any ongoing commitment for the Council. The funded project/initiative should cease once the funding dries up and this should be clear from the outset. If this has been used to test an innovative approach to develop services in accordance with our priorities, a full evaluation of the financial and service improvement implications would be needed before consideration is given to potential ongoing funding. This would also need to identify potential savings/reprioritisation of services to enable this to happen. Where the time limited funding will result in ongoing financial implications, these should be flagged up when the project starts. Effectively, this is then a growth bid and it should be subjected to the prioritisation process and, if supported, built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Treatment of Under and Overspends

At the end of the financial year, the Head of Corporate Finance may authorise the carrying forward of unspent budgets, having due regard to the following:-

- The Council's overall resources
- Agreements with external funding bodies, where funding can only be used for the purposes for which it was given
- Financial commitments already entered into on behalf of the Council
- The availability of funding to support financial commitments in future financial years
- The proposed applications of the funds to be carried forward

The Head of Corporate Finance will report all amounts carried forward to the Executive.

The Head of Corporate Finance may recommend that an overspending in a service area's budget is carried forward to the following year, and may therefore contribute to the first call on service estimates the following year.

Freedoms and Flexibilities

Virement is limited to budgets which are fully controllable by the service manager.

Virements between individual controllable revenue budgets within a cost centre can be approved by the Service Team Manager up to a limit of £5,000 in total per individual budget. Similarly, Service Team Managers can transfer amounts within controllable budgets between cost centres up to an overall limit of £5,000 (in total between the cost centres).

The agreement of Corporate Management Team is needed for any virement above £5,000.

For capital, any transfers between schemes must be approved by the Executive.

Invest to Save Initiatives

The Council has established a 'Venture Fund' for invest to save initiatives and to encourage innovation/new ways of working.

As part of the budget agreed by Council on 28 February 2008 the £107,000 balance on the Venture Fund was allocated to support the budget re-prioritisation to a single priority around "People and Places".

3. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Local Government Finance Settlement

For 2006/07, the Government introduced a new funding system which focuses on grant and not on notional measures of spending and council tax. A new 'four block' model for distributing grant is now used. Councils receive:-

- A relative needs allocation using Relative Needs Formulae (RNF)
- A reduction based on relative resources - the ability of Councils to raise Council Tax
- A central allocation based on a per head amount
- An allocation to ensure a minimum increase in grant.

The settlement included a number of methodology changes for environmental, protective and cultural services (EPCS):- 2001 census data replaced 1991 census data; the fixed cost element was updated from £300,000 to £325,000 per authority; and there were adjustments to take account of the new duty in respect of concessionary fares.

Spending Review 2007

The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, covering departmental allocations for 2008/09 – 2010/11 was announced on 6 December 2007.

Local Authority Business Growth Initiatives

All business rates are collected by Councils and paid over to a central, national pool. The revenue is then redistributed on a per capita basis.

The Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI) allowed Councils to retain some of the business rate revenue that has resulted from increasing the business rate base at a local level. This covered period 2005/06 – 2007/08.

On 9 October 2007, DCLG published a consultation paper seeking views from local authorities and other interested parties on how best the LABGI scheme can be redesigned to create a permanent incentive for Councils that encourages sustainable economic growth, fully integrated within the local authority finance system.

Business growth is measured in terms of the increase in a local authority's rateable value during a calendar year. A single payment is made to each eligible authority in the final quarter of the financial year. The payments are treated as unringfenced grants, which means that they can be used by authorities to fund their own spending priorities.

Business Rates and Council Tax Revaluations

The last review for business rates took place in April 2005. Transitional payments ensure that the impact of revaluations is spread over a number of years.

The 2003 Local Government Act introduced 10 year revaluations for Council Tax. Valuations were initially planned for April 2005, which would have affected Council Tax bills in 2007/08 but this has been postponed following the extension to the Lyons Inquiry into Local Government Funding. The Government has now stated that it would not expect to consider revaluation before 2011 and that, even at this point, there would need to be clear benefits of doing this.

Capping

The Government announced that it expected the average Council Tax increase in England in 2008/09 to be substantially less than 5%.

4. LOCAL CONTEXT

A new unitary council will come into being in April 2009. Chester-le-Street, as a District Council will no longer exist after next March. We now need to work with the County Council, other county Districts and our partners to ensure that this new unitary council successfully continues to deliver improving services.

The aim is to ensure that there is as little disturbance as possible to our customers, partners and other stakeholders. As it is not possible to deliver everything that we wanted to under our previous seven priorities we have had to review our ambition. Never the less we want to do the best we can for our communities in the remaining year of the council's life and hopefully that we can ensure some sustainable difference for our communities that can be transferred into the new organisation. In order to do this the Council have decided to focus on one priority which is called 'People and Place'.

This Transitional Plan sets out what we will be trying to do over the next year and was approved by Council on 27 March 2008..

The Transition Plan aims to:

- state the Council's aims, objectives and priorities during the transition period;
- build on the councils learning and continue its improvement programme;
- set out revised corporate activity and funding arrangements for transition period;
- clarify corporate transition programme management arrangements;
- identify how we will support and motivate and support staff through the process;
- set out the values and principles by which the Council will operate during transition; and
- establish terms of engagement with 'County Durham Council' Change Programme

In doing so the Transition Plan incorporates a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. It also takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process and provides a summary of the budget agreed. It sets out the council's new single priority of 'People and Place'. The Plan includes the council's Corporate Improvement Plan following its learning through comprehensive Performance Assessment last year.

5. KEY FINANCIAL ISSUES FACING THE COUNCIL

Housing Transfer

The Council transferred its housing stock to Cestria Community Housing Association. The position and requirements of the Council in embarking on LSVT were consistent: the Council did not seek to make any money out of the transfer but sought to get a broadly cost neutral position extending beyond this Medium Term Financial Strategy for the first 5 years having regard to the fact that we have 'in built' efficiency savings over that period of time and beyond.

A detailed financial model is available but was commercially sensitive to the Council as part of the negotiations with Cestria Community Housing Association. The Council will agreed the approval of the stock transfer at a Full Council meeting on 21 December 2007.

Leisure Options Review

The Council has considered options for the delivery of its leisure services. It wants to develop leisure services so that they are more economic, efficient and effective and to consider innovative ways to improve the services. The Council agreed, therefore, to carry out a full options appraisal of the delivery of sports, arts and leisure services. Phase 1 of the work has now been completed. Progress in respect of Phase 2 will now no longer progress in the light of Local Government Reorganisation as agreed by the Executive on 7 January 2008.

Procurement

The Council agreed its Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan in April 2006. The Strategy was planned to be implemented over the next three years and set out the Council's aims, objectives, framework, policies and actions relating to its future approach to procurement.

The purpose of the Strategy is:-

- "To ensure that all procurement decisions made by the Council will help to deliver the Corporate Plan objectives, produce Best Value by demonstrating Value for Money and the effective Use of Resources."

All Procurement decisions should be made in order to achieve community benefits and support the continuous improvement of service delivery in Chester-le-Street.

A key theme of the Strategy is the development of a 'business case culture' whereby there is a clear justification for the chosen method of procurement based on the authority's objectives.

A Procurement Strategy Group and Procurement Strategy Network were established, and a robust action plan developed and implemented.

The 2007/08 budget included a target of £50,000 for cashable procurement savings to be delivered by managers working with the Procurement Strategy Network. This has been delivered across the authority through various procurement initiatives.

The 2008/09 budget also includes a £50,000 target and the aim is to identify potential savings at both a service team and corporate level and progress this as part the wider efficiency agenda throughout the year.

The Procurement Strategy Network has now been combined within the Council's Extended Corporate Management Team who will monitor efficiency and procurement targets.

Joint Working

The authority is already committed to exploring joint working and operational partnerships with other authorities.

This commitment resulted in a successful partnership arrangement with Derwentside District Council for Procurement.

Local Government Review

The responsibility for setting the 2008/09 budget remained with Chester-le-Street District Council but the responsibility for setting the 2009/10 budget will be that of the new Executive of the Unitary Council following elections in May 2008.

In light of the direction dated 29 February 2008 which has now been issued by CLG under Section 24 of the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act, the Implementation Executive have issued a general consent in respect of:-

- (a) the disposals of land and entry into capital and revenue contracts identified in the District Councils' budgets for 2008/2009;
- (b) the completion of all disposals of land to which a District Council was contractually committed prior to 4 March 2008;
- (c) all disposals of land approved in District Council budgets prior to 2008/2009 where no contractual commitment currently exists and
- (d) all disposals of land where the value of the land concerned is less than £250,000. (For the avoidance of doubt this figure is not to be treated as cumulative with previous transactions referred to in Section 27(1) of the 2007 Act.
- (e) District Councils to enter into contracts under legislation relating to emergencies and civil contingencies and that the use of such powers be reported to the Implementation Executive or, in the case of contracts entered into after 1 May 2008, the Executive of the newly elected Council.

The need for Council's to continue normal day-to-day business is important and the County Treasurer has a framework in place to ensure that, where necessary, the Implementation Executive can consider issues which are outside the norm. A key part of the framework is a reliance on each Council's budget, confirming that appropriate provision has been made to cover planned disposals, major contracts, capital spending and appropriate use of reserves.

Following consideration of our budget summary and additional material supplied, we have the general consent in regard to revenue plans and those capital plans for which specific finance has been provided in the budget. However, we will need to consult with the County Treasurer further during the year:

- Where part of our capital spending is predicated on the basis of external/new finance becoming available during the year and/or
- Where we would seek approval from Members to proceed with projects which were specifically identified in your budget plans.

Where the Area Based Grant is spent during the year for purposes broadly related to the purpose of the grant and where no long-term liability is established it has been agreed that the general consent covers these circumstances.

The County Treasurer has emphasised to the Implementation Executive the onus these arrangements have placed on the Section 151 Officer and the Chief Executive to bring to his attention any proposals which, against the background of the Regulations, the framework and the expectation of Elected Members, we consider need to be brought to his attention.

6. REVENUE FORECASTS 2008/09 TO 2010/11 - GENERAL FUND

Chester-le-Street District Council will receive formula grant of £5.121 million in 2008/09. As the Medium Term Financial Strategy runs up to the end of 2010/2011, some assumptions have had to be made for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. At present, the Strategy assumes increases in Formula grant of 0.5% for each year in line with the provisional settlement.

The level of resources available to the authority to fund its revenue expenditure is also dependent on Council Tax levels. The Council Tax increased by 2.9% in 2008/09; for future years the financial strategy currently assumes Council Tax increases of 5.0%, year on year. The projections also show how available resources will vary if Council Tax levels differ from the level originally assumed. (Table 2).

Table 1

	2008/09		2009/10		2010/2011	
	£m	Increase	£m	Increase	£m	Increase
Formula Grant	5.121	+50,708 1%	5.147	+25,607 0.5%	5.173	+25,735 0.5%
Income from Council Tax (5% increase) and Collection Fund Surplus	3.126	+68,000 2.2%	3.290	+164,000 +5.2%	3.463	+173,000 5.3%
Total Resources	8.247	+118,708 1.5%	8.437	+189,607 +2.3%	8.636	+198,735 +2.4%

Assumptions

2008/09 Taxbase = 17,086.65; Band D Tax = £181.17
 2009/10 Taxbase = 17,136.65; Band D Tax = £190.23
 2010/11 Taxbase = 17,186.65; Band D Tax = £199.74

The following table shows the effect of different options for Council Tax increases on the total resources available. The amount of Formula Grant assumed is the same as that shown in Table 1.

Table 2

	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	2010/11 £m
2% increase	8.219	8.408	8.606
2.5% increase	8.234	8.424	8.622
3% increase	8.250	8.440	8.639
3.5% increase	8.265	8.456	8.656
4.0% increase	8.280	8.472	8.672
4.5% increase	8.295	8.487	8.689
5.0% increase	8.309	8.503	8.706

Tax Levels

The table below shows the band D Council Tax which results from varying percentage increases.

Table 3

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
2% increase	179.58	183.17	186.84
2.5% increase	180.46	184.97	189.60
3% increase	181.34	186.78	192.39
3.5% increase	182.22	188.60	195.20
4.0% increase	183.10	190.43	198.04
4.5% increase	183.98	192.26	200.91
5% increase	184.86	194.11	203.81

The revenue projections for the next three years are summarised below:-

Table 4

	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000
Starting Position	8,100	8,247	8,437
Plus unavoidable growth	552	500	500
Less savings already identified	(270)	-	-
Less net savings to be found	(135)	(310)	(301)
Base budget for the year matches funding available	8,247	8,437	8,636

2008/09

The unavoidable growth identified for 2008/09 comprises the pay increase, removing the planning delivery grant and LABGI grant from the budget in its entirety and an increase in the recycling budget. Again, bids for growth coming out of the service planning process will be in addition to this.

2009/10 and 2010/11

The only unavoidable growth shown here is that resulting from the pay increase.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

The Council transferred its housing stock to a Registered Social Landlord at the end of 2007/08 (4th February 2008); consequently, the Medium Term Financial Strategy does not project the HRA position beyond the next financial year. The financial implications of stock transfer have been incorporated in the General Fund revenue projections and are outlined further in section 5 of the Strategy - Issues Facing the Council.

The balance on the HRA at the time of stock transfer is expected to be £1.798 million. This is available to the General Fund and the summary on page 1 reflects the estimated use of the balance in future years.

7. CAPITAL FORECASTS 2008/09 - 2010/11

The Council's Capital Programme is divided into two areas: regeneration, and other services.

Although the Council receives some specific capital grants and has been extremely successful in attracting external funding, the whole capital programme is extremely dependent on asset sales.

The Council has taken the opportunity to use all of its capital receipts resulting from the sale of housing land for the provision of affordable housing and regeneration schemes. By doing this the Council is able to retain all of its housing receipts for local use. This does mean that the funding for other services is dependent on the proceeds of sales from non-housing land.

The Capital Working Group, chaired by the Executive Lead Member for Finance, monitors capital expenditure and funding and is involved in the prioritisation of new bids.

In addition, the Council benefits from Specified Capital Grants to help meet the costs of Disabled Facilities Grants.

The total funding for the next three years is summarised below:-

	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	Total £000
Asset Sales	1,200	1,200	1,200	3,600
VAT Shelter	450	0	0	450
Specified Capital Grant	150	150	150	450
	1,800	1,350	1,350	4,500

The Council's I.T. Strategy for 2006-2009 has recently been updated. Beyond 2007/08 it only includes outline estimates of the scale of investment required and recognises that a business case will be developed for each potential development. The business case will assess the benefits to the Council and its customers against the costs of procurement, implementation and management.

At present, there are no ongoing commitments beyond 2007/08, meaning that resources totalling £1.2 million in 2008/09 will be available for regeneration and general fund schemes. This figure is based on a conservative estimate of the proceeds from asset sales.

The authority is pro-active in its approach to securing s106 agreements resulting in funding for schemes associated with new developments and agreeing significant developers' contributions as part of land sale contracts. In total, funding currently agreed through these processes amounts to £2.1million at present.

The proposed replacement Local Plan - the Local Development Framework - provides an opportunity to develop our current approach to s106 obligations, including widening the scope of agreements and the development of firmer guidance on such issues as payment matrices.

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Council adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice 'Treasury Management in Public Services' in 27 March 2003.

All Treasury Management activities are undertaken within the procedures set out in the Code and the Council employs external Treasury Management consultants to advise on its treasury management strategy and provide data and interest rate forecasts to assist in planning and reducing the impact of unforeseen adverse interest rate movements. Wider treasury activities also include managing the Council's cash flows, its previous borrowing activities and the investment of surplus funds. These activities are structured to manage risk foremost and then optimise performance.

In accordance with the Code's requirements, the Council agreed its Treasury Management Strategy, including Prudential Indicators for 2007/08 - 2009/10, on 1 March 2007.

The table below shows the Council's Capital Financing Requirement which is the Council's underlying indebtedness for a capital purpose.

	2008/09 Estimated Projection £m	2009/10 Estimated Projection £m	2010/11 Estimated Projection £m
CFR – Non Housing	3.80	3.65	3.50
CFR - Housing	0	0	0
Total CFR	3.80	3.65	3.50
Borrowing	0	0	0
Other long term liabilities	0.04	0.04	0.04
Total Debt 31 March	0.04	0.04	0.04

This reflects the fact that the Council became debt free following the transfer of the housing stock.

The Council's investment policy is governed by DCLG (previously ODPM) guidance which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy. The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Council to set performance indicators to assess the adequacy of the Treasury function over the year. These are district historic indicators as opposed to the prudential indicators. The latest CIPFA Treasury Management Statistics, which are for the year 2005/06, show:-

Borrowing - gross average rate of interest on all external debt for the Council was 5.57% as compared with all English non-metropolitan districts' rate of 6.19%.

Investments - average rate of interest on all external investments was 4.61% as compared with all English non-metropolitan districts' rate of 5.02%.

The Council is aware of the risks of passive management of the treasury portfolio and, with the support of Butlers, the Council's advisers, has pro-actively managed its treasury position. The Council continues to utilise historically low borrowing costs and complies with its internal and external procedural requirements. There is little risk of volatility of costs in the current debt portfolio as the interest rates are predominantly fixed, utilising long-term loans.

The Council's investments comprise of reserves and balances, including unused capital receipts, income from government grants, council tax and business rates, and cash-flow timing differences between income and expenditure.

Clearly capital receipts have a significant role to play in the Council's investments. Although these have been earmarked to fund regeneration schemes, there have been delays between the receipt and expenditure on the scheme.

The 2007/08 revenue budget includes £494,357 from interest on investments. This is considered a realistic prudent figure and improving upon this is very much dependent on the timing of capital receipts. Our cash flow and investment forecast is monitored and updated on a monthly basis, consequently the estimates of the investment interest will be revised to reflect our treasury management activities.

9. RESERVE AND BALANCES

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) published guidance on reserves and balances in 2003.

Reserves can be held for three main purposes:-

- A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows - this forms part of general reserves.
- A contingency to cushion this impact of unexpected events or emergencies - this also forms part of general reserves.
- A means of building up funds, often referred to as earmarked reserves, to meet unknown or predicted liabilities.

For each reserve held by a local authority, there should be a clear protocol setting out:-

- The reason for/purpose of the reserve
- How and when the reserve can be used
- Procedures for the reserve's management and control
- A process and timescale for review of the reserve to ensure continuity relevance and adequacy

Chief Financial Officers must take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority in assessing the adequacy of unallocated general reserves when setting the budget.

Chief Financial Officers have a fiduciary duty to local taxpayers and must be satisfied that the decisions taken on balances and reserves represent proper stewardship of public funds.

The level and use of reserves is determined by the Council, informed by the advice and judgement of the Chief Financial Officer. In order to help the Council reach its decision in respect of reserves, the Chief Financial Officer should report the facts that influenced his judgement and ensure that the advice given is recorded formally. Where the Chief Financial Officer's advice is not accepted, then this should be recorded formally in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The Council's reserves at the beginning of 2007/08 are summarised below:-

	£'000
General Fund reserve	390
Insurance reserve	176
Earmarked revenue reserves	1,134
	1,700

The total reserves are estimated to stand at £0.77 million at the end of 2007/08 and £2.57 million at the end of 2008/09 when the residual HRA balance of £1.8 million will be added to the general fund reserve.

The General Fund reserve is a reserve set aside for unforeseen events and is needed to help cash flow management. The Council is responsible for collecting the Council Tax for Durham County Council, Durham Police Authority, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority and the Parish Councils as well as itself. Instead of paying their share of the Council Tax as it is collected, the Council has to pay a proportion of the total due to the different organisations at specific times during the year, irrespective of whether the amount due has been collected. It is important, therefore, to have the general reserve available to meet these payments should this be required.

At £390,000, the general fund reserve represents approximately 4.8% of the net general fund budget (1.2% of the gross budget). The Council has agreed that the General Fund Reserve should not be allowed to fall below £349,000.

CIPFA's guidance note on Local Authority Reserves and Balances makes it clear that the factors which determine the appropriate level for balances can only be properly assessed at local level and stresses that decisions on the level of reserves should be set in the context of each local authority's medium term financial plan, not on short term considerations. The factors to be considered in determining the appropriate level of reserves include:-

- the treatment of inflation and interest rates in the budget;
- estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts;
- the treatment of demand-led pressures;
- the treatment of planned efficiency savings and productivity gains;
- the financial risks inherent in any new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or capital developments;
- the availability of other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions;
- the overall financial standing of the authority;
- the authority's track record in budget and financial management;
- the authority's capacity to manage in-year budget pressures;
- the strength of the financial information and reporting arrangements;
- the authority's virement and end of year procedures in relation to budget under/overspends;
- the adequacy of the authority's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks.

If the general fund balance is not maintained at an adequate level, the authority may not have sufficient unallocated resources to deal with unexpected liabilities and has reduced capacity to manage in year budget pressures.

The insurance reserve is needed to ensure the Council can fund its self insurance costs.

The earmarked revenue reserves are a variety of funds earmarked for specific revenue purposes. They include the planning delivery grant, finally earmarked for leisure activities and the Venture Fund.

Collection Fund Surplus

The Collection Fund Surplus is used to reduce Council Tax levels. Historically, this has been relatively small, for 2007/08 the District Council's share was £43,000. The Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes a surplus of £30,000 for both 2008/09 and 2009/10.

The projected tax base takes account of all expected major changes which may affect the property base of the district and a 98.5% collection rate is assumed when the taxbase for tax setting purpose is agreed.

The Council has recently decided to charge second homes the maximum of 90% council tax charge, thus giving the minimum 10% discount. This will have very little effect on the taxbase but the Council made a policy based decision to do this.

All expected changes in the taxbase have been incorporated in the financial projections.

Housing Revenue Account Reserve

The Housing Revenue Account Reserve is currently £1.3 million and is expected to be £1.798 million when the housing stock transfers at the end of 2007/08. The Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes that this will be available to the Council in 2008/09.

10. MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW PROCESSES

The Medium Term Financial Strategy will be monitored by the Council's Executive. As a minimum, progress will be reported every six months - when the revenue budget and capital programme is set for the forthcoming year and when the final accounts for the preceding year are closed. However, the strategy is reviewed outside of these processes when required, particularly when the exact impact of major financial changes, such as that relating to the Local Government Reorganisation, become more certain.

The financial management principles have been communicated and are understood by all service team managers and other budget holders. They have been incorporated in the new financial regulations which, again, have been widely communicated as part of the new constitution; training on the new financial regulations has been provided to ensure they are fully understood. Refresher training and training sessions for new staff will be scheduled as part of the Corporate Training Plan.

The medium term financial strategy has been drawn up with the full involvement of corporate management team and, will be communicated throughout the organisation.

Financial monitoring reports are considered on a quarterly basis by corporate management team; high level monitoring reports are submitted to the Council's Executive at the six months, nine months and year end position. The three Overview and Scrutiny Panels receive more detailed monitoring reports for the services within their remit, again at the six months, nine months and year end stages.

The Executive also receives quarterly corporate performance management reports which link financial and non-financial performance, including key strategic risks.

The authority's corporate performance management system links performance indicators (both national and local) with financial management data.

Consultation

The Annual Residents' Survey includes specific questions about the Council's budget. It gave some background information so that the questions could be put into context and asked residents to look at the costs, in terms of Council Tax, for each major service and asks whether they would be willing to pay more for the service, or have a reduced charge for a lesser service.

When the Council considered its 2008/09 budget, it took account of the outcome of the Residents' Opinion Survey and the views of the business ratepayers.

Business ratepayers are consulted as a matter of course prior to each year's revenue budget being set.

The Financial Strategy is published on the Council's website and residents and other stakeholders invited to comment.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Action
Projections about government funding are inaccurate.	Those assumed for 2008/09 and 2009/10 reflect the 2007 Spending Review. (Note that a 1% increase in formula grant means an increase in funding of £50,000).
Assumptions made in respect of pay and price increases are not correct.	Financial projections will be revised as the annual pay award is agreed. Pay inflation has been relatively stable over recent years. Pension figures may have to be amended in the light of new information from the pensions authority.
Income levels are not achieved	Budget monitoring arrangements flag this up at an early stage in the year so this can be quantified and corrective action taken if necessary.
Expenditure budgets not adequately controlled	Financial Management system includes controls to address this. Frequent, detailed budget monitoring reports and arrangements ensure this is picked up at an early stage.
Savings not achieved	Where savings prove to be unachievable, this will be identified through budget monitoring and reporting arrangements to enable corrective action to be taken.
Capital Receipts do not materialise	Capital Schemes dependent on the proceeds of planned asset sales do not start until the sales are certain. Only schemes with guaranteed resources can progress.
Unforeseen expenditure is identified for which there is no budgetary provision	Regular budget monitoring arrangements will identify problem areas and potential savings or additional income can be vired to fund the unforeseen expenditure in accordance with financial regulations.
Procurement target savings are not achieved	These have been allocated to each area and action is being taken to ensure that these are achieved. The work of the Procurement Strategy Network will help managers to achieve their procurement savings.

The review of local government could have implications for the Council's decision making processes as early as 2008/09. Clearly this would impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Local Government Reorganisation in Durham will be managed by a Joint Committee, which includes representatives from Chester-le-Street District Council.

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	12th May 2008
Report from:	Chief Environmental Health Officer
Title of Report:	Changes to the Disabled Facilities Grants Programme.
Agenda Item Number:	10

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to fully appraise Members of the changes to the Disabled Facilities Grants Regime (DFGs) recently introduced by the Government following a major review of the DFG programme.
- 1.2 The main changes to the DFG programme are detailed in Section 5 of this report and Members are asked to agree the following recommendations:
- (i) Note the report and the changes to the DFG programme.
 - (ii) Agree to amend and incorporate the changes into the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy which was agreed by the Council on the 24th November 2005 and reviewed by Executive on the 1st October 2007.
 - (iii) Agree to place a charge against adapted properties of owner occupiers where the cost of the DFG exceeds £5,000 limited to a maximum charge of £10,000 with charges lasting for a maximum of 10 years.
 - (iv) Agree that the Director of Development Services has the discretion to waive a charge where the placement of a charge may cause hardship or where due to the sensitivities of a case a charge should be waived and that any appeal against the Director's decision to be determined by the Executive whose decision will be final.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place between the Principal Occupational Therapist at Durham County Social Services, the Council's Home Improvement Agency and the Chief Environmental Health Officer. All are agreed that the changes to the DFG programme will update and streamline the programme. This in turn will reduce the current bureaucratic nature of the DFG process and improve both the speed of delivery of the DFG process as well as allowing the Council to tailor the service to the individual needs of disabled clients.

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE AND PLACE PRIORITY

- 3.1 Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory and form an integral part of the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy which clearly linked to the Corporate Plan within the context of supporting the Council's Housing Strategy and its overall obligations as a Housing Authority. There are no implications for the People and Place priority as set out in Council's Transition Plan and neither will the changes to the DFG process result in any departure from the Council's existing policies in particular the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

The maximum amount of grant available for a mandatory DFG has been increased from £25,000 to £30,000. This will help an increasing number of people for whom the current ceiling is not high enough to meet the full cost of the required adaptations as well as addressing the increased costs of carrying out the relevant works. Also because adaptations for children tend to be the most costly, increasing the DFG ceiling will have an immediate benefit for families with children. In practice very few DFG approvals in the Council's district exceed the maximum amount so it is not anticipated that this increase will have a detrimental effect on how quickly the Council's DFG budget is committed which in turn could lead to a shortfall in DFG funding during the financial year.

From April 2008 the 60:40 funding split for DFGs will be removed. Currently 60% of the funding for DFGs comes from the Specified Capital Grant with the Council being required to find the remaining 40% from its own capital resources. The Council will now receive a DFG allocation without a specified requirement to match this funding. The allocation received for this financial year is £150,000 with a current bid of £85,000 being made to the Council's Capital Working Group which will be prioritised along with other bids as and when capital becomes

available. It should be stressed that the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in its communication, DFGs – The Package of Changes to Modernise the Programme, expect the Council to continue to contribute capital funding towards the total DFG allocation at least to the previous 40% level in order to deal adequately with local demand for DFGs. Given the importance of providing DFG adaptations the Council will be expected to continue to prioritise this high profile area of its work.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Issues

There are no implications for local government reorganisation associated with this report.

4.3 Legal

By virtue of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, DFGs are mandatory with the proviso that the relevant works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled applicant and are supported by a referral from Durham County Council Social Services Department. In addition grants are assessed having regard to the statutory minimum standards necessary to meet the client's needs.

Subject to the agreement of Members a legal charge will be placed against the adapted properties of owner occupiers where the cost of DFG work exceeds £5,000 limited to a maximum charge of £10,000. This means that where the property is sold, or otherwise disposed of, the grant is repayable, subject to the above conditions. This charge will have the effect of allowing the DFG budget to go further in order to keep pace with the continued need for adaptations and will last for a maximum of 10 years. Provisions will be put in place where it is thought that the charge should be waived. (See Section 1.2 above.)

4.4 Personnel

There are no implications for personnel.

4.5 Other Services

There are no implications for other services.

4.6 Diversity

Disabled Facilities Grants provide a key source of financial assistance for disabled and vulnerable people in order to help them maintain their independence. The new changes to the DFG programme will help support

this assistance and ensure that care needs are tailored accordingly to meet the individual needs of disabled clients by improving the speed of delivery of DFGs and generally streamlining the DFG process from application to approval.

4.7 Risk

There are no risk implications in respect of this report.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The Council's Data Quality Policy has been fully complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other implications associated with this report.

5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL

- 5.1 The Disabled Facilities Grants programme provides mandatory grants for housing adaptations and helps approximately 35,000 disabled and older people each year across all tenures to live independently. The programme has proved to be highly successful and consequently the Government has recognised that in order to build on this success the programme needs modernising to reflect the changes which have taken place since DFGs were first introduced in 1990. Demand is constantly increasing and currently children and adults with disabilities are waiting too long to be helped.

The main criticisms of the DFG programme relate to the complexity of the system, the bureaucratic nature of the process and the continued pressure on funding. This has a direct impact on DFG applicants in terms of speed of delivery or the way in which the Council can tailor the service to individual needs. The programme has therefore been updated and improved and the main changes to the DFG programme are as follows:

- (i) Funding. Given the existing pressures on the DFG budget and in recognition of the important role that DFGs play in maintaining the independence of disabled and older people, the DFG budget has been

increased immediately by 20% taking the annual budget to £146 million in 2008-2009. This will increase to £156 million in 2009-2010 and to £166 million in 2010-2011. Over the next 3 years the total increase in funding is £45 million which represents an overall increase of 31% in funding to local authorities.

(ii) Maximum grant limit to be raised from £25,000 to £30,000. Details of this important change to the DFG programme are given in Section 4.1 above.

(iii) Changes to the Means Test. A number of changes have been made to speed up the DFG process and make it fairer. DFG applicants claiming Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits for those on low incomes will no longer be required to provide any further financial information in addition to these benefits. Additionally in applying the DFG means test Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit will no longer be counted as income.

(iv) Property Charges. Details of the proposed changes regarding property charges are given in Section 4.3 above.

(v) Removal of the 60:40 Split. Full details of this are given in Section 4.1 above.

(vi) Transfer of Social Housing Grant Funding for Adaptations. This is the separate funding stream which the Housing Corporation uses to support the DFG budget for adaptations in social housing. The transfer of this part of the Social Housing Grant (SHG) which amounted to £1.5 million annually has now been agreed with the Housing Corporation and consolidated into the main DFG budget.

(vii) Relaxing the DFG Ring Fence. Ring fencing means that money allocated for DFGs must be spent on DFGs. Initially the ring fence will remain but from 2008/09 the scope for use of the DFG will be widened to support any LA expenditure incurred under the Regulatory Reform Order 2002. This will give local authorities greater flexibility to use specific DFG funding for wider purposes, which may be more appropriate for individuals than current DFG arrangements allow. e.g. recycling stairlift schemes. From 2010-2011 the ring fence will be removed which in effect means that DFG funding could be pooled with resources from other programmes allowing local authorities to determine against local priorities how best to target these funds.

It is intended that work will be ongoing to continue to modernise the DFG programme and make it even more effective in future years. Members will of course be kept fully informed of any further changes which take place.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Members are asked to agree the following recommendations:

- (i) Note the report and the changes to the DFG programme.
- (ii) Agree to amend and incorporate the changes into the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy which was agreed by the Council on the 24th November 2005 and reviewed by Executive on the 1st October 2007.
- (iii) Agree to place a charge against adapted properties of owner occupiers where the cost of the DFG exceeds £5,000 limited to a maximum charge of £10,000, with charges lasting for a maximum of 10 years.
- (iv) Agree that the Director of Development Services has the discretion to waive a charge where the placement of a charge may cause hardship or where due to the sensitivities of a case a charge should be waived and that any appeal against the Director's decision to be determined by the Executive whose decision will be final.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO

7.1 Department of Communities and Local Government: Disabled Facilities Grants – The Package of Changes to Modernise the Programme.

Disabled Facilities Grants Programme: The Governments Proposals to Improve Programme Delivery.

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society.

AUTHOR NAME: David Farquhar
DESIGNATION: Environmental Health Officer
DATE OF REPORT: 29th April 2008
VERSION NUMBER: 1.0

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Chester-le-Street District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	12 th May 2008
Report from:	Director of Development Services
Title of Report:	Lifecheck Programme – Roll out funding
Agenda Item Number:	11

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 To provide members with details of the Lifecheck programme and associated funding to roll out the programme across the District.
- 1.2 It is recommended that Members delegate responsibility to the Communities for Health Sub Group, to produce a programme of activity to support the rollout of the Life check programme and that the programme is brought back to the Executive for approval.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The Director of Development Services and members of the Communities for Health sub group have been consulted on this matter and believe it appropriate that Members consider it. Consultations with members of the Health Improvement Group and Health Improvement Group Sub Group will take place once a decision has been made about the proposed areas of expenditure.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

- 3.1 The proposed programme supports the Transition plan and People and Place priority, particularly strengthening partnerships and partnerships for the future, as it aims to meet the needs of the community by working towards reducing health inequalities and improving the health and the wellbeing of the District.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

There are no financial Implications arising from this report. In terms of Value for Money, the Lifecheck grant brings additional resources into the Council, allowing projects to be delivered at no cost to the Council.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Issues

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report

4.4 Personnel

There are no personnel issues arising from this report

4.5 Other Services

There are no implications for other services arising from this report

4.6 Diversity

The Lifecheck programme will provide opportunities for young people across the District, allowing all children and young people to access health information and assess their own health needs.

4.7 Risk

This funding has been granted specifically to roll out the Lifecheck Programme. The Department of Health will be monitoring expenditure to ensure that the Lifecheck programme has been supported within the District. There is a risk to the uptake on the programme, which depends greatly on partnership working and cooperation of local organisations and young residents. Every effort shall be made to engage local service providers and young people in this process so as to reduce this risk.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

The Lifecheck Programme equips young people with the information and knowledge to make positive life choices in respect to personal health. Engaging hard to reach young people and raising their self esteem and self confidence reduces the likelihood that they will engage in risk taking

behaviour, therefore impacting on levels of antisocial behaviour, youth nuisance and crime.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other implications from this report.

5. Background, Position Statement and Option Appraisal

5.1 Communities for Health was launched in 2005, shortly after the publication of the Choosing Health White Paper. The aim of the programme is to support local authorities and their partners to encourage the involvement of the local community to take action against reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the District.

5.2 In 2007 the District Council were invited to take part in the Communities for Health programme and funding has been received for the delivery of projects to tackle public health priorities. A new, one off grant of £70000 has been made to the Council, to prepare for the rollout of NHS Lifechecks, planned for Summer 2008

5.3 The NHS Lifecheck is an online resource that is designed to offer advice and support on key areas of health. They are based around a straightforward questionnaire approach, which once completed, will provide the individual with information on supporting good health. There are 2 lifechecks due to be rolled out this summer, Early years Lifecheck and Teen Lifecheck.

Early Years Lifecheck

This online resource has been designed to help parents and carers of young babies, aged 5 – 8 months. It focuses on key areas that will aid the health of their baby, including safety, teething, learning, play and feeding.

Teen Lifecheck

This resource has been developed for use by young people aged 12 – 15 years. It concentrates on areas such as smoking, sexual health, emotional well being and physical activity.

- 5.4 The grant is to be used to promote the two new NHS Lifechecks, through local activity in the District. Suggestions of activity from the Department of Health include, supporting people to access internet enabled computers in locations such as children's centres, youth centres and community groups, promotional material and cascable training packages. However all activity must be targeted towards young people and parents and carers of young babies.
- 5.5 A subgroup has been developed to oversee the delivery of the Communities for Health Programme. Memberships includes representation from the District Council, including member representation, the Local Strategic Partnerships, the Health Improvement Group and the Primary Care Trust. As they are currently overseeing the wider Communities for health programme, this subgroup would be best placed to develop and deliver a programme of activity to support national roll out of Lifecheck. Plans for activity and progress updates would be reported to Executive for approval at future meetings.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members delegate responsibility to the Communities for Health Sub Group, to produce a programme of activity to support the rollout of the Lifecheck programme and:
- 6.2 The programme when drafted is brought back to the Executive for approval

7. Background Papers/ Documents referred to

- 7.1 Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier, Public Health White Paper, Department of Health, 2004

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28th April 2008
Version 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	12 th May 2008
Report from:	Director of Development Services
Title of Report:	Communities for Health – Grant aid for 2008-2009
Agenda Item Number:	12

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 To provide members with details of the Communities for Health Grant aid for 2008 -2009 and proposed areas of expenditure.
- 1.2 It is recommended that Members approve the proposed expenditure of the additional Communities for Health grant, allowing the continuation of the health trainer programme and the mental health awareness programme for another year.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The Director of Development Services and members of the Communities for Health sub group have been consulted on this matter and believe it appropriate that Members consider it. Consultations with members of the Health Improvement Group will take place once a decision has been made about the proposed areas of expenditure.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

- 3.1 The proposed programme supports the Transition plan and People and Place priority, particularly strengthening partnerships and partnerships for the future, as it aims to meet the needs of the community by working

towards reducing health inequalities and improving the health and the wellbeing of the District.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

The financial implications arising from this report are dealt with in section 5. In terms of Value for Money, the Communities for Health grant brings additional resources into the Council, allowing projects to be delivered at no cost to the Council. Moreover, the suggested expenditure of the grant allows the continuation of established services, which will expand on the health improvement work that is currently being undertaken, without any additional internal funding.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Issues

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report

4.4 Personnel

The personnel implications arising from this report are dealt with in section 5.

4.5 Other Services

There are no implications for other services arising from this report

4.6 Diversity

The proposed programme of expenditure will provide opportunities for local residents by reducing health inequalities and improving health in the District. The programme will be open to all members of the community, including young people and residents will be actively encouraged to participate, therefore improving community cohesion and social inclusion.

4.7 Risk

The additional funding could be used to further support the original projects, developed from the initial Communities for Health grant in 07/08. If the proposed expenditure of the additional grant is not supported, these projects will end after 1 year, limiting the number of people who can access these projects and reducing the impact on the improvement of health within the District. In addition, a new programme of expenditure will

have to be agreed for the additional £50000, which may result in a delay in implementation. This delay may result in the grant not being used as effectively as it could be, but moreover it would reflect poorly on the Council in performance reports to the Department of Health.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

As the Communities for Health grant works towards reducing health inequalities through community involvement, there is a possibility that projects will impact on matters of Crime and Disorder. Providing activities/projects and engaging the community to take ownership often reduces anti social behaviour and crime, especially if such projects are aimed at specific populations such as young people and those currently not engaged with services.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other implications from this report.

5. Background, Position Statement and Option Appraisal

5.1 Communities for Health was launched in 2005, shortly after the publication of the Choosing Health White Paper. The aim of the programme is to support local authorities and their partners to encourage the involvement of the local community to take action against reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the District.

5.2 Chester-le-Street is a health inequality spearhead area and in 2007 the District Council were invited to take part in the programme, receiving £100000 of funding for the delivery of projects to tackle public health priorities. An additional sum of £50000 has been granted for use in 08/09.

5.3 The initial sum of money (£100000) has been used largely to support 2 projects,

- The health trainer programme
- The Communities for Health, Mental Health Awareness project.

Project 1 - Health trainer Programme

- 5.4 The Health Trainer programme is being developed and delivered in partnership with the Primary Care Trust. Health Trainers will work with members of the community to support them to work towards behaviour change and manage their health needs. Support, advice and guidance can be given on a range of health topics and tailored support plans/action plans will be drafted to help the individual progress. Referrals into specialist services can also be made.
- 5.5 Money from the Communities for health grant was used to recruit a dedicated health trainer for Chester-le-Street (PCT staff work across the North PDA, Durham, C-I-S and Derwentside). In addition, the health trainer employed by the Council has a focus on working with young people and issues that they face, such as sexual health. This differs slightly from the PCT health trainers who work solely with adults.
- 5.6 The Health Trainer programme is currently being developed but should be delivering in the coming months. Staff are awaiting the final installment of essential training, which should take place at the end of May, when they will be fully skilled to start working with clients. A mapping exercise of all local providers has been conducted and links have been made with key agencies/organisations. Local venues and facilities have also been mapped, with the view to setting up drop in sessions in key areas. A great deal of interest has been shown in the project and names of prospective clients are already being collected. It is expected that this project will have a significant impact on engaging hard to reach people, who do not generally access traditional health services.

Project 2 – Communities for Health, Mental Health Awareness Project

- 5.7 As agreed in a previous report, a portion of the initial grant was to be used in conjunction with partners. The LSP were consulted including members of the Health Improvement Group, a policy group of the LSP. It was agreed that there was a gap in provision in terms of mental health and that this should be the focus of the new project. A sub group consisting of representatives from the District Council, the LSP and the HIG was set up to oversee the development of the project. Chester-le-street Mind were commissioned to deliver the project.
- 5.8 The project works with local employers, support groups and voluntary and community sector organisations in the Chester-le-Street District, to increase knowledge and awareness of mental health issues. Chester-le-Street Mind work with these organisations to deliver education and training on mental health issues that are specific to their needs. Part of this training includes the delivery of Mental Health First Aid, a new national

training programme which provides people with the skills to identify and help people with mental health problems.

- 5.9 The project has proved to be very successful. To date, over 150 local services providers have been contacted to take part in the project, over 70 of which have engaged and received training, information and support (across all sectors). 15 training sessions have been delivered to date, with more planned for the future. From the training that has been delivered, over 90% of attendees have rated it as excellent or good, with 100% of people saying that information will be cascaded throughout their organisation and will be used to further address mental health in policies and procedures.

Proposals for the 2008/09 funding

- 5.10 The £50000 additional grant could be used to continue supporting both of the above projects for an additional year. If not, both projects will terminate at the end of the 1 year contract.
- 5.11 The Health trainer programme could be extended for an additional year, allowing the project to have a greater impact on the reduction of health inequalities in the District. The Health Trainer employed by the Council currently has a temporary 1 year contract, which could easily be extended in line with the additional funding. To extend the project for 1 year will cost approx £35000
- 5.12 The remaining £15000 could be used to support the continuation of the Mind project. Although a reduction on the amount of money received in 07/08, this funding could help to continue the project in a number of ways,
- Continuing the existing project at reduced hours. A reduction in hours should be sufficient as a large number of organisations have already engaged with the project, so numbers should reduce as the project continues, therefore reducing the workload.
 - The money could be used for Mind to carry out more detailed work (developing policies, procedures etc) with the smaller number of organisations who are interested in further addressing mental health in the workplace
 - This sum of money could be used as match funding so that Mind could attract additional grants to continue running the project at the same capacity as it has been delivered throughout 07/08

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members approve the proposed expenditure of the additional Communities for Health grant, allowing the continuation of the health trainer programme and the mental health awareness programme for another year.

7. Background Papers/ Documents referred to

7.1 People and Place Local Government Reorganisation Transition Plan 2008

7.2 Communities for Health Programme, Report to Executive April 2007

7.3 Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier, Public Health White Paper, Department of Health, 2004

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