

Public Document Pack

22 January 2009

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, 2nd February, 2009 at 3.00 pm**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Templeman', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

R TEMPLEMAN

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Meeting held 1 December 2008 (Pages 1 - 8)
3. Public Speaking
4. To Receive Declarations of Interest
5. Forward Plan and Work Programme (Pages 9 - 18)
6. Executive Decision Tracker (Pages 19 - 20)

People and Place

7. Implementing the Transition Plan: Developing 'People and Place' (Pages 21 - 38)

Report Of Director of Corporate Services

A presentation on the achievement of the 'People and Place' priority will be made by the Action Learning Sets

Usual Business

8. 3rd Quarter Financial Monitoring Position (Pages 39 - 46)

Report Of Head of Corporate Finance

9. Review into the Future of unparished areas of Chester-le-Street (Pages 47 - 138)

Report Of Director of Corporate Services

10. Review into the Future of the Market Final Report (Pages 139 - 210)

Report Of Director of Corporate Services

11. Review into the Marketing of activities for young people Final Report (Pages 211 - 232)

Report Of Director of Corporate Services

12. Exclusion of Public and Press. To RESOLVE:

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

13. Community Facilities Report (Pages 233 - 280)

Report Of Community Development Manager

14. Write-Off Irrecoverable Debts (Pages 281 - 284)

Report Of Head of Corporate Finance

15. Land Matters (Pages 285 - 296)

Report Of Acting Head of Regeneration

16. Tenders for Delivery of Heart of the Village Pelton Fell
Report Of Acting Head of Regeneration

(Pages 297 -
300)

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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, 1 December 2008 at 3.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor L Ebbatson (Leader of the Council)

Councillor L Armstrong, (Portfolio Holder for Resources and Value for Money)
Councillor M Sekowski, (Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Partnerships)

Councillor C J Jukes, (Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning)

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

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), I Forster (Director of Corporate Services), C Potter (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), C Symmons (Assistant Solicitor), I Herberson (Head of Corporate Finance), J Elder (Acting Head of Resources), T Galloway (Director of Development Services), N Tzamarias (Assistant Director of Development Services), S High (Leisure Services Manager), M Keenlyside (Environmental Strategy Co-ordinator), L Dawson (Acting Head of Regeneration), J Johns (Economic Development and Tourism Officer), A Stephenson (Executive Assistant) and D Humble (Democratic Services Assistant)

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received from Members.

67. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 3 NOVEMBER 2008

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

The Leader proceeded to sign the minutes.

68. PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

69. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

70. FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Leader introduced the Forward Plan and Work Programme and suggested items that should be included between January and March 2009.

It was agreed that the following items be added to the Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme for February 2009:-

- Handing over the Baton Report
- Market Report
- Parish/Town Councils Report
- Presentation of the outcomes of the Action Learning Sets for Developing People and Place

Councillor Westrip spoke in relation to the Communities for Health – Mental Health Project Final Report which was scheduled to be presented to Executive in March and advised that further funding had been allocated towards this project.

He advised of a sub-group meeting that was to be held in January to consider arrangements within the New Authority and he hoped to get MIND to produce their final report sooner to tie in with that.

The Leader advised of a Meeting that she was due to attend with MIND and suggested that either the Director of Development Services or the Assistant Director of Development Services attend also.

The Director of Development Services suggested that following discussions, a report on proposals for the additional funding be included in the Work Programme.

It was suggested that clarification be sought on whether Durham County Council approval would be required on allocating this funding and that draft proposals be prepared in the meantime.

RESOLVED: “That the comments on the Forward Plan and Work Programme be noted and be updated accordingly.”

71. EXECUTIVE DECISION TRACKER

The Leader spoke in relation to the Decision Tracker. A number of verbal updates were given on Heart of Pelton Fell, Budget 2009/10, Sacriston Community Resource Centre.

The Acting Head of Regeneration spoke in relation to the Heart of Pelton Fell and advised that work was well underway and the contractors had started on site on the refurbishment. Regular budget meetings were being held with Capita and everything was within budget and timescale.

The Chief Executive advised of negotiations that were ongoing on the delivery vehicle at Pelton Fell to go beyond 2008/09.

The Head of Corporate Finance gave an update in relation to the budget which was being Officer led and driven by the County Council and explained the budget process.

The Chief Executive clarified that there had been no senior management or member involvement from this Authority in the prioritisation of budgets and that Officers had only provided information on possible savings.

The Acting Head of Regeneration gave an update on the Community Resource Centre in Sacriston that was now opened and that it was being well used by the community. The land adjacent to the Community was now ready to be developed as part of the village which was due to be started in February for completion in March.

The Leader referred to Item No. 4 of the decision tracker and queried whether a response had been drafted on the website to the petition on car parking. It was agreed that the Director of Development Services ensure that this was added.

The Director of Corporate Services referred to the employee survey and advised that in light of the Local Government Review it was now irrelevant to produce an action plan to deal with this.

He advised that Durham County Council had employed consultants to carry out a web-based employee survey on the value of their current employer and the future with the new authority and that there had been a 16% return across the County. The findings would be presented to CMT and then brought to Executive as well being included as part of the 'handing over the baton' report. It was agreed to remove this item from the Decision Tracker.

The Economic Development and Tourism Officer updated Members on the Hanlon tracking system that had gone live that day. She advised that once the Head of Service for Economic Development was appointed that she and a representative from Sedgefield District Council would meet with them to ensure this was taken over into the new unitary authority. It was agreed to remove this item from the Decision Tracker.

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

72. IMPLEMENTING THE TRANSITION PLAN: DEVELOPING 'PEOPLE AND PLACE'

The Director of Corporate Services gave an update in relation to the Developing People and Place report and highlighted the progress made to date. On Strengthening Partnerships he advised of the progress on the Community Cohesion project. Thanks were conveyed to Lesley Lines for keeping the 'What Wonderful Women' project on track.

He advised that there would be a presentation made to Executive in February on the Action Learning Set achievements.

RESOLVED:

- "1 That the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan be noted.
- 2 That the progress made in respect of individual progress and the comments made be noted."

73. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT JULY 2008 TO SEPTEMBER 2008

The Director of Corporate Services updated Members on the Corporate Performance Report July 2008 to September 2008 and summarised the achievements, non-achievements and the remedial action that had been taken that were listed within section 5.3 of the report.

The Leader proceeded to go through the contents of the performance information in the report and sought clarification on a number of issues. The Director of Corporate Services gave an explanation on the non-achieving performance indicators and confirmed that these issues would be flagged up at the next performance clinic.

Particular concern was raised by the Leader on the homelessness indicators and especially the length of time taken to assess a homelessness application. She felt that the actions proposed were unsatisfactory and that improvements needed to be made. The Chief Executive advised that because of the unsatisfactory performance he had held discussions with Cestria housing on the homelessness service and suggested that he discuss this further with the Leader to address the concerns that she had raised.

Councillor Westrip referred to the sickness performance indicators that were improving which he felt were worthy of acknowledgement.

RESOLVED: "That it be noted that Members considered and commented on the progress on improvements and the contents of the Performance Report in Appendix 1 of the report and it was agreed that the concerns raised by the Leader be addressed.

At this point Councillor Jukes entered the Meeting at 4pm.

74. POSITION STATEMENT IN REGARD TO SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

The Assistant Director of Development Services gave a background to the report in relation to the financial contributions held by the Authority that have been secured through Section 106 Agreements.

He outlined the current allocated funds and committed schemes that were to receive this funding throughout the District. He also spoke in relation to two 106 agreements that had unallocated monies attached to them and of the two potential schemes being considered by the Ward Members.

Councillor Sekowski sought clarification on the £10800 that was earmarked from the Miller Homes development at Pelton Lane Ends. He advised that discussions had been held on suggested schemes including a play area and Councillor Laverick's suggestion of a community garden within Pelton Roseberry Primary School but felt that the residents should be consulted on these schemes.

The Assistant Director of Development Services noted the comments expressed by Councillor Sekowski and confirmed that this matter was in hand.

In response to a query from the Leader on paragraph 4.2.3 of the report the Head of Legal and Democratic Services outlined the legal position on whether the new Authority would be bound by the decisions taken by this Authority. The Director of Corporate Services clarified that 106 agreements had to be relevant to the development and must be necessary as a result of that development.

In response to a query from Councillor L Armstrong, the Leisure Services Manager gave clarification in relation to Item No. 19 of the Section 106 Agreements in relation to the site of former Highfield Hospital, Highfield Rise and the access to the Northlands play area.

RESOLVED: "That the Executive notes the position in relation to Section 106 Agreements entered into by the Authority as detailed in the report and attachments."

75. MID YEAR FINANCIAL MONITORING POSITION

The Head of Corporate Finance spoke in relation to the Mid Year Financial Monitoring Position and outlined the key issues arising from this process and the actions taken to address them. He advised of the impact on reserves due to Local Government Reorganisation and the economic climate.

A summary was given on the Initial general fund forecast outturn as outlined in the table in section 5.2 and the action that had been undertaken to ensure that there was no overspend at the end of the financial year.

He referred to the table on 5.4 which indicated the impact the actions had already had on the revised expected end of year position and outlined a

number of solutions that had been identified to close the gap. Managers were working to ensure that the overspend was reduced but with minimal impact on service delivery.

The Head of Corporate Finance also spoke in relation to the General Fund Revenue Account and the consent to close the Housing Revenue Account on 31 March 2009.

Clarification was sought from the Leader on a number of projected overspends within Appendix B of the report including CCTV, Selby Cottage Childcare Centre, Golf Complex, Arts Development which were explained by the relevant Officers.

The Leader thanked Officers for the work that they had undertaken on the budget and asked that she be provided with a detailed analysis of reserves.

The Chief Executive explained the reasoning behind the recommendation in 11.2 in the report which was to approve the use of the HRA balance to fund the shortfall in projected Right to Buy sales.

RESOLVED:

- “1 That the Executive notes the financial monitoring information detailed in sections 5-7 of the report.
- 2 That the Executive approves the use of the HRA balance to fund the shortfall in projected Right to Buy sales amounting to £109,990.”

76. 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 2000, the public be excluded during the transaction of the following business because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.”

77. LAND MATTERS

Consideration was given to a report from the Acting Head of Regeneration on various land matters.

14 Redmires Close, Urpeth Grange

“RESOLVED: “That the application to acquire the land identified in Appendix A is refused on the basis that it is located in an open plan estate and to do otherwise could introduce an undesirable precedent that could undermine the general amenity of the area.

24 Gibside, Chester-le-Street

RESOLVED: That subject to the business as usual agreement with the County Council, the land be disposed of to the applicant for the purpose of a domestic garden in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's approved Land Disposal Policy.

36 Sydney Street, High Handenhold

RESOLVED: That subject to the business as usual agreement with the County Council, the site be sold subject to the standard terms set out in the approved land disposal policy and subject to written confirmation that the applicant had successfully removed the restrictive covenant that prevents development on this site. Also, should it be necessary, in order to facilitate the proposed future use, to relocate the multi-utility mast, then the costs of doing so should be covered by the applicant.

Land at Stella Gill Industrial Estate

RESOLVED: That officers are authorised to work with the applicant to identify alternative options to facilitate safe and well connected pedestrian access and report back to Executive with a preferred option.

6a Moor Court, Bournmoor

RESOLVED: That subject to the business as usual agreement with the County Council, a Deed of Release be issued to remove the restrictive covenant subject to the terms and conditions of the Council's approved Land Disposal Policy.

Wayleave agreement at Lingey House Farm, Sacriston

RESOLVED: That subject to the business as usual agreement with the County Council, and the applicant being responsible for all of the associated costs as set out in the Council's approved Land Disposal Policy approval be granted to issue a Wayleave to allow for the installation of the cables."

The meeting terminated at 5.05 pm

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme



February 2009

5 December 2008

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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 Westrip	Tel: 0191 387 2090
Deputy Leader and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: simon.westrip@bigfoot.com simonwestrip@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Cllr. Chris Jukes	Tel: 0191 389 1136
Regeneration and Strategy Planning Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: chris.jukes1@btopenworld.com
Cllr. Lawson Armstrong	Tel: 0191 3873195
Resources and Value for Money Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: lawsonarmstrong@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Cllr Mike Sekowski	Tel: 0191 3703416
Community Engagement and Partnerships Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: m.sekowski@metronet.co.uk michaelsekowski@Chester-Le-Street.gov.uk

How do I find out when the Executive is meeting?

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

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

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

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



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part One: Executive Forward Plan



February 2009

5 December 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)
Bad Debt Quarterly Report	Executive	February 2009	Jim Elder 0191 3872300	Acting Head of Resources Head of Corporate Finance Internal Auditor	In writing or by telephone, to the Acting Head of Revenue and Benefits or by email to jimelder@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Land Matters	Executive	February 2009	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
Land Matters	Executive	March 2009	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



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part Two: Executive Work Programme



February 2009



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)
<p>People and Place Action Learning Sets Presentation</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Ian Forster 0191 3872130</p>	<p>Workstream leads Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Services or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>
<p>Community Facilities Review Report</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Jorge Lulic</p>	<p>Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Community Development Manager or by email to jorgelulic@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – the future of the unparished areas in the District.</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>Revised date February 2009</p>	<p>Ian Forster 0191 3872130 Chris Potter 0191 3872011</p>	<p>Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Services or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk or to Head of Legal and Democratic Services or by email chrisspotter@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>
<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – The future of the market</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Ian Forster 0191 3872130</p>	<p>Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Services or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>

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<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – Marketing of facilities for young people</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>February 2009</p>	<p>Ian Forster 0191 3872130</p>	<p>Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Services or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>
<p>Real Power for Real People Handing over the Baton Report</p>	<p>Executive</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Ian Forster 0191 3872130</p>	<p>Workstream leads Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Executive Members</p>	<p>In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Services or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk</p>

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)
Communities for Health - Mental Health Project – Final report	Executive	March 2009	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Health Improvement Sub Group	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance Report April 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 Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk



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. 	March 2009	Progressing	Negotiations under way with landowners and prospective interested parties in the village.	Leila Dawson
2	2 June 2008	<p><u>Budget 2009/10 Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on financial planning on the formal budget process. 	February 2009	Progressing	Ongoing	Ian Herberson
3	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 	February 2009	On schedule	Ongoing	Leila Dawson

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: Executive

DATE OF MEETING: 2nd February 2009

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

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

ITEM NUMBER:

1 Purpose and Summary

1.1 In March 2008 the council adopted its Transition Plan for 2008/2009 and since that time significant progress has been made on the implementation of plan. The purpose of this report is to update members specifically on the implementation of the '**People and Place**' Priority, which has now been completed. Presentations by each of the Action Learning Sets will take place at the Executive meeting. The report also seeks Members approval regarding the approach to the 'Handing Over the Baton' report to the new unitary authority. This is the final '**People and Place**' Monitoring Report that will be considered by the Executive.

1.2 The Council has undertaken the following work undertaken as part of implementing the Priority:

- 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;
- Executive has agreed the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
- carried out a launch event on 13th May 2008
- worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to undertake a workshop in May;
- agreed to a single '**People and Place**' Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which had its first meeting in June;

- agreed a Draft '**People and Place**' Scrutiny Work programme;
- undertaken three Scrutiny reviews which are the subject of separate reports to this Executive;
- agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan of which this report is the last.
- agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees and launched the project .
- Commenced time lining and crosscutting work to re-evaluate the scale and practicality of delivering the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan;
- Set up a resource centre and commenced a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities in early July.
- Implemented the Delivery plan

1.3 With specific regard to the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan, the progress made with the high level proposals since the last report are set out in Appendix 1. It is considered that the council has made significant achievement against the delivery plan and this will be highlighted in the presentation. In view of this it is considered that the single priority of 'People and Place' has effectively been achieved.

1.4 Chester-le-Street District Council has worked together in partnership with its communities to achieve significant change and improved well being over the last five years. As the Council will no longer exist as an organisation from 1st April 2009, the progress made by the District's communities will need to be sustained. It is therefore proposed to produce a written document, supported by a DVD with key verbal messages, presentations and other methods to ensure the unitary authority understand the progress made so it can build the learning into the way it operates in Chester-le-Street. The document will be known as the 'Real Power for Real People; Handing over the Baton Report' and will be a celebration of what the communities have achieved with the support of its council and partners. The final edition of District News will be the public version of the 'Handing over the Baton Report'.

1.5 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress made in implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Note the progress made in respect of individual progress as outlined in this report and comment on issues raised
- 3) Note the presentations by the Action Learning Sets on the progress made in implementing the 'People and Place Priority'
- 4) Agree the approach to the 'Handing over the Baton' report to the new authority

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 and its implementation to date.

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, replaced the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan included 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 provides members with an outline of progress made in 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 has achieved value for money in a year of significant challenge. In delivering **'People and Place'** resources may need redirecting during the forthcoming year. Action Learning Set leads and relevant Executive members were responsible for the allocated budgets to deliver the four strands of the **'People and Place'** priority.

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 and specifically the '**People and Place**' priority. 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 has taken place. The report includes an approach to the handing over of achievements through the Handing over the Baton Report'

4.3 Legal

It is not considered that there is any significant legal implications in respect of the recommendations in this report.

4.4 Personnel

How the council has supported 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. The approach to '**People and Place**' was 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. One of the key risks to delivery of business as usual was the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council has faced depleting human resources and account has been taken of the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents. This process has ensured that the delivery plan has effectively been achieved.

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 had 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 were clear risks to the organisation in failing to continue to maintain and improve on its progress in its remaining year. The council has remained committed to improving its services although it faced difficult capacity challenges through the transition period. The council undertook 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 was the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council has been faced with depleting human resources and account has been taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents and managing human resources. It is considered that achievement of the delivery plan has been the result of effective and successful risk management. The Audit Commission is shortly to report on the council's final Annual Audit and Inspection letter and it is expected that the council's achievements will be recognised in this letter.

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. The information has been communicated to the community and stakeholders by inclusion on the web-site. The Transition Plan has been made available to staff and Members through the intranet and a web-site has been developed. The Transition Plan has been made available to the County Council. An Intranet site for 'People and Place' has been established and work has been undertaken to update the council's own website to communicate the new priority. A '**People and Place**' brand has been developed and this has been used to co-ordinate, communicate and celebrate achievements in the coming months. Appendix 1 includes achievements that need to be communicated and celebrated and work is ongoing with the Communications Team to ensure that this happens. Achievements will be included in the Handing over the Baton Report and the final edition of District News. The Handing over the Baton report will be presented to Council in March and subsequently to the County Council before 'vesting day'.

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' was approved by the council in March 2008 The Transition Plan aimed 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 incorporated a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. It also took account of the 2008/2009 budget process and provides a summary of the budget agreed. It set out the council's new single priority of '**People and Place**'. The Plan included the council's Corporate Improvement Plan following its learning through Comprehensive Performance Assessment last year. The new priority of '**People and Place**' has now been fully 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 was 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 undertaken the following work undertaken as part of implementing the Priority:

- 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;
- Executive has agreed the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
- carried out a launch event on 13th May 2008
- worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to undertake a workshop in May;
- agreed to a single **'People and Place'** Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan which had its first meeting in June;
- Agreed a Draft **'People and Place'** Scrutiny Work programme
- agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan of which this report addressees
- agreed an approach to delivering the **'People and Place'** Personal Profile for all employees and launched the project .
- Commenced time lining and crosscutting work to re-evaluate the scale and practicality of delivering the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan;
- Set up a resource centre and commenced a programme of weekly member engagement opportunities in early July.
- Implemented the Delivery Plan

5.5 In terms of the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority the Action Learning Sets have been working with Executive Members implement Delivery Plans. This work has now been completed. There will be a presentation to members at the Executive on overall achievements. The latest achievements and issues for each of the themes are as follows:

Partnerships for Futures

- Implementation of Hanlon Skills Register
- Delivery of Young Entrepreneurs project
- Progress being made towards a training centre being established at Stella Gill Industrial Estate by the end of 2009
- Interviews for Executive Director were scheduled for 30 January 2009

Investment in the Town Centre

- The Christmas Lights switch on event took place on 22 November 2008 and was a great success, with excellent publicity

- A Christmas Food Fair took place on 13 December 2008 to raise awareness on environmental issues, unfortunately the bad weather had an adverse effect on the event
- Unfortunately due to illness no further action has been taken regarding the meeting between the Town Centre Forum and Business Improvement District Steering Group
- Final draft of research report presented to Task and Finish Group on 17 November 2008 and members comments included
- The '**People and Place**' Overview and Scrutiny Committee' agreed their review report at their meeting on 14th January 2009
- The planning application for the locator boards has been approved and boards will be installed as soon as possible

Strengthening Partnerships

- Filming of women's achievements now complete for 'What Wonderful Women' project and DVD shown to project group
- Launch event to be held at Beamish Hall on 8 March 2009 to coincide with International Women's Day
- 15 young people signed up to the new Youth Forum and first informal meeting held on 13 January 2009
- Action Packed Futures event held on 13 December 2008 at the Civic Heart, but was adversely affected by poor weather conditions
- Meeting held on 15th January 2009 to consider the returned questionnaires from the voluntary organisations and ways of promoting their work to the new unitary authority
- New Community Cohesion Officer in position and engaging with communities
- ICT support service level agreements signed by community centres; Sacriston, Grange Villa and CVS
- Building work started on Grange Villa sports changing facilities
- Work has commenced on the implementation of the online booking system for the community centres
- Progress made with credit union at Pelton
- Content Management training dates arranged for community centre volunteers

Neighbourhoods

- All projects successfully completed, a summary of which will be included in the 'Handing over the Baton' report
- All events as part of the Local Democracy week activities have been successfully undertaken with a possibility of a further performance of 'The Word' in late January 2009.

- A full colour booklet of the DIY Neighbourhoods toolkit is currently in the final consultation stage prior to the printing process and local distribution
 - All trees, bulbs and seats in all parish areas have now been completed as part of the Chester in Bloom project
 - All Anti-Social Behaviour Projects have been completed as agreed. The Open your Eyes campaign continues to be promoted to residents groups schools
- 5.6 A significant amount has been achieved in setting up the Action Learning Sets, developing and rationalising the delivery projects and implementing the projects agreed. A couple of actions are behind target including the meetings to develop the Business Improvement District, setting up lease agreement and disposal of land for Stella Gill Community Allotment and setting up credit unions at Sacriston. Appropriate actions are being implemented to address these and the redesigning of Grange Villa website also still needs to be undertaken.
- 5.7 Successes to celebrate include the programme of events for the Town Centre, appointment of the Community Cohesion Officer, the first meeting of the Youth Forum, completion of filming for 'What Wonderful Women' project and agreement of launch date, the Young Entrepreneurs project and the completion of all projects in the 'Neighbourhoods' theme. All achievements will be included in the 'Handing over the Baton' report, to the new unitary authority.
- 5.8 It is considered that the council has made significant achievement against the delivery plan and this will be highlighted in the presentation. In view of this it is considered that the single priority of '**People and Place**' has effectively been achieved. This is the final '**People and Place**' monitoring report to the council Executive.
- 5.8 Chester-le-Street District Council has worked together in partnership with its communities to achieve significant change and improved well being over the last five years. As the Council will no longer exist as an organisation from 1st April 2009, the progress made by the District's communities will need to be sustained. It is therefore proposed to produce a written document, supported by a DVD with key verbal messages, presentations and other methods to ensure the unitary authority understand the progress made so it can build the learning into the way it operates in Chester-le-Street. The document will be known as the 'Real Power for Real People; Handing over the Baton Report' and will be a celebration of what the communities have achieved with the support of its council and partners. The final edition of District News will be the public version of the 'Handing over the Baton Report'. There will be a short presentation of the detail of the report at the Executive

6. **Recommendations**

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress in implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Note the progress made in respect of individual progress and comment on the issues raised
- 3) Note the presentations by the Action Learning Sets on the progress made in implementing the 'People and Place Priority'
- 4) Agree the approach to the 'Handing over the Baton report' to the new unitary authority

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
- 7.4 Report to Executive 12th May 2008
- 7.5 '*People and Place*' Action Learning Set Monthly monitoring reports

Ian Forster
Director of Corporate Services
14 January 2009
Version 1.0

Ian Forster Tel 0191 3872130 e mail IanForster@chester-le-street.gov.uk



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 1
'People and Place' Theme	Partnerships for Futures
Milestone and outcome achievement	Implementation of Hanlon Skills Register
	Delivery of Young Entrepreneurs Project
	Progress being made towards a training centre being established at Stella Gill Industrial Estate, as part of Ambic's business planning. Discussions are planned with the County Council, with a view to a training centre being in place towards the end of 09.
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	Appointment of Executive Director – interviews scheduled for 30 January 2009.
Issues to be resolved and who by	Jenny Johns
Successes to communicate and celebrate	Both public and private sector support has been gained for the project, with the following organisations agreeing to sit on the board to guide and provide strategic oversight to Partnerships for Futures. Board members consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beamish Museum • Durham County Cricket Club • Enterprise Agency • Hermitage School • New College Durham • Ambic Ltd • Chester-le-Street District Council
Comments	None



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 2
'People and Place' Theme	Investment in Town Centre
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>The programme of events</p> <p>The Christmas Light Switch On event took place on Saturday 22 November and involved 5 local school choirs and singers from Chester-le-Street Civic Chior, Churches together and others. A group led a mass sing-along from Birmingham - Beautiful Black Voices; this was a great success and the whole of the civic heart was packed with young people, their parents and other family members. Publicity was excellent and we had coverage in the Sunderland Echo, Northern Echo, Journal and Evening Chronicle, BBC Radio Newcastle, Durham FM and Sun FM. The Chairman of the Council made a speech and the lights will switch on at 1630hrs. Members of the public used hand torches to spread light around the civic heart when the lights were switched on.</p> <p>The Business Association were very complimentary about the Christmas Celebrations and the air of celebration that the Christmas lights provided this year.</p> <p>A Christmas Food Fair took place on 13 December 2008, the event was held to raise awareness on environmental issues and the availability of high quality locally produced goods. 12 traders turned up on the day along with an environmental magician, a cookery demonstration road show and awareness raising companies demonstrating recycling and energy efficiency.</p> <p>Unfortunately the weather had an adverse effect on the event as well as the market. Driving rain and cold conditions meant that three stallholders did not attend nor did a couple of exhibitions that were arranged. All the stalls made money or at least broke even and confirmed on the day that they would be prepared to attend future events. Those residents that attended the event were very positive in their comments and asked if future events such as this would be held again.</p> <p>The cookery demonstration was well received along with the quality of the food samples given out.</p>

<p>Milestone and outcome achievement</p>	<p>Work to develop a Business Improvement District has moved on a little</p> <p>A meeting took place between the Leader, Chief Executive and the Town Centre Development Manager to discuss the direction of the terms of reference and purpose of a private sector led Steering Group and it's purpose relating to Town Centre Master Plan.</p> <p>Finance for developing the BID has now been released and the process to recruit a part-time temporary assistant to begin consulting and communicating with businesses across the town centre has commenced. An inaugural meeting of a Town Centre Forum and BID Steering Group will take place when political membership has been decided. Unfortunately, due to illness, no further action has been taken.</p> <hr/> <p>Work to Research the Future of the Market.</p> <p>The final draft of the research report was delivered on Monday 17 November. This was taken to the Task and Finish Group and used as the basis for a facilitated discussion. Members' recommendations and comments were recorded and added to the report.</p> <p>The locator board maps have been designed and were presented to the business forum at its meeting on 12 November. The planning application has been approved and arrangements to have the boards installed will be made as soon as possible.</p> <p>The money set aside for football counters was used to purchase new timers for the Christmas lights, which were at the end of their safe working life. They were installed throughout the town centre during the first week of November 2008.</p>
<p>Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed</p>	
<p>Issues to be resolved and who by</p>	
<p>Successes to communicate and celebrate</p>	<p>The events programme.</p>
<p>Comments</p>	



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 3
'People and Place' Theme	Strengthening Partnerships
Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>What Wonderful Women's Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Filming of women's achievements stories is now complete. Final edited draft version of the DVD being considered for approval by steering group on 14th January. - Currently completing ring-bound version of stories and archives. - Working to complete the build up of stories and archives on the What Wonderful Women website (www.whatwonderfulwomen.org.uk/) - Launch event being organised to coincide with International Women's Day on 8th March. Event to be held at Beamish Hall.
	<p>Youth Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 young people signed up to the new Youth Forum. - First informal meeting of the Youth Forum takes place on 13th January in the Council Chamber. - The first meeting will allow young people and key officers to meet each other and allow the young people to explore and agree the future of the forum including what they want to achieve and how regular meetings will take place. - The first meeting will also include a presentation to the group of other forums across the county and how they operate. - A disco will take place in early February to publicise and launch the new forum.
	<p>Action Packed Futures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event held on 13th December at Chester-le-Street Civic Heart to raise awareness on environmental issues and the availability of high quality locally produced goods. - The event included 12 traders, an environmental magician, cookery demonstrations and awareness raising sessions on recycling and energy efficiency. - Poor weather conditions resulted in some exhibitors not attending and a lower turnout than expected. - Despite the weather and lower than expected turnout, stalls confirmed on the day that they would be prepared to attend future events that would be held at Chester-le-Street. Those residents that attended the event were very positive in their comments and asked if future events such as this would be held again.

Milestone and outcome achievement	<p>Strengthening the Voluntary/Community Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial collection of information regarding 'not for profit' organisations in Chester-le-Street District nearing completion. - Next meeting organised for 15th January to consider the returned questionnaires and recommend a way forward :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for the council to facilitate a seminar at the Riverside to enable a number of volunteers from the 'Not for Profit' sector to display and promote their contribution to the people and place of Chester-le-Street. Portfolio holders and Directors from the New Unitary will be invited to the seminar to enable the 'Not for profit' sector to start engagement with the New Unitary. o The collated information from the questionnaires and catalogue of 'Not for Profit' sector organisations will form part of the 'Handing over the Baton' portfolio to the New Unitary.
	<p>Community Cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning application now approved for the Grange Villa sports changing facilities. Building work started in week 5th January 2009. Expected completion of work in 6-8 weeks. - New Community Cohesion Officer in place; Carl Chapman is working closely and effectively with the 3 communities. - First 'Get Together' meeting of the communities took place on 17th November. Community Cohesion officer is organising 2 further 'Get together' meetings in late January/Early February and the end of March. - Credit union progress with Pelton – meeting between Cestria Credit Union training officer and Pelton to discuss setting up the credit union in Pelton. Struggling to recruit volunteers from Sacriston to work with the Credit Union. Community Cohesion Officer is working with Sacriston to try and identify volunteers for the credit union. - ICT support service level agreement signed by community centres; Sacriston; Grange Villa and Chester-le-street CVS. ICT support service level agreements have been delivered to Lilac House and Pelton Fell for signature. - The order for the online booking systems has been made and work has started on the implementation with the community cohesion officer and community centres. - New fire escape gates at Grange Villa Community Centre are planned to be put in place between 19th and 30th January as a result of fire risk assessment. - Website content management training dates arranged to train community centre volunteers to maintain the content on their websites. Take up of the training is being encouraged by the Community Cohesion Officer. Additionally, a training handbook is being made available to the community centres

Milestone and outcome achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Community Cohesion officer is arranging for the community centres to become members of the CVS. This is expected to help community centres be aware of funding and training opportunities and to gain access to specialist information and advice. - Future plans approved to build community websites for Ouston and Pelton
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	<p>Setting up lease agreement and disposal of land (leasehold) for Stella Gill Community Allotment.</p> <p>Setting up Credit Unions at Sacriston – Community Cohesion Officer working to encourage volunteers.</p>
Issues to be resolved and who by	<p><u>Community Cohesion</u></p> <p>Grange Villa website needs redesigned. To meet new common style of design approved by the community centres.</p> <p>Stella Gill allotment. Regeneration team need to provide a report to Executive to approve transfer of leasehold. Report expected to go to council in March. Legal team need to set up the lease agreement for the allotment.</p>
Successes to communicate and celebrate	<p><u>Community Cohesion</u></p> <p>New Community Cohesion officer in place and engaged immediately with communities.</p> <p><u>Youth Forum</u></p> <p>First information meeting of the Youth Forum takes place on 13th January.</p> <p><u>What Wonderful Women</u></p> <p>Filming complete for What Wonderful Women.</p> <p>Launch date booked for 8th March to coincide with International Womens Day</p>
Comments	None



'People and Place' Action Learning Set Monthly Monitoring Report

ALS Ref	Action Learning Set 4
'People and Place' Theme	Neighbourhoods
Milestone and outcome achievement	Local Democracy Week All events have been successfully undertaken with a possibility of a further Word event in late January
	DIY Neighbourhoods Toolkit - A full colour booklet is currently in the final consultation stage prior to the printing process and local distribution
	Chester in Bloom - All trees, bulbs and seats in all parish areas have now been completed as realistically possible.
	Respect & Anti Social Behaviour - All ASB Projects completed as agreed. The Open your Eyes campaign continues to be promoted to residents groups and schools.
Actions behind target and remedial measures proposed	None
Issues to be resolved and who by	-
Successes to communicate and celebrate	All projects successfully concluded and awaiting information on how to engage in Handing Over the Baton.
Comments	Well done to all who participated in the development and delivery of process and a big thanks you to all of our audiences.

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to: Executive

Date of Meeting: 2 February 2009

Report from: Head of Corporate Finance

Title of Report: 3rd Quarter Financial Monitoring Position

Agenda Item Number:

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report summarises the Council's General Fund actual financial performance for the first nine months of the year as compared with its estimated position. It identifies key issues arising from the financial monitoring processes and advises the Executive of actions taken to address these.
- 1.2 The Executive is recommended to note the financial monitoring information detailed in section 5 of the report.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Corporate Management Team has been consulted on the report.

The financial monitoring data has been discussed with Heads of Service and the extrapolated full year position has been based on the outcome of these discussions.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The Council's budget sets out the financial resources which will be used to deliver the Council's corporate priorities.

4. IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Financial

The financial implications are detailed throughout the report.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

The main implication is to ensure that the Council has adequate financial resources to help establish the new Council while delivering 'Business as Usual'. There is a requirement if any potential resource issues arise that are not included in the Authority's budgets for 2008/09 to consult with the County Treasurer. In addition the financial monitoring process is used also to develop the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and clearly affects next year's budget plans. The County Treasurer will be forwarded a copy of this report to inform him of the latest position and the steps we were taking to address the projected overspend.

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the report.

4.4 Personnel

There are no personnel implications.

4.5 Other Services

It has been necessary for some service areas to identify savings to help address some of the potential problem areas identified during the financial monitoring process.

4.6 Diversity

There are no diversity implications.

4.7 Risk

The financial monitoring information and, more importantly, the corrective actions taken, help manage the risks associated with potential problem areas in the budget. The risk analysis which supported the 2008/09 budget process identified that income projections were a key area of risk.

The closure of the Housing Revenue Account and Local Government Reorganisation were identified as significant risks when approving the 2008/2009 General Fund budget, for which plans were in place.

The economic climate has produced a number of additional risks to budget management and these have included interest rates, energy prices, fuel costs, general inflation, income generation and debt recovery.

The action to manage this was to ensure that income levels were carefully monitored and reported and that if income is below budget, action will have to be taken to identify compensating savings or additional income elsewhere.

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 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.

5. **GENERAL FUND REVENUE**

5.1 Appendix A shows the general fund revenue position to date for each service area and forecasts this to the end of the year.

5.2 Based on the position to date, the expected end of year position compared with the 2008/09 budget is summarised below:-

Initial General Fund Forecast Outturn

	£'000
Leisure Services	+ 66
Environmental Health and Planning	+ 6
Environmental Services	+ 34
Revenues and Benefits	+ 20
Finance and Accountancy	0
Human Resources	0
Regeneration	+ 143
Corporate Development Unit	- 25
Legal and Democratic Services	+ 80
Corporate Functions	+ 12
Other Corporate	+ 187
Initial Forecast Overspend	+ 523

5.3 Clearly this forecast is not acceptable and Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service have been working together to ensure there is no overspend at the end of the financial year. The following actions have been taken to correct the situation highlighted by the mid year monitoring position:-

- Corporate Management Team met with specific Heads of Service to consider proposals to offset overspends in their service areas.
- All Heads of Service have been notified that there is a freeze on all supplies and services related expenditure. If there is a need to spend any of these budgets approval has to be sought from the Chief Executive or myself before an order can be raised.
- All vacant posts that arise are carefully considered by the Chief Executive and myself for approval.

5.4 The following table indicates the impact the above actions have already had on the revised expected end of year position.

	£'000	£'000
Projected Overspend as per Appendix A	523	
<u>Add</u>		
Revenue Underspend on People & Place Priorities	41	
Procurement Savings Shown Throughout Services	35	
Additional Income Shown Throughout Services	45	
Projected Loss in External Interest	30	
Overspend on Members Allowances (Pension Costs)	10	
		684
<u>Less</u>		
Projected Savings-Freeze on Supplies Expenditure		140
Over Provision of MRP in 2008/2009		114
Projected Salary Savings above Contingency		95
Use of Local Government Reorganisation Contingency		219
Savings from the Corporate Training Programme		70
Use of HRA balance to meet Shortfall in RTB Sales		110
Revised Projected Underspend		64

5.5 Leisure Services

The end of year position for leisure services is expected to show an overall overspend against budget of £66,000. This situation has improved by £17,000 in the last quarter due to reducing utility costs and savings made by the Leisure Centre Manager in managing shift rotas. However, income continues to be a cause of concern and will be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the financial year.

5.6 Environmental Health and Planning

This service area is expected to show an overall overspend against its budget for the year of £6,000. This is mainly due to building control income expected to be £30,000 below budget. However I am pleased to report that Development Control income has significantly improved since the mid year position and is expected to be approximately £32,000 over budget. The only other significant factor is a projected £13,000 shortfall in fees from administering Disabled Facilities Grants due to a reduced capital programme.

5.7 Environmental Services

There are a number of issues within Environmental Services which amount to a predicted net overspend for the year amounting to just over £34,000. Car Park fine income is likely to be under budget by £12,000. Vehicle, fuel prices and agency costs are affecting Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing services and are expected to be over budget by just over £47,250. In addition the utilities, fuel oil and telephone costs at Sacriston Depot are projected to be

over by approximately £23,000. However, additional income has been generated amounting to just under £53,000 in respect of Grounds Maintenance and Cemeteries which reduces the net projected overspend for the year. A verbal update will be given on the day of the meeting on the financial issues surrounding the recycling service.

5.8 Revenues and Benefits

The service is showing a net overspend against budget for the year of approximately £20,000. However the service has made significant salary savings which are shown in the salary contingency which is reflected in Other Corporate Services. Overall the service area will be under spent at the end of the financial year.

5.9 Regeneration

The service is showing a net overspend against budget for the year of approximately £143,000. The main reason is a forecast shortfall in Market income of £105,000 for the year. In addition CCTV expenditure is expected to be over budget by £20,000 due to salaries costs and the cost of maintaining the equipment. An amount of £20,000 has been identified as being required to carry out maintenance works and health and safety related testing at the Communal Rooms.

5.10 Corporate Development Unit

The forecast underspend of £25,000 for the year is due to income received in the year which was not budgeted for.

5.11 Legal & Democratic Services

Due to the economic downturn Land Charges income is projected to be under budget by £80,000 at the end of the financial year.

5.12 Other Corporate

The end of year position for Other Corporate issues is expected to show an overall overspend against budget of £187,000. This is mainly due to a predicted shortfall in the Right to Buy sales income amounting to £109,990. We estimated 21 sales at £9,999 per property (as per the Stock Transfer Agreement). To date we have only generated and received £79,992 from the sale of 8 properties. It was agreed at the meeting of the Executive on 1 December 2008 to use the HRA balance to meet the projected shortfall in Right to Buy Sales income.

5.13 Summary of General Fund Position

Based on the mid-year monitoring information, the overall end of year forecast for the General Fund Revenue account shows an underspend of £64,000.

Action has already been taken as highlighted in 5.3 above to limit expenditure against controllable budgets to ensure offsetting savings are identified so there is no call on the general fund balance at the year end.

I am also investigating the possibility that Minimum Revenue Provision was over provided for in 2005/2006. This is potentially a further saving of £80,000 that could increase the revised projected underspend highlighted above.

Heads of Service will also continue to work with budget holders to explore what else can be done to reduce expenditure and maximise income.

Members will be aware that the County Treasurer has already authorised expenditure to address ER/VR costs from Council reserves. It is likely that further expenditure may be required to address ER/VR costs as the new Unitary structure is put in place and the County Treasurer has suggested that our reserves would be the initial funding source for such expenditure. Members will be aware from this report that we are proposing the utilisation of the Local Government Re-organisation contingency of £219,000 to address this year's budget position and therefore the costs associated with the ER/VR approved expenditure will initially fall to the General Fund balance which is now supported by the HRA balance being made available in this year.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The Executive is recommended to note the financial monitoring information detailed section 5 of the report.

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Service Area	Budget for Year £000	Profiled Budget to end of December £000	Actual Exp. to end of December £000	Three Quarter Year Variance £000	Comments	Projected Variance for full year £000
Leisure Services	1,669.7	942.7	970.0	+ 27.3	Mainly due shortfalls in income at the Golf Course, the Leisure Centre and Special Events at the Riverside plus a significant increase in utilities expenditure	+ 66.0
Environmental Health and Planning	762.2	639.5	572.4	- 67.1	Mainly due to a downturn in the economic climate affecting Building Control Income .	+ 6.0
Environmental Services	2,756.7	1,949.3	2,011.4	+ 62.1	Mainly due to increased expenditure on fuel, utilities and agency fees and a downturn in Car Park Fine income.	+ 34.5
Revenues and Benefits	781.0	600.6	632.8	+ 32.2	Agency Fees – Savings in Salaries shown below in Other Corporate	+ 20.0
Finance and Accountancy	53.5	-10.3	-103.4	- 93.1	-	0
Organisational Development	137.4	107.0	90.2	- 16.8	-	0
Regeneration	1,050.0	735.6	878.5	+ 142.9	Mainly due to a Shortfall in projected Market Income, CCTV and Communal Rooms	+ 143.2
Corporate Development Unit	1,288.8	977.5	844.6	- 132.9	Additional Income not budgeted for.	- 25.0
Legal and Democratic Services	339.7	260.2	293.5	+ 33.3	Mainly due to a downturn in the economic climate affecting Land Charges Income.	+ 80.0
Corporate Functions	1,377.0	1,066.6	1,212.3	+ 145.7	Net Corporate Overspend	+ 11.6
Other Corporate	-1,969.0	338.9	133.6	- 205.3	Overspends in respect of Statutory External Audit Fees, and Organisational Support and a shortfall in Income in relation to Right to Buy Sales	+ 187.0
	+ 8,247.0	+ 7,607.6	+ 7,535.9	- 71.7		+ 523.3



Chester-le-Street District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	2nd February 2009
Report from:	Director of Corporate Services
Title of Report:	Review into the future of the unparished area of Chester-le-Street – Final Report
Agenda Item Number:	

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for members to consider and agree the final report on the scrutiny review into the future of the unparished areas of the district.
- 1.2 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:
 1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultations carried out as part of the review are fully detailed in the attached Appendix.

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE & PLACE PRIORITY

- 3.1 The recommendation has a direct impact on the following area of the ***People and Place*** priority:
 - Strengthening Partnerships.
- 3.2 There is a specific project within the ***People and Place*** priority delivery plan. This has been put on hold as result of Boundary Committee advice but there remains significant value in a scrutiny review of the potential for additional Parish or Town Councils in the currently unparished area in Chester-le-Street.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report for this council at the current time. However there would future financial implications to establishing a town council, possibility to the new unitary, and these have been explored during the review process.

4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications relating to this report at the current time. However there are legal issues to establishing a town council that have been investigated during the review process and as set out in the final report.

4.3 Personnel

There are no specific personnel implications relating to this report at the current time. Support to the Task and Finish Group has been provided by the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Democratic Service Officer.

4.4 Other Services

The review has had limited impact upon other service departments.

4.5 Diversity

There are no diversity implications relating to this report at the current time. Accessibility to all service users will be considered as part of the review.

4.6 Risk

There are no risk implications to the council relating to this report at the current time. The biggest risk is the capacity of the organisation to support the review process.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications to this report at the current time.

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 attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.9 LGR Implications

In Durham County Council's successful unitary bid there were clear references to the importance of town and parish councils and a clear undertaking for the new unitary council to use its power to establish town and parish councils.

'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 cooperation for wider clusters of town and parish councils.'

A New County Durham Council – Durham County Council

The review is a firm part of this council's Transition Plan. The approval of the County Council was not required. A County Councillor took part in the extended focus group as part of the review consultation process.

5. BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

- 5.1 Through the development of the new single priority 'People and Place' a number of Action Learning Sets (ALS) have been developed to deliver on some of the key themes and projects. ALS3 – Strengthening Partnerships is considering the potential of parish or town councils in the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street.
- 5.2 The Action Learning Set was very clear in that it wished to raise awareness of and fully explore the viability of the options for the unparished area in Chester-le-Street and how this will bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.
- 5.3 On 12 May the Council's Executive considered a report by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the legislation which allows consideration of Town and Parish Councils. The law requires a council to undertake what is known as a 'community governance review.' The Executive considered the implications of this including potential costs, bearing in mind a new form of local government will come into force next April and the need to engage with Durham County Council. The Executive

also considered the fact that the national Boundary Committee is to undertake a review of electoral arrangements within County Durham.

- 5.4 On 2 June the Council's Director of Corporate Services attended a meeting with the Boundary Committee. This is a statutory committee of the National Electoral Commission. The Boundary Committee is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, administrative boundaries and structure. The Electoral Commission is responsible for considering and implementing electoral review recommendations. It is likely that a review in Durham could commence in July this year. At the meeting, also attended by Durham County Council the Boundary Commission strongly advised councils not to undertake any community governance review arrangements until final recommendations have been reported. This could not be until August 2009.
- 5.5 However there remained value in progressing the research and engagement work associated with the possibility of developing a Town council and considering other local engagement models such as a Federation of Residents' Associations, which is another potential **People and Place** project. The Scrutiny project involved considering the possibility of options including a 'parish council' with 'town status' for the unparished area of Chester-le-Street. It involved considering the implications of undertaking a formal 'Community Governance Review' working closely with Durham County Council as heralded in their successful local government reorganisation bid in line with the County Durham Association of Local Councils policy objective of fully parishing the County. It should possibly aid engagement work that may be required by the Boundary Committees Review.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE : OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

- 6.1 To understand the legislation and requirements both legally and financially for the establishment of parish and/ or town councils in the unparished area of Chester-le-Street.
- 6.2 To understand the benefits of a town council or other potential engagement models such as a Federation of Residents' Associations for the residents and communities of Chester-le-Street.
- 6.3 To gauge public opinion on the creation of a parish and/or town councils for the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street through a variety of consultation and engagement techniques.
- 6.4 To assess the practicalities, procedures and operations of other similar parish and town councils.

6.5 To evaluate the options and viability of a parish and/or town council model and present findings and contribute to the People and Place priority.

6.6 To explore the scope to undertake engagement work that may be required to assist the Boundary Committee Review.

7. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The review methodology is detailed below.

7.2 Introduction

The Task and Finish Group looked at the recent changes to the legislation and the procedures that will need to be undertaken for the establishment of a town council whilst considering the implication of other delivery models.

7.3 Visits

A series of visits were arranged to neighbouring town councils to look at a town council in operation taking evidence from officers and members on the benefits and weaknesses of this model of local government. The findings are set out in the Final report.

7.4 Evidence Gathering

The Task and Finish Group sought to engage the public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the formation of parish and town councils in the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street. This included a questionnaire and extended focus group.

7.5 Report Findings

Appendix 1 sets out the report findings.

7.6 Timeline

The following timetable was agreed:

- Initial meeting to discuss scoping report on 22nd July 2008
- Initial presentation, Scoping report and Task and Finish Group membership agreed 30th July 2008
- Visits to other councils by 31st August 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10th September 2008
- Web based questionnaire by end September with article in next District News by 30th September 2008
- Meeting with Parish Councils and relevant residents associations by 19th September 2008
- Report of findings and Options by 30th September 2008

- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd October 2008
- Meeting with parish councils and appropriate Residents Group representatives on Boundary Committee consultation issues by 31st October 2008
- Task and Finish Group informal meeting to discuss evidence gained by 14th November 2008 and agree recommendations
- Findings of Task and Finish Group reported to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd December 2008

7.7 The review has taken slightly longer than expected due to reduced capacity in the Legal and Democratic Services Team

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:

1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERED TO:

- Transition Plan & People and Place Priority
- Putting communities in control – Communities and Local Government website
- National Association of Local Councils – website
- A New County Durham Council – Durham County Council Unitary Submission Document

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VERSION NUMBER 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Appendix 1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee



People & Place

**Refreshing Local Democracy -
Review into the Future of the Unparished
Areas of the District**

Final Report

January 2009

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Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Foreword of the Task and Finish Group Lead

In April 2009 Durham County Council will become the new unitary council. It will deliver services previously provided by Chester-le-Street District to the communities in our District.

A large area of our District is currently unparished. This includes Chester-le-Street Town Centre. It is clear that the county council in their bid support the further development of parish and town councils. We have found that there are mixed views about whether Chester-le-Street ought to be fully parished. However we have found that there is sufficient support for this to undertake a formal 'community governance review' to fully test out opinion.

Our scrutiny review has involved us visiting existing and developing town and parish councils and above all listening to people's views. We have been impressed with the commitment and enthusiasm of those councils. We have also been impressed with the passion shown by our residents in presenting their views to us.

We thank the communities in Chester-le-Street for offering us their views. We urge the new unitary council to listen to and consider our findings and in doing so support our recommendations.

Cllr David Holding

Task and Finish Group Lead Member
Vice Chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The review was carried out between June 2008 and December 2008.
Lead Officer was Ian Forster, Director of Corporate Services

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

Future of the Unparished Areas of the District Task and Finish Group
Cllr D M Holding (Lead Member and Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Cllr A Holden
Cllr S Barr
Cllr P H May
Cllr M May
Cllr W Laverick
Cllr P Nathan
Cllr G Armstrong
Cllr F Wilkinson
Cllr L E W Brown
Cllr R Harrison
Cllr P Ellis
Cllr M J Gollan
Cllr T J Smith
Cllr A Humes
Cllr D Thompson

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2009 Chester-le-Street District Council will no longer exist. It will be replaced by a new unitary council, Durham County Council, who will deliver local authority services across the county of Durham. The District's existing parish councils will remain. However at the current time there are substantial areas of the district for which no parish or town council exists. A plan detailing the unparished areas is provided on page 23
- 1.2 In order to guide the delivery of Chester-le-Street District Council's services in its final year the council developed what it called its 'Transition Plan' The council's Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the council's previous planning document, 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. The council's choice to move towards a single priority (its focus for the final year) of what it calls '**People and Place**' was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.
- 1.3 At their meeting on 30th June 2008 and in response to the council's single priority of '**People and Place**', the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake three scrutiny reviews all linked to the corporate priority. This specific scrutiny topic has a direct impact on the following area of the **People and Place** priority:
- Strengthening Partnerships.
 - Neighbourhoods
- 1.4 The review has been undertaken as a result of specific proposals within the part of the single priority known as 'Strengthening Partnerships'. This is about ensuring that the partnerships we undertake are strong enough to be able to continue to influence the new unitary council. The future of the unparished areas of the district is an issue which has been raised by a number of residents and community associations.

2 Purpose of the Review

- 2.1 The purpose of the review was to undertake some initial research on the potential for additional new governance arrangements within the area of Chester-le-Street which is not covered by a Parish council.
- 2.2 It is the intention of the review to make recommendations to the new unitary council on how it may respond to the views of the public. The results of the review will be encompassed in the Council's 'Handing over the Baton' report which will be presented to Durham County Council in March 2009.

3 Scrutiny Review Process

- 3.1 Scrutiny reviews are in-depth studies into issues which have been identified by scrutiny members as important to the community and Council of Chester-le-Street.
- 3.2 Scrutiny reviews investigate issues by a process of gathering evidence through speaking to individuals and groups that are involved or affected. The review panel then formulates realistic evidence based recommendations which are presented to the Council's Executive.
- 3.3 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

Stage 1 Scope	The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.
Stage 2 Investigate	The panel gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges site visits where appropriate.
Stage 3 Analyse	The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the panel.
Stage 4 Clarify	The panel discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.
Stage 5 Recommend	The panel formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.
Stage 6 Report	Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.
Stage 7 Monitor	The panel undertakes to monitor agreed recommendations on a regularly agreed basis. (It will be the responsibility of Durham County Council to undertake this final stage).

4 Background

How the review was established

- 4.1 Through the development of the new single priority 'People and Place' a number of what are called Action Learning Sets (ALS) were developed to deliver on some of the key themes and projects. These are one of the ways the District Council has worked over the last few years to improve our services. A specific Action Learning Set, ALS3 – Strengthening Partnerships, was considering the potential of parish or town councils in the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street.
- 4.2 The Action Learning Set was very clear in that it wishes to raise awareness of and fully explore the viability of the options for the unparished areas in Chester-le-Street and how this will bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.
- 4.3 On 12 May 2008 the Council's Executive considered a report by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the legislation which allows consideration of Town and Parish Councils. Before new arrangements can be developed the relevant law (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (LGPIH) 2007) requires a council to undertake what is known as a 'community governance review.' The Executive considered the implications of this including potential costs, bearing in mind a new form of local government will come into force next April and the need to engage with Durham County Council. The Executive also considered the fact that the national Boundary Committee is to undertake a review of electoral arrangements within County Durham. The Executive noted the progress available to Chester-le-Street District Council and resolved that
- “clarification be sought and discussions undertaken with Durham County Council on the status, cost and scale of a corporate governance review taking into consideration the Boundary Committee for England's proposed review of local authority electoral arrangements.”***
- 4.4 On 2 June 2008 the Council's Director of Corporate Services attended a meeting with the Boundary Committee. This is a statutory committee of the National Electoral Commission. The Boundary Committee is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, administrative boundaries and structure. The Electoral Commission is responsible for considering and implementing electoral review recommendations. It is likely that a review in Durham could commence in July this year. At the meeting, also attended by Durham County Council the Boundary Commission strongly advised councils not to undertake any community governance review arrangements until its final recommendations have been reported. This could not be until July 2009.

- 4.5 However it was considered that there was value in progressing the research and engagement work associated with the possibility of developing a Town Council and considering other local engagement models such as a Federation of Residents' Associations, which is another potential **People and Place** project. It was therefore agreed that it was more appropriate for this work to be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A scoping report was agreed by the Committee at their meeting on 18th June 2008. A task and finish group was created to undertake the work. The Scrutiny project involved considering the possibility of options including a 'Parish Council' with 'town status' for the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street. It involves considering the implications of undertaking a formal 'Community Governance Review' working closely with Durham County Council as heralded in their successful local government reorganisation bid in line with the County Durham Association of Local Councils' policy objective of fully parishing the County. It was also intended that it ought to aid engagement work that may be required by the Boundary Committees Review.

Town and Parish Council's

- 4.6 Parish and Town Councils in England and community and town councils in Wales are the first tier of local government. They deliver a vast range of services at a community level. There are around 10,000 community, Parish and Town Councils in England and Wales, made up of nearly 100,000 councillors. These first-tier councils can respond to the needs of the community through delivery of services or providing required representation.
- 4.7 Town and parish councils have a large range of powers and are involved in a great number of activities including planning, promoting tourism, licensing, communal halls and management of town and village halls. A full list of these powers and duties are contained in **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 4.8 Communities Secretary Hazel Blears recently signalled a new era for parish and town councils where they would have a real purpose in modern society. Local parish and town councils can be a force for local pride and empowerment and have an important contribution to make in reinvigorating local democracy. They are often the most immediate form of representation, acting as a focal point for local debate and identity.
- 4.9 An 'Empowerment' White Paper, with proposals designed to refresh local democracy and devolve power to the grass roots, was announced in March 2008. *Communities in control: real people, real power* was launched on 9 July 2008. This White Paper is about passing power to communities and giving real control and influence to more people. The Government's key themes are power, influence and control: who has power, on whose behalf is it exercised, how is it held to account, and how can it be diffused throughout the communities we live in. It is about democracy, and how democratic practices and ideals can be applied to our complex, modern society. The White Paper does not signify the end of work in this area. It is intended as a catalyst for change and its success will be measured over the medium term. Communities

in Control contains an annex which gives an indication of plans for implementation.

- 4.10 A survey by Aberystwyth University found that 75% of parish and town councils were expecting to make use of the new wellbeing power once in operation. The new power was extended to eligible parish and town councils by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (LGPIH) 2007 and is now in force. This allows parish and town councils in England and Wales to do anything they consider likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area unless explicitly prohibited elsewhere in legislation.
- 4.11 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 organizations themselves to see through specific projects to tackle local issues...' (Paragraph 137 of the Guidance). Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables this. 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.' (Paragraph 54 of the Guidance).
- 4.12 At the present time there are eleven parish councils in the District of Chester-le-Street, namely Bournmoor, Edmondsley, Great Lumley, Kimblesworth and Plawsworth, Little Lumley, North Lodge, Ouston, Pelton, Sacriston, Waldrige and Urpeth. The rest of the District is unparished.
- 4.13 Parish councils can achieve a standard known as 'Quality' Parish and Town Councils. This is something that must be worked towards rather than a statutory definition or status. Further details of this are identified in Paragraphs 7.10 to 7.12 of this report.

5 Terms of Reference

5.1 The terms of reference of the review were as follows:

- To understand the legislation and requirements both legally and financially for the establishment of parish and/ or town councils in the unparished area of Chester-le-Street.

- To understand the benefits of a town council or other potential engagement models such as a Federation of Residents' Associations for the residents and communities of Chester-le-Street.
- To gauge public opinion on the creation of a parish and/or town councils for the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street through a variety of consultation and engagement techniques.
- To assess the practicalities, procedures and operations of other similar parish and town councils.
- To evaluate the options and viability of a parish and/or town council model and present findings and contribute to the People and Place priority.
- To explore the scope to undertake engagement work that may be required to assist the Boundary Committee Review.

6 Methodology

6.1 The task and finish group was working to a clearly agreed timetable. The timetable was a useful tool by which progress could be monitored and also provided a basis for progress reports to the main task and finish and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

6.2 The council agreed its methodology as part of the scoping report approved by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 30th July 2008. The methodology is set out in the following paragraphs.

Interviews

6.3 Interviews were conducted with the Council's head of Legal and Democratic Services, Democratic Services Officer and the Director of Corporate Services

Visits

6.4 It was decided at an early stage to visit a mix of existing and developing town and parish councils to understand how they operate successfully. The results of these visits and the learning is set out in **Appendix 2** The following visits were made:

- Durham City (developing)
- Stanley (developing)
- Great Aycliffe (existing 'Quality' Town Council see Paragraph 7.10-7.12)
- Peterlee Town Council

6.5 The key aspects of learning from the visits can be summarised as follows:

- Stanley only came into being in May 2008 and have recently been appointing staff.

- Stanley took a £100,000 loan from Derwentside for set up costs but must pay this back.
- Durham City is only going through formal community engagement. A series of public meetings and exhibitions have been undertaken looking at peoples views in principle and understanding views about the number of potential councillors.
- Both Peterlee and Great Aycliffe are both well established councils who deliver a significant range of local services and employ a significant number of staff to do so.

Community Engagement

- 6.6 Members made a conscious decision that the review was not a formal process. Members needed to test out what the views of the public might be. It was agreed therefore that within the resources available to the 'Task and Finish Group' a sample resident's survey would be undertaken. This would be backed up by an extended focus group so members could hear directly from people how they felt about the issues.
- 6.7 A questionnaire was forwarded to 1,000 households within the unparished areas as well as to existing Parish Councils and Residents and Community Associations. It is important to note that this is a small sample and the response rate was only about 12%. In view of this responses ought to be treated with caution. However they do give an indication of public views. An analysis report is provided in **Appendix 3**. The results of the responses can be summarised as follows:
- 44% respondents didn't feel disadvantaged without a parish council now while 41% did
 - 45% would feel disadvantaged from April 1st while 42% wouldn't
 - 46% felt that the district ought to be fully parished while 36% didn't
 - Of those responding positively to a fully parished district 43% felt that there should be a mix of a new parish as well as extensions, 32% felt there ought to be a new single parish while 22% felt existing parishes ought to be extended
 - 57% felt a new parish ought to seek to achieve Quality status while 21% didn't
 - 29% would be prepared to pay more for a parish while 57% would not
 - 12% would be prepared to pay for a parish with quality status while 71% would not
 - 57% wanted a corporate governance review while 29% did not
 - Only 17 % of respondents were interested in joining a focus group
 - A small majority of respondents (53%) were female
 - The largest group of respondents (35%) were 65 and over
 - 25% of respondents considered themselves to be disabled
 - 76% were of Christian faith
 - 99% were heterosexual; and
 - over 98% considered themselves to be white English

- 6.8 The extended focus group took place on the evening of 25th November. between 6pm and 8pm. This was by invitation only. Invites were sent out to 15 people who indicated that they wished to attend in their questionnaire responses. Invitations were sent out also to all parishes, and residents and tenants associations. Members of the Task and Finish Group attended. 15 people attended the focus group as follows:
- 2 members of the public representing residents and community associations and themselves;
 - 3 members of the public representing themselves;
 - 2 parish Councillors;
 - 2 County Councillors (one of which was also a District member and was attending in that capacity); and
 - 6 members of the Task and Finish Group
- 6.9 The majority of people who attended expressed a clear view that the unparished area would lose out if there was not a town or parish council. There were some strong views that because of potential time setting up a parish or town council something needed to be done immediately to address representation from 1st April 2009.
- 6.10 One of the participants expressed a view that a parish or town council would only be setting up another tier of local government and would not be better than the existing council. One of the County Councillors took the view that the new Unitary should be given the opportunity to deliver first.

Report Findings

- 6.11 The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings which was presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for agreement on 14th January 2009.

7 Legislative & Strategic Context

Legislative context

- 7.1 There are new powers for councils to establish parish councils under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (referred to in subsequent paragraphs in this report to 'the Act') which was enacted on 30 October 2007.
- 7.2 Districts councils, unitary county councils and London borough councils (principal councils) have since 13 February 2008 had the power to undertake 'community governance reviews' and to make decisions as to whether to implement recommendations. This power is now available to Parish and Town Councils. The Secretary of State therefore no longer makes such decisions. Under new legislation progress can only be made following a 'community governance review'. It therefore is the case 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. As such a review could take up to 12 months the decision maker in this case would be the county council. Taking this into account and in view of the advice of the Boundary Committee it is not appropriate for the council to do this in advance of vesting day. The government has provided guidance on 'community governance reviews'.
- 7.3 Paragraph 23 of the Guidance on the powers 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.'
- 7.4 Paragraph 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.' 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.'
- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 Para136 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.' The Act helps to highlight the importance of parish councils. Paragraph122 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. Paragraph 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 recognisable community of place, with its own sense of identity. The views of local communities and inhabitants are of central importance.'

- 7.7 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 2007 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. An important point to note is set out in Paragraph 106 of the Guidance. This makes it clear that ‘...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. Paragraph 110 of the guidance advises that 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.’ Further extracts from the guidance are set out in **Appendix 4.**

Strategic Context

- 7.8 The focus for the District Council up to 31 March 2009 is of relevance to Durham County Council as the new unitary council. 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 councils 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 cooperation for wider clusters of town and parish councils.’

- 7.9 This is over and above proposals in the bid for Action Area Partnerships (AAP’s). These partnerships are proposed to form the wider governance arrangements for community engagement in the new unitary. There will be 14 AAP’s throughout the county, which will be comprised of County Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and other community representatives. They will have a relatively small, devolved budget. They will not be an alternative to a Town or Parish Council and are not proposed to replace them. In view of the above there is clear evidence that the County Council will be expecting to give consideration to governance arrangements in addition to Action Area Partnerships.

Quality Town and Parish Councils

7.10 The Quality Town & Parish Council Scheme was launched in 2003 with three main aims:

- To provide a benchmark of standards for Town & Parish Councils.
- To enable them to work more closely with partners in the delivery of services.
- To enable them to more effectively represent their communities.

7.11 In order to achieve Quality Status, Town & Parish Councils must demonstrate they have achieved the standard required by successfully completing a number of tests based on:

- Electoral mandate
- Qualifications of the Clerk
- Council Meetings
- Communication and Community Engagement
- Annual Report
- Accounts
- Code of Conduct
- Promoting local democracy and citizenship
- Terms and conditions
- Training

7.12 Either a town or parish council can meet the standard requirement. However those councils who have a critical mass tend to be able to be achieve the standard better. Larger councils can deliver more services, employ more people but cost much more. Examples of costs are as follows:

The 11 existing Parish Councils in the District currently precept for amounts that vary from £3,000 (Edmondsley) to £44,000 (Pelton). The effect on the Council Tax of the Parish Council precepts based on a Band D property varies from £10.98 (Ouston) to £28.22 (Sacriston), which equate to 21p and 54p a week respectively.

As examples of 'Quality' Town Councils the costs of Aycliffe Town Council in Sedgefield and Peterlee Town Council in Easington suggests that once running, a 'Quality' town council would cost council taxpayers in the unparished area between £3.85p and £4.14p per week

8 Findings of the Review

- 8.1 There are advantages and disadvantages of town and parish councils. These can be simply summarised as follows:

Advantages might be:

- Increased representation
- Right to be consulted on planning applications
- Ability to undertake projects for the benefit of local residents
- Partnership working with other bodies for the benefit of the Parish
- Ability to precept for funds

Disadvantages might be:

- Costs will be borne by residents
- An additional layer of government
- They might not be what people want
- Residents might not see any benefit

Findings about attitudes for and against

- 8.2 The community engagement evidence does not clearly give any specific or unanimous support for or against the introduction of some form of parish or town council arrangement in the unparished area of the district

- 8.3 There is however, evidence of support for some form of town or parish arrangement. In particular the focus group showed significant support for a town or parish council although there were relatively few members of public in attendance. The focus group also were passionate that something must happen in the interim period between April and the creation of any town or parish council. Statistically:

- Currently 44% of respondents feel disadvantaged by the absence of a town or parish council. This changes only slightly in the post April 2009 situation with 45% feeling they will then be disadvantaged; 42% felt they would not be disadvantaged post April 2009 ;
- 46% felt that the district ought to be fully parished while 36% felt it should not;
- 57% felt that any parish or town council ought to seek to achieve 'Quality' Status while 21% felt it should not;
- only 29% would be prepared to pay more for a parish or town council compared to 58% who would not; and
- feelings were stronger still regarding the cost of a 'Quality' council, with only 12% prepared to pay this cost compared with 71% opposed to paying it.

- 8.4 Comments made in support of parish or town councils views were very expressive. For example:

I feel being unparished severely undermines any residents' ability to take an active and influential part in the decisions which affect people's lives in their immediate area. The parish/town layer of governance, responsibility and accountability is essential if people are not to feel ignored or disenfranchised.

'It is patently absurd that the main urban core of the Chester le Street District has no town council and is classified as 'unparished'. There is widespread concern that this intermediate state (links) will impede the development of Chester le Street'.

'A local parish/town rep is crucial to get a more balanced outlook on the needs of those whom live in the smaller areas that have limited amenities available.'

'All areas need a voice'

'As all the other areas surrounding main town are parished then why shouldn't we when DCC take over

- 8.5 However, views against any new body or extension were also strongly expressed. For example:

'It appears to me while we are doing away with the present council people are wanting to get more so called Parish reps involved. There were too many councillors before lets just have the reduced council as stated.'

'More jobs for Government wasting tax payers money'

'The point of a unitary authority was to reduce the tiers of bureaucracy and reduce costs so why do we need a parish or town council?'

'The two members will adequately represent my views within the new unitary authority in the future. I never felt, under the current system that my views were ever received in a sympathetic way. It will most certainly not be worse in the future.'

'There is certainly a need for a focal point for residents to contact 'Operational Departments' i.e. the people who do the work. We do not want a bureaucratic high cost additional layer of government that is simply a continuation of a failed District Council under another name. I am afraid I see this questionnaire as simply a further attempt by the District Council to retain an inefficient structure after having already wasted our taxes challenging the legality of the changes we voted for.'

Findings about the views about costs

- 8.6 There were clearer majorities about potential costs. 58 % of respondents were not prepared to pay for any further governance arrangements. This rose to 71% when considering costs such as known Quality Town Councils in the county. Views expressed ranged between the following:

'I think Chester le Street would require the full organisational structure of a traditional town council. I think that for such a substantial town the cost per household would be comparatively small. Parish structures in village area would be more expensive.'

'Council tax along with the rising cost of living and 'credit crunch' at present are high enough. We are looking to lower outgoings not increase them. Also the unitary authority proposals state that there would be savings in moving to one authority. If this is the case these savings should be re-invested to cover the cost of any subsequent changes to structures.'

'Council tax is crippling to most people now. Why have we always got to embrace more costs. We are not a huge area. Let's just have the new council without the red tape.'

'I would be prepared to pay a percentage of the cost. But feel should be made available from central government.'

'I honestly believe that we already pay enough for council tax – and why can't some existing premises be adapted – buildings already used by the council.'

Findings about carrying out a 'Community Governance Review'

- 8.7 There was a clearer majority on whether or not a community governance review ought to be carried out. 57% of people felt that this was appropriate compared to 29% who did not. Comments made ranged between the following examples:

'I feel that in this case a Community Governance Review is essential to ensure that all arrangements are reviewed and assessed and the views of local people are included as part of a formal consultation to ensure that the outcomes meets the needs and wants of residents.'

'Why could a Governance Review and Boundary Commission Process not have been undertaken and finalised before the establishment of Unitary Councils? What decisions are going to be made by the UCs before this essential layer of local governance is in place? Can these decisions be subsequently challenged? How certain can a local electorate be that they will definitely have a voice at local level?'

'This is an important change and needs to be properly researched and understood.'

'It would not make any difference. No one took any notice of the last review which was returned to the government'

'Formal reviews come at a price – the council should be considering how to cut council spending.'

Findings about options if change happens

8.8 Should change happen there were four options suggested in the questionnaire. These were:

- A single Town or Parish Council covering the whole of the area;
- The extension of existing surrounding Parish Councils to cover the area
- A mix of these with a single Town and Parish Council focussed on the Town Centre and existing Parish Councils extended to include areas such as Chester Moor and Pelton Fell.
- Another solution, please state your ideas.

8.9 44% of respondents who answered positively to whether there should be a town or parish council in the area favoured a mix of extended parish council and a town council focussed on the town centre. 32% felt a single town or parish council covering the whole area would be best while 22% preferred simply extending existing Parish Boundaries. Comments made ranged between the following examples

'I'd like to see residents asked specifically whether they wish their locality to be absorbed by a neighbouring existing parish and ensure some influence based on size, OR, establish their own smaller parish where the advantage is uniqueness and exclusivity. Once the local residents have made their decision both local (and Central) government) are obliged to respect the decision and recognise the formed parish as the essential layer of government they promote.'

'Chester Moor and Pelton Fell areas have different community needs to the central area so each would be best served by separate arrangements.'

'The needs of Chester le Street as a town are different from those of the surrounding parishes. Any re-hashed district council will not succeed in sustaining the development of the town. The town council must comprise representatives of businesses, residents and leisure communities and clubs in town. A town council is required.'

'Keeping areas locally is the best way forward.'

'As long as the town parish council look after the people then its okay.'

Findings about 'Quality' Town and Parish councils

8.10 There was a small majority (53%) of people who felt that if there were to be town or parish councils then they should seek to achieve 'quality status. This

compared with only 21% who did not. It is clear that while there was a majority here this needs to be balanced against how people feel about costs set out in paragraph 8.6. Comments made included views such as:

'The Town/Parish Council (s) should work to provide 'quality' services to meet the key standards of 'quality' status however consideration needs to be made to the additional costs to the public and ability to pay – it may need to be balanced'

'It is in the best interest of us all to achieve quality status'

'If we are to have them we might as well have a high standard.'

'This is just bureaucratic claptrap – more expense for council tax payers'

'All services must be bench marked with performance targets and VFM audits.'

Findings about other models of governance

- 8.11 Capacity limitations in preparing the review have not allowed significant analysis of the options for other models such as community trusts and federations. Only the parish/town council option does offer formally elected representation. However it is clear in the guidance in respect of community governance reviews that councils ought to analyse these. In particular Paragraph 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...'. Bearing in mind the majority of respondents agreed to such a review, rather than delay the review it is felt that full analysis of other options ought to be taken should any community governance review be undertaken. There were few ideas put forward in responses to the questionnaire. Examples of comments made were:

'The views of local people in terms of representation need not be limited to Parish/Town Councils. Other options should be explored for e.g. looking at the remit of 'action area partnerships' to include representing and working with local residents and liaising with county councillors and local authority officers.'

'I do support the idea of a Town/Parish Council in principal however I think we could be adequately represented depending on the process and mechanisms for consultation with the Unitary Council – however this needs to be consistent across the county and district.'

'Form a residents body let the people who live there do it.'

'Have yearly fixed elections and a mayor to oversee all arrangements.'

'A similar process needs to be implemented for Councils and this can be achieved by the creation of small local multidiscipline progress centres for specific local issues such as holes in the road, individual lighting failures etc that incorporates all the modern communication methods as well as a reception desk for those who do not have access to these. We should maximise the benefits of centralised services by the economy of scale and not create additional local office blocks that will incur ongoing high costs. These progress centres can also act as contact points for focus groups or indeed

County Councillor surgeries but there should be at least one senior manager located in them with sufficient authority to deal with significant problems.'

'Give us our district council back.'

Summary Findings

8.12 Taking into account the above the key findings are summarised as follows:

- Should a council intend to create new town or parish councils then the law requires a 'community governance review' which requires in turn a formal consultation process;
- There are other options to town and parish councils which do not involve formally elected representatives and these ought to be considered as part of a 'community governance review';
- There was no strong majority of people who would feel more disadvantaged after April 2009 if there was not something in place although a strong view was made at the focus group that some interim arrangement was necessary;
- There is no significant majority in the sample survey that the district ought to be fully parished;
- While some would pay for parish and town council services most would not particularly if costs were similar to other known 'quality' town councils;
- Most people thought a 'community governance review' was appropriate;
- Should town and parish councils be considered most favoured a mixed approach with a Town Council centred on the Town Centre with extended parishes;
- Most people expected quality although this had to be balanced against the cost findings ; and there was no clear agreement on any other option although many of those against felt that the new unitary was sufficient

9 Conclusions

9.1 The Task and Finish Group consider that the views of people in the vicinity are crucial to any future arrangements. In view of the restricted resources to facilitate the review, the group sought to sound out public opinion rather than have a form of referendum. The Task and Finish Group understands the limitations of the responses but it acknowledges the passion expressed by those who have responded. The review does not give a mandate or a clear steer for the task group to make recommendations about a specific course of action on a specific arrangement. However it is felt that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there is a mixed view about what ought to happen in the future and when.

9.2 It is concluded that;

- there is evidence which suggests that a community governance review is justified and necessary but
- there is no clear evidence yet of substantial majority support for a particular course of action and as such any review ought to be based on the whole District area and not just the unparished area.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The review recommends that:

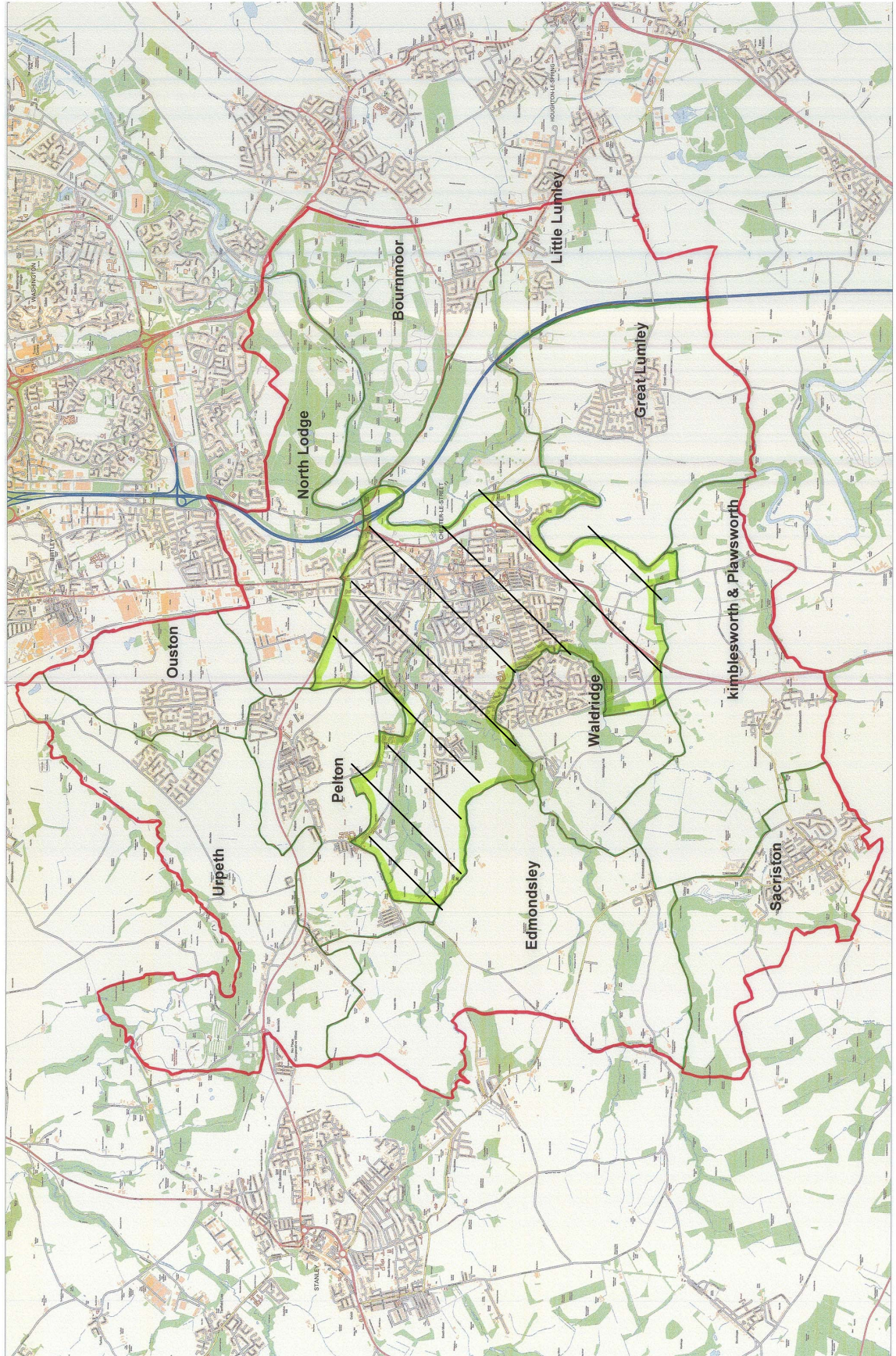
1. The findings of the review and the proposals for the future are submitted for the consideration of the new Unitary Council as part of the 'Handing Over the Baton' Report.
2. Durham County Council are requested to undertake an early 'community governance review' based on the whole area of the existing District and not just the unparished area of the District Council
3. Durham County Council be requested to consider how they might consider an interim arrangement for governance until the outcome of a 'community governance review' is known and implemented.

10.2 It is recommended that this report is agreed and reported to the District Council's Executive on 2nd February 2009

Operator:	
Department:	
Drawing No:	
Date:	11/05/24
Scale:	1:10000

Un-parished areas of Chester-le-Street District

CIVIC Centre
 Newcastle Road
 Chester-le-Street
 Durham
 DH3 3UT
 Tel: 0191 387 1345
 www.chester-le-street.gov.uk





Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy - Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Final Report Second Draft

Appendix 1:

Powers and duties of Parish and Town Councils

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Appendix 1: Powers and duties of Town and Parish Councils

The powers which have been vested in Parish, Town and Community Councils by Acts of Parliament are summarised in this publication as a guide to Councillors and others. Each description is brief and is intended to be a general indication. Like all powers given to public bodies the powers of local councils are defined in detail in legislation and these details may include a requirement to obtain the consent of another body (for example the approval of the County Council to the provision of a car park). Local Councils must exercise their powers also subject to the provisions of the general law (for example planning permission is necessary for a sports pavilion). Information on all these details should be in the hands of the Clerks of the Council. The powers are listed below.

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments. Duty to provide allotment gardens if demanded unsatisfied	Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908, ss. 23, 26, & 42
Baths and Washhouses	Power to provide public baths and washhouses	Public Health Act 1936, Ss 221, 222, 223 & 227
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, Ss 9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214; Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s.1 Local Government Act 1972, s. 215(6)
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s. 4

Bye Laws	Power to make bye-laws in regard to pleasure grounds, Cycle Parks Baths and Washhouses Open spaces and burial grounds Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7) Public Health Act 1936, s.223 Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15 Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Charities	Duty to receive accounts of parochial charities	Charities Act 1960, s.32
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers as to maintenance	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons and common pastures	Powers in relation to enclosure, as to regulation and management, and as to providing common pasture	Enclosure Act 1845; Local Government Act 1894, s.8(4); Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Community Centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19
Crime prevention	Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Education	Right to appoint school governors	Education (No.2) Act 1986, s.4
Entertainment and the arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s.139

Highways	Power to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridle-ways. Power to light roads and public places Provision of litter bins Power to provide parking places for vehicles, bicycles and motor-cycles. Power to enter into agreement as to dedication and widening. Power to provide roadside seats and shelters, and omnibus shelters. Consent of parish council required for ending maintenance of highway at public expense, or for stopping up or diversion of highway. Power to complain to district council as to protection of rights of way and roadside wastes Power to provide traffic signs and other notices Power to plant trees etc. and to maintain roadside verges	Highways Act 1980, ss.43,50 Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301 Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.57,63 Highways Act 1980, ss.30,72 Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1 Highways Act 1980, ss.47,116 Highways Act 1980, s.130 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72 Highways Act 1980, s.96
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11
Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127 Local government Act 1972, s.139
Litter	Provision of receptacles	Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976, s.7
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Nuisances	Power to deal with offensive ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Open spaces	Power to acquire land and maintain	Public health Act 1875, s.164 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10

Parish Property and documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s.226
Postal and telecommunications facilities	Power to pay the Post Office, British Telecommunications or any other public telecommunications operator any loss sustained providing post or telegraph office or telecommunication facilities	Post Office Act 1953, s.51; Telecommunications Act 1984, s.97
Public buildings and village hall	Power to provide buildings for offices and for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public Conveniences	Power to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Recreation	Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them Power to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps Provision of boating pools	Public Health Act 1875, s.164 Local Government Act 1972, Sched.14 Paragraph27 Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 s.44 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19 Public Health Act 1961, s.54
Town and Country Planning	Right to be notified of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched.1, Paragraph8
Tourism	Power to contribute to organisations encouraging	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic Calming	Powers to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.30
Transport	Powers to spend money on community transport schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26-29
War memorials	Power to maintain, repairs, protect and adapt war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948,
Water Supply	Power to utilise well, spring or stream and to provide facilities for obtaining water there from	Public Health Act 1936, s.125

(Source: National Association of Councils Website)



Chester-le-Street
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Final Report Second Draft

Appendix 2:

Results of Visits to Town and Parish Councils

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Appendix 2:

Results of Visits to Town and Parish Councils

Durham City – Claire Greenlay – 14 August 2008

A panel of Members met with Claire Greenlay on 14 August 2008. Durham City were investigating the possibility of creating a town or parish council for Durham City Centre and Newton Hall.

The City Council was not proposing to do a formal consultation exercise involving all of the properties in the un-parished area. Instead their proposals involved a series of 4 public meetings and 4 separate exhibitions at various locations throughout the unparished area.

A brief questionnaire was to be handed out containing the following questions:

1. Do you support the proposal that all the unparished area is included in a single town Council?
2. There are currently 17 city councillors representing the unparished area. How would you like to be represented in a town council?
 - A) 17 is too many
 - B) 17 is too few
 - C) 17 is about right

Stanley Town Council - Malcolm Hole - 27 August 2008

Stanley Town Council was created on 1 May 2008 when the first elections took place. Set up costs were estimated to be in the region of £208,000. Derwentside DC had allocated £100,000 to be drawn on to offset the set up costs. The £100,000 or the amount drawn down will eventually be repayable by the town council.

The town council is currently in the process of recruiting a full time clerk, the secretarial work having been undertaken by Derwentside DC staff to date.

Great Aycliffe Town Council – Andrew Bailey – 28 August 2008

Great Aycliffe has a long established town council with a current budget of £2,795,150. The precept of £1,576,775 representing a Council Tax bill of £3.85 per week for a Band D property. Services provided by town council include:

- Running the sports complex
- Running the golf complex
- Managing the cemeteries
- Manage the parks and most of the town's play areas and sports pitches
- Run a programme of excursions for senior citizens
- Run 3 pre-school play settings
- Provide 136 allotment plots; 9 pigeon plots and 5 poultry plots
- Provide a wide range of leisure events – Fun-in-the –Parks, Santa Tours, Firework display
- Produce and manage the Great Aycliffe Show
- Comment on all planning applications
- Manage woodlands, nature walks and Woodham burn
- Maintain most of the bus shelters

The town council currently employs 72 staff.

Peterlee Town Council – John Arthur – 28 August 2008

Peterlee is a long established town council with a current budget of £4,047,536 and a precept of £1,992,235, representing a Council Tax bill of £4.14 per week for a Band D property.

The services by the town council are similar to those provided by Great Aycliffe Town Council with the addition of a formal banqueting suite at Shotton Hall, which is available for functions.

There are currently 43 employees, some of which are part time.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy - Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

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Appendix 3:

Results Community Questionnaire



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review into the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street

Community Questionnaire Analysis Report

1. Summary

1.1 This document sets out the findings of the questionnaire that was aimed at seeking the views of the public to inform the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. It had been decided to undertake a sample survey of 1000 households in the unparished area of Chester-le-Street. In addition all resident and community associations and parish councils were issued with a questionnaire. The sample represented Xx% of households in this area 118 people responded at a response rate of 10%. This response rate is low and there were high numbers of people responding unsure (13% -25%). The results must therefore be treated with some caution.

1.2 The following were the key findings:

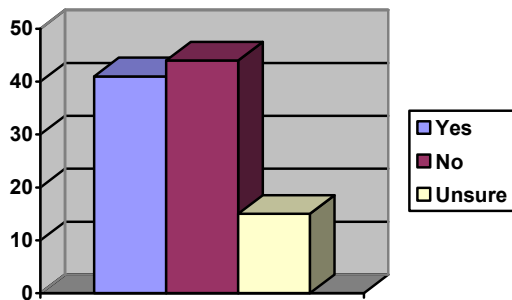
- 44% respondents didn't feel disadvantaged without a parish council now while 41% did
- 45% would feel disadvantaged from April 1st while 42% wouldn't
- 46% felt that the district ought to be fully parished while 36% didn't
- Of those responding positively to a fully parished district 43% felt that there should be a mix of a new parish as well as extensions, 32% felt there ought to be a new single parish while 22% felt existing parishes ought to be extended
- 57% felt a new parish ought to seek to achieve Quality status while 21% didn't
- 29% would be prepared to pay more for a parish while 57% would nit
- 12% would be prepared to pay for a parish with quality status while 71% would not
- 57% wanted a corporate governance review while 29% did not
- Only 17 % of respondents were interested in joining a focus group
- The majority of respondents (53%) were female
- Most respondents (35%) were 65 and over
- 25% of respondents considered themselves to be disabled
- 76% were of Christian faith
- 99% were straight; and
- over 98% considered themselves to be white English

Annex 1: Detailed Questionnaire Results

Questions

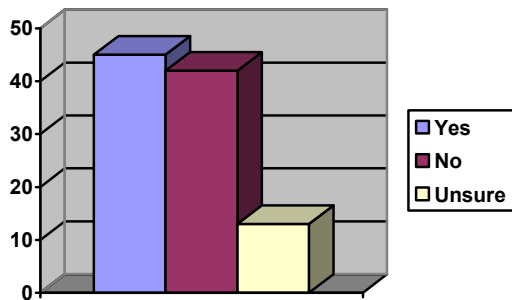
1. If you live within the unparished area of Chester-le-Street do you currently feel disadvantaged because you will not have a Town or Parish Council to represent your views or deliver local services after April 2009? Please tick box

Yes	41%
No	44%
Unsure	15%



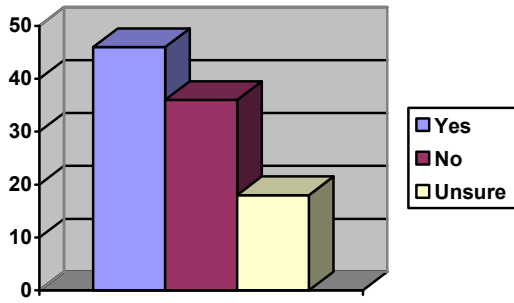
2. From 1 April 2009 there will be no District Council Councillors and there will be two County Council Members serving your area. Do you think you will be disadvantaged then by not having a Town or Parish Council to represent your views?

Yes	45%
No	42%
Unsure	13%



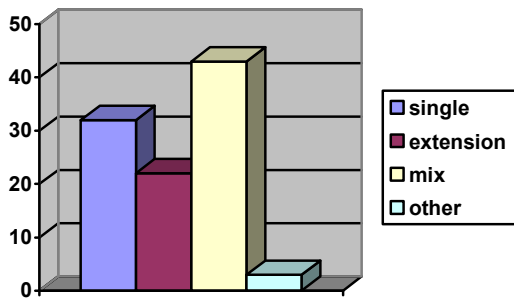
3. Do you feel that the District ought to be fully parished?

Yes	46%
No	36%
Unsure	18%



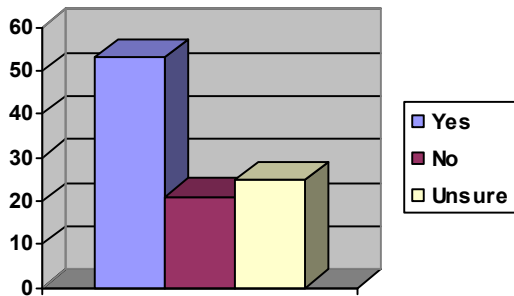
4. If your answer to Q3 is yes which of the following options would you prefer for the current unparished area:

- a) A single Town or Parish Council covering the whole of the area; 32%
- b) The extension of existing surrounding Parish Councils to cover the area 22%
- c) A mix of these with a single Town and Parish Council focussed on the Town Centre and existing Parish Councils extended to include areas such as Chester Moor and Pelton Fell. 43%
- d) Another solution, please state your ideas. 3%



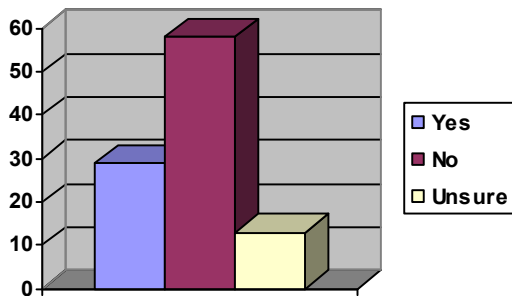
5. Whatever your answer to Q4, do you feel that any new Town or Parish Council should seek to achieve 'Quality' Status. (See paragraphs 10 and 11 on introductory notes)

Yes	53%
No	21%
Unsure	25%



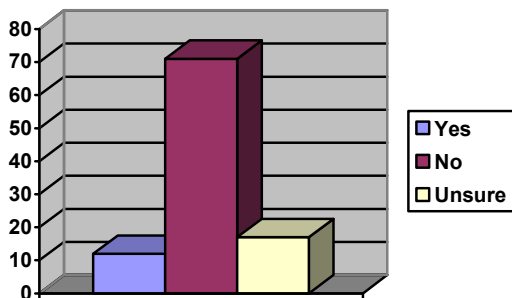
6. Evidence from the existing parish councils in Chester-le-Street suggest that a new town or parish council similar to these councils would cost between 21p per week and 54p per week more to council taxpayers in the unparished areas. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Yes	29%
No	58%
Unsure	13%



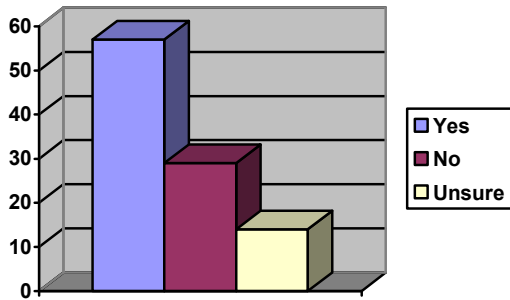
7. As examples of 'Quality' Town Councils the costs of Aycliffe Town Council in Sedgefield and Peterlee Town Council in Easington suggests that once running a 'Quality' town council would cost council taxpayers in the unparished area between £3.85p and £4.14p per week. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a 'Quality' town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Yes	12%
No	71%
Unsure	17%



8. Do you consider that a formal review should be undertaken of the whole of the Chester-le-Street District Council area i.e. a Community Governance Review? (See paragraph 6 and 16 on the introductory notes)

Yes	57%
No	29%
Unsure	14%

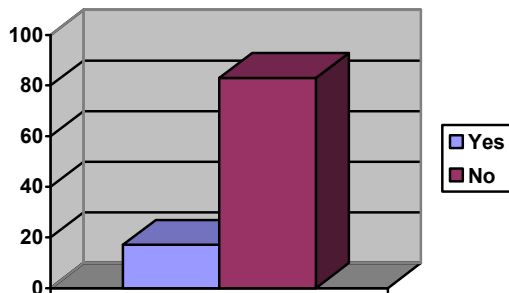


9. If you do not support the idea of a Town or Parish Council in the unparished area how do you feel this area can be represented in the future?

10. If you have any other views or want to raise any other issue please do so here?

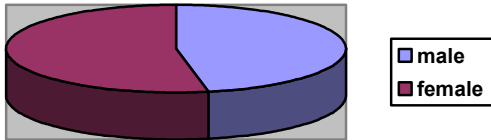
11. On 26th November (between 6 and 8pm) we are proposing to have an extended focus group where by invitation only members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can meet interested people from the community to hear views first hand. Would you be interested in coming along if invited?

Yes	17%
No	83%



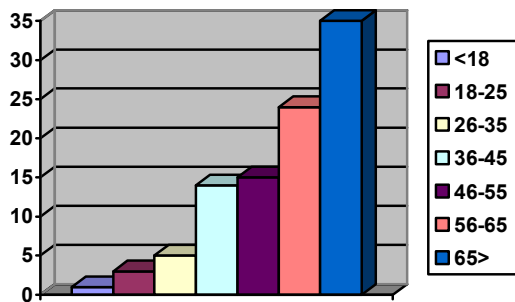
Equality and Diversity Monitoring.

A. Are you: Male 47% Female 53%



B. How old are you?

<18	1%	18-25	3%	26-35	5%
36-45	14%	46-55	18%	56-65	24%
65+	35%				



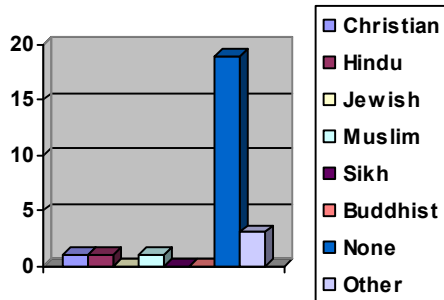
C Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? (This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Longstanding means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year)

Yes 25% No 75%



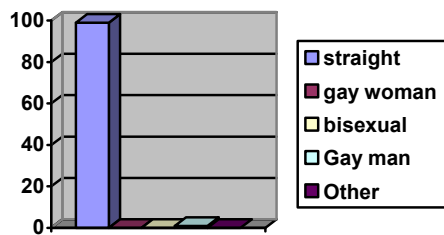
D What is your religion or belief?

Christian	76%	Hindu	1%	Jewish	0%
Muslim	1%	Sikh	0%	Buddhist	0%
None	19%	Other	3%		



E how do you describe your sexuality

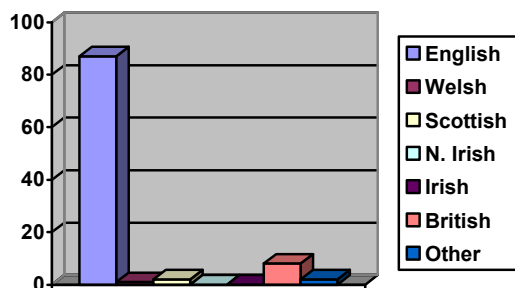
Straight	99%	Gay Woman/Lesbian	0%
Bisexual	0%	Gay Man	1%
Other	0%		



F To which of these groups do you belong

1. White

English	87%	Welsh	1%	Scottish	2%
N. Irish	0%	Irish	0%	British	8%
Other	2%				



2. Travelling Community

Gypsy/Roma	0%	Traveller of Irish descent	0%
Other	0%		

3. Black or Black British

Caribbean	1%	African	0%
Any Other Black Background			0%

4 Mixed

White and Black Caribbean	0%	White and Black African	0%
White and Asian	0%	Any other	0%

5 Asian or Asian British

Indian	0%	Pakistani	0%
Chinese	0%	Bangladeshi	0%
Other	1%	Please State _____	

6. Other Ethnic Group

Detailed Respondent Comments

The following detailed comments were made by respondents.

1. If you live within the unparished area of Chester-le-Street do you currently feel disadvantaged because you will not have a Town or Parish Council to represent your views or deliver local services after April 2009? Please tick box

Respondent 1:

Other options / structures could be explored to allow people to be represented that could feed into the local councillors and Local Authority Officers, e.g. Area Action Partnerships with nominated reps etc.

Respondent 2:

I feel being unparished severely undermines any residents' ability to take an active and influential part in the decisions which affect people's lives in their immediate area. The parish/town layer of governance, responsibility and accountability is essential if people are not to feel ignored or disenfranchised.

Respondent 5:

Only because it is not clear how our views would be collected on issues – I assume even without a town/parish council there would need to be mechanisms for us to express or be consulted with a certain issues.

Respondent 6:

It appears to me while we are doing away with the present council people are wanting to get more so called Parish reps involved. There were too many councillors before lets just have the reduced council as stated.

Respondent 8:

The whole object of the unitary process was to increase operational efficiency by dispensing with expensive and unnecessary staff and councillors.

Respondent 16:

It is patently absurd that the main urban core of the Chester le Street District has no town council and is classified as 'un parished'. There is widespread concern that this intermediate state (links) will impede the development of Chester le Street.

Respondent 18:

Much will be depend on breakdown of services agreed by the new unitary council. Any decision to establish town/parish councils should be deferred until final details are known after April 2009 and avoid the very real possibility of abortive costs.

Respondent 26:

Live in Ouston Parish.

Respondent 28:

There cannot possible be the time or concern given to matters as given at present.

Respondent 43:

More jobs for Government wasting tax payers money.

Respondent 44:

Parish views should always be taken into account and if this does not happen then certain parish/town areas may have or appear to have more financial resources targeted towards them.

Respondent 46:

Less money will be available throughout region and less therefore for our area.

Respondent 57:

Live in Parished area.

Respondent 65:

Local residents need this extra voice and deal with local issues

Respondent 74:

The point of a unitary authority was to reduce the tiers of bureaucracy and reduce costs so why do we need a parish or town council?

Respondent 77:

Should save money on wages therefore it can be used for essential services.

Respondent 92:

Not required. Less costs to pay for.

Respondent 114:

Not really sure what town/parish council does, even after reading the notes.

2. From 1 April 2009 there will be no District Council Councillors and there will be two County Council Members serving your area. Do you think you will be disadvantaged then by not having a Town or Parish Council to represent your views?

Respondent 2:

Significantly, not least on terms of size and remoteness. The people selected to sit as Unitary Councillors are each responsible for too large and diverse geographical areas. The size of the electorate they purport to take responsibility for is also too large – surely it is possible to bring in some semblance of proportional representation at local level. The excuses for incompetence and inaction (as displayed by the proposed format for the unitary council) will be based on size, number and remoteness.

Respondent 5:

It depends on the effectiveness of the CC members. 2 effective members could be much more beneficial than an ineffective town council. However the CC members would need to be proactive in seeking community views.

Respondent 6:

Surely two county council members are enough after all we just have one MP for North Durham.

Respondent 8:

The two members will adequately represent my views within the new unitary authority in the future. I never felt, under the current system that my views were ever received in a sympathetic way. It will most certainly not be worse in the future.

Respondent 16:

It is evident that the main urban core of Chester le Street will be disadvantaged compared with the parished rural areas. Two County Council members cannot possibly hope to cope with the range of issues and concerns of a complex urban area. Your notes frighten me because they indicate that no adequate arrangement is likely to be put in place before April 2011. Town developments can atrophy!

Respondent 17:

We need representatives who know and understand our area.

Respondent 18:

See item 1

Respondent 21:

I feel a local person is more able to understand our needs and hopes for the future, and would be able to mix among us more easily.

Respondent 28:

Member then serving – will not have the same contact knowledge or individual areas.

Respondent 42:

It depends on how available they are.

Respondent 44:

A local parish/town rep is crucial to get a more balanced outlook on the needs of those whom life in the smaller areas that have limited amenities available.

Respondent 45:

No I think that the savings made will improve services.

Respondent 46:

No representatives mean even less voice of opinions to take to council meetings.

Respondent 57:

Happy with existing councillor

Respondent 59:

How can two county council members represent all the wards in Chester le Street and the rural? The possible could favour their own particular areas!!!!

Respondent 65:

2 councillors have such a large area they can not be expected to deal with all our problems.

Respondent 74:

Having less councillors will have no impact on area. No idea who they are or what they do other than receive tax payers money for attending meetings?

Respondent 92:

Durham County Councillor should be able to cope.

Respondent 112:
Any communications can be dealt with by county council members.

Respondent 114:
Don't know what difference will be having a district councillor to a county council member.

Respondent 115:
There needs to be some type of authority for public to identify with.

3. Do you feel that the District ought to be fully parished?

Respondent 2:
Responsibility, accountability and accessibility. Too often I speak as active member of the local residents association, the wishes and wants of Council Tax payers in unparished areas are overlooked or ignored. A parish council would help to rectify this.

Respondent 3:
Only id the "unparished" areas request to be parished – up to now have always operated without a parish council – will now be represented by their local county councillors and the new County Council (which are replacing District Council and Councillors)

Respondent 5:
I think it is important for there to be consistency in the approach to the democratic arrangements in the district.

Respondent 6:
As in previous paragraph.

Respondent 8:
No since the last major structural change in local government, parish councils have archived little or nothing. Chester le Street District Council never up to this point suggested the District should be fully parished.

Respondent 9:
To have a voice for ordinary people who know how the area runs.

Respondent 10:
To have a voice.

Respondent 13:
Depends on what they can influence.

Respondent 15:
All areas need a voice.

Respondent 16:
The development of a town requires that there must be a sense of belonging, pride and ownership in the businesses, residents and leisure associations in that town. Only an elected,

accountable town council can provide the administrative structure required for the sense of belonging. A unitary county council cannot do this.

Respondent 17:
The District is too big to have only token representation.

Respondent 18:
See item 1.

Respondent 20:
If not fully parished, some areas would have advantages over others.

Respondent 22:
Local representatives for local people. Big is not always right.

Respondent 23:
Costs too high.

Respondent 28:
The town has to have priority status – people visiting – should be able to see the town as superior.

Respondent 29:
Equality.

Respondent 44:
A more balanced view of all the district would be received.

Respondent 45:
Cost savings.

Respondent 46:
I don't not like the changes proposed and think that the Government have got their figures wrong as usual.

Respondent 55:
I think it would be much better for the People in Chester le Street.

Respondent 57:
At the moment we can contact someone who lives locally. The future is uncertain.

Respondent 58:
Each area needs to be represented.

Respondent 59:
Historically it is the way it has always been so – I see no reason for it to be changed – if something is not broken why fix it.

Respondent 65:
The new council is so large in area it will be impossible for areas not parished to get a say.

Respondent 66:

We already had full democratic representation and 73% of us felt this was sufficient. Why was this demolished only to be recreated as something different.

Respondent 74:
Costs.

Respondent 77:
Only adds to the cost of council tax.

Respondent 78:
Satisfied with current local situation.

Respondent 91:
Otherwise we could be at a disadvantage.

Respondent 92:
Too many Parish Councils already. Spread their responsibility to include other areas or do away with them altogether to save money.

Respondent 101:
As all the other areas surrounding main town are parished then why shouldn't we when DCC take over a single unitary Parish Council.

Respondent 106:
Single playing field – all funded alike.

Respondent 110:
Each community deserves to have a representation. Events and 'happenings' in a small area are easily overloaded in the bigger picture.

Respondent 112:
Financial reasons

Respondent 114:
Don't know what this means.

Respondent 115:
There needs to be some type of authority for public to identify.

4. If your answer to Q3 is yes which of the following options would you prefer for the current unparished area:

Respondent 2:
I'd like to see residents asked specifically whether they wish their locality to be absorbed by a neighbouring existing parish and ensure same influence based on size, OR, establish their own smaller parish where the advantage is uniqueness and exclusivity. Once the local residents have made their decision both local (and Central) government are obliged to respect the decision and recognise the formed parish as the essential layer of government they promote.

Respondent 3:
Most economical

Respondent 5:

Chester Moor and Pelton Fell areas have different community needs to the central area so each would be best served by separate arrangements.

Respondent 8:

N.A (See Q3)

Respondent 16:

The needs of Chester le Street as a town are different from those of the surrounding parishes. Any re-hashed district council will not succeed in sustaining the development of the town. The town council must comprise representatives of businesses, residents and leisure communities and clubs in town. A town council is required.

Respondent 45:

Not applicable.

Respondent 46:

Keeping areas locally is the best way forward.

Respondent 55:

As long as the town parish council look after the people then its okay.

Respondent 112:

N/A answer was 'No'.

5. Whatever your answer to Q4, do you feel that any new Town or Parish Council should seek to achieve 'Quality' Status. (See paragraphs 10 and 11 on introductory notes)

Respondent 2:

I may have misunderstood the introductory notes but my understanding of the affect of achieving Quality Status would be to increase a (theoretical) precept of 54p/wk to £4.14/wk. A resentful electorate may be persuaded to pay £28 on top of Council Tax. They are less likely to pay £215. Is "QS" a duplicitous way of denying democratic influence and access?

Respondent 3:

Depends if the "existing –connecting" parishes are eligible to go for it i.e. elected members

Respondent 5:

The Town/Parish Council (s) should work to provide 'quality' services to meet the key standards of 'quality' status however consideration needs to be made to the additional costs to the public and ability to pay – it may need to be balanced.

Respondent 6:

Let's try the new system without re introducing another two tier system via the back door. Councillors should always have good status whatever fancy titles they are given.

Respondent 8:

Town or parish merely add another unwanted tier of inefficient and expensive administration.

Respondent 16:

There have long been the characteristics of town councils over the years. Just observe the traditions and standards of freely elected councils which, without unnecessary political allegiances, have served the needs of the urban communities for years.

Respondent 17:

It is in the best interest of us all to achieve quality status

Respondent 18:

Quality status is generally a very expensive exercise and does little to benefit council tax payers – E.g. The equality and diversity monitoring sections of this questionnaire are totally irrelevant to the formation of parishes.

Respondent 20:

The areas quoted as 'quality' status are much larger areas than Chester le Street. In the current economic climate the amount of rise in the council tax is not justifiable.

Respondent 23:

If we are to have them we might as well have a high standard.

Respondent 28:

This would keep standards from falling.

Respondent 42:

Of course they should. But they all should no matter what

Respondent 43:

More expense to the ordinary people.

Respondent 45:

Not applicable.

Respondent 55:

Yes they should achieve quality service.

Respondent 65:

It needs to be the best.

Respondent 66:

This is just bureaucratic claptrap – more expense for council tax payers

Respondent 74:

All services must be bench marked with performance targets and VFM audits.

6. Evidence from the existing parish councils in Chester-le-Street suggest that a new town or parish council similar to these councils would cost between 21p per week and 54p per week more to council taxpayers in the unparished areas. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Respondent 1:

Council tax along with the rising cost of living and 'credit crunch' are present are high enough. We are looking to lower outgoings not increase them. Also the unitary authority proposals state that there would be savings in moving to one authority. If this is the case these savings should be re-invested to cover the cost of any subsequent changes to structures.

Respondent 2:

I would like to see (in this informative age) each council Tax payer receive annually a detailed breakdown showing how their obligation is spent e.g. 54% on education = £620 etc. A separate, itemized account showing tax payers how the precept is spent would enhance the image of local democracy.

Respondent 3:

These figures are only applicable to Parish Councils – a town council will be a lot higher

Respondent 5:

See comments above – whilst perhaps £1- £2 max more would be acceptable too much of the community £4 may be difficult.

Respondent 6:

Council tax is crippling to most people now. Why have we always got to embrace more costs. We are not a huge area. Let's just have the new council without the red tape.

Respondent 8:

See response to Q1, 2, 3, & 5

Respondent 14:

The former unparished (Urban District) only pays the basic council tax. Parished areas pay basic rate additionally. All should pay equally.

Respondent 15:

We pay too much council tax as it is for the services provided.

Respondent 16:

I think Chester le Street would require the full organisational structure of a traditional town council. I think that for such a substantial town the cost per household would be comparatively small. Parish structures in village area would be more expensive.

Respondent 17:

I would be prepared to pay a percentage of the cost. But feel should be made available from central government.

Respondent 18:

Yes – if ultimate proposals referred to in item 1 are found to be in favour of town/parish councils.

Respondent 20:
As above.

Respondent 21:
If it were for more benefit suitable to those who live here I'm sure it would not be objected to.

Respondent 28:
I honestly believe that we already pay enough for council tax – and why can't some existing premises be adapted – buildings already used by the council.

Respondent 31:
Should be sourced from existing funding.

Respondent 42:
Extend the existing Parish Councils and the cost to the tax payer should be less than that of the new town council

Respondent 43:
The council tax rises every year but the services never get any better.

Respondent 46:
Extra money could be put to keeping post offices open and reopening ones closed.

Respondent 55:
I get council tax benefit so it doesn't bother me much.

Respondent 65:
You need someone to keep control and have equipment to do it.

Respondent 66:
We were told that millions of pounds would be saved by the new system, so we should not need to pay more.

Respondent 74:
Unsure if we receive VFM or representation under current structure.

Respondent 77:
Pay too much council tax as it is.

Respondent 88:
Definitely not.

Respondent 91:
We pay enough council tax this should be sufficient especially in the economic climates and we know councils squirrel money away in bank accounts.

Respondent 92:
Council taxes are high enough and no increases can be accepted.

Respondent 101:

I feel that the parking charges in Chester le Street could easily pay for a Parish council, these machines must take thousands of pounds per day and I have often asked the question where do this money go?

Respondent 106:

No applicable. We are parished.

Respondent 112:

Council tax increases (percentage increases) are already greater than all other household increases including gas, electricity, water etc etc.

Respondent 114:

Probably not as I don't know what difference it will make. I don't suppose they would do anything about all the boy racers who drive dangerously around Chester le Street.

7. As examples of 'Quality' Town Councils the costs of Aycliffe Town Council in Sedgefield and Peterlee Town Council in Easington suggests that once running a 'Quality' town council would cost council taxpayers in the unparished area between £3.85p and £4.14p per week. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a 'Quality' town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Respondent 1:

Council tax along with the rising cost of living and 'credit crunch' are present are high enough. We are looking to lower outgoings not increase them. Also the unitary authority proposals state that there would be savings in moving to one authority. If this is the case these savings should be re-invested to cover the cost of any subsequent changes to structures.

Respondent 2:

See previous answers

Respondent 3:

Who would fund the set up costs

Respondent 5:

However for others this could be nearly a 25% rise in Council Tax which may pose financial difficulties on some.

Respondent 6:

Less Councillors should mean reduced council tax. When the District Council was in power our area never saw a councillor from one election to the next one.

Respondent 8:

See previous answers

Respondent 16:

The focused and cohesive efforts of a town council that was seriously concerned with the welfare of the town (and not a party political instrument) would provide benefits which would be ? more than the cost.

Respondent 17:

Money is always an issue. Central government should help fund these initiatives as in the long term it would help improve the area which should reduce costs.

Respondent 18:

See comments to question 5.

Respondent 25:

There is a big gap in costs between questions 6 and 7.

Respondent 28:

I believe that the council at present does a good job – people voted against change – which was ignored – what was the point of asking? I don't think a new to be better.

Respondent 29:

Not in the present financial climate.

Respondent 42:

See question 6.

Respondent 52:

Pensioner – limited income.

Respondent 55:

Not fair on tax payers.

Respondent 65:

Would need to get more accurate information on town centre area numbers etc.

Respondent 74:

Can't see benefit in giving council any more money as cant see what we get for money now.

Respondent 77:

See previous.

Respondent 78:

'Quality' achievements obtained by fake measures and not worth the paper they are written on.

Respondent 91:

See comment to no 6.

Respondent 92: Same answer as question 6. Greater productivity expected of new DC councillors.

Respondent 101:

My answer is the same as question 6.

Respondent 106:

N/A

Respondent 112:
See answer to Q 6.

Respondent 114:
Defiantly not.

8. Do you consider that a formal review should be undertaken of the whole of the Chester-le-Street District Council area i.e. a Community Governance Review? (See paragraph 6 and 16 on the introductory notes)

Respondent 1:
I feel that in this case a Community Governance Review is essential to ensure that all arrangements are reviewed and assessed and the views of local people are included as part of a formal consultation to ensure that the outcomes meets the needs and wants of residents.

Respondent 2:
Why could a Governance Review and Boundary Commission Process not have been undertaken and finalised before the establishment of Unitary Councils? What decisions are going to be made by the UCs before this essential layer of local governance is in place? Can these decisions be subsequently challenged? How certain can a local electorate be that they will definitely have a voice at local level?

Respondent 5:
Whilst consistency is important, delivery mechanisms need to be appropriate to specific areas.

Respondent 6:
Once again its all down to cost.

Respondent 8:
Unwanted and unnecessary expenditure

Respondent 16:
I'm not sure there is much point in addressing this question. You have made it clear that you will not make any move before the boundary commission reports. That must mean the so called 'unparished' area of Chester le Street town must remain in limbo for at least two years.

Respondent 17:
This is an important change and needs to be properly researched and understood.

Respondent 23:
Why no have a vote.

Respondent 28:
How else can the people be given what they want and don't want.

Respondent 42:
I'm not sure it would do any good. Will you take any notice?

Respondent 43:
Why do we need a Parish Council. Never had one before.

Respondent 45:

Extra cost.

Respondent 46:
Scrap the idea all together and start again.

Respondent 55:
No I don't think it's a good idea.

Respondent 65:
Again we need to know the figures

Respondent 66:
I believe that in a few years time the giant new county council will have to be split up again because it will be too unwieldy.

Respondent 78:
Waste of 'real' time.

Respondent 91:
Only if it does not cost the rate payer.

Respondent 92:
It would not make any difference. No one took any notice of the last review which was returned to the government

Respondent 112:
Formal reviews come at a price – the council should be considering how to cut council spending.

Respondent 114:
I read the notes and they didn't make sense, so its quite hard to comment on what I would want.

9. If you do not support the idea of a Town or Parish Council in the unparished area how do you feel this area can be represented in the future?

Respondent 1:
The views of local people in terms of representation need not be limited to Parish/Town Councils. Other options should be explored for e.g. looking at the remit of 'action area partnerships' to include representing and working with local residents and liaising with county councillors and local authority officers.

Respondent 3:
By local Unitary Councillors and Durham County Council

Respondent 5:
I do support the idea of a Town/Parish Council in principal however I think we could be adequately represented depending on the process and mechanisms for consultation with the Unitary Council – however this needs to be consistent across the county and district.

Respondent 6:

Like always I feel we have never had proper representation. Surely the whole area should be just as good with two reps. We never had good reps from thirty odd councillors before.

Respondent 8:

By its two, elected members in the new unitary authority.

Respondent 18:

See comments to question 1.

Respondent 23:

Form a residents body let the people who live there do it.

Respondent 26:

Areas absorbed into existing Parishes. Town Centre should have town council.

Respondent 27:

Just carry on with improvements.

Respondent 28:

The town council should deal with parishes surrounding it.

Respondent 34:

N/C

Respondent 43:

That's what the district council is supposed to do.

Respondent 44:

N/A

Respondent 45:

One County Council with town councillor sitting on county council.

Respondent 46:

Have yearly fixed elections and a mayor to oversee all arrangements.

Respondent 47:

County councillors

Respondent 52:

Rely on expertise of qualified officers of the new unitary authority/county councillors.

Respondent 57:

Support the idea.

Respondent 60:

We seek to so alright as we are.

Respondent 64:

DCC can run it.

Respondent 66:

Give us our district council back.

Respondent 69:

As proposed.

Respondent 71:

Don't know what any of the town/parish councils do to help improve Chester Le Street.

Respondent 74:

It will be represented by unitary authority and boundaries changed to ensure representation for town areas.

Respondent 75:

We will have county councillors.

Respondent 76:

The two county council members should be quite able and qualified to carry out public enquiries.

Respondent 77:

Don't feel the need as we've managed okay in the past without.

Respondent 78:

By people being true to themselves and each other without interference from self seeking individuals.

Respondent 82:

I will have to trust the county councillors.

Respondent 92:

The new DC Councillors should represent us at reduced costs.

Respondent 96:

By action area partnerships.

Respondent 97:

No idea.

Respondent 103:

As ruled by government.

Respondent 101:

We should have local surgeries to contact our representatives to forward our views within the community.

Respondent 112:

All areas should be represented by at least one county council member.

Respondent 114:

What are the alternatives?

Respondent 116:

By communicating with County Councillor or at a surgery.

Respondent 118:

Only Durham Unitary Council togetherness required.

10. If you have any other views or want to raise any other issue please do so here?

Respondent 1:

There is an opportunity to review the way DCC operates locally in the 21st century and options other than traditional parish/town Councils should be explored to ensure more inclusiveness in decision-making. The increasing low turn out at elections demonstrates younger peoples (in particular) changing attitude towards formal democratic process, we need to adapt.

I feel that this survey is rather leading – particularly Q1 -3 which is more or less the same question asked differently. The wording is leading only focusing on the negative implications of no town council. Similarly, the supporting information is leading in that it is clearly supportive of the Town Council model and offers no balanced view or alternative. It is disappointing that there are no alternative options to be explored although I understand that the unitary bid referenced this model. Finally it is disappointing that there is not a freepost return address and residents are expected to pay to contribute to the review.

Respondent 2:

Other Views/Issues:

1. Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)

- What is their relationship with parish (and other) Council's proposed to be?
- Who sits on the AAPs?
- Who do they represent?
- How accountable will they be?
- Why is it current policy to promote AAPs but less emphasis is placed on formation of parishes?
- Will there be a risk that AAPs will be more in favour of the business community rather than ordinary electorate?

2. Residents Associations (RAs)

- Is it possible to increase the status and involvement of already formed RAs when decision affecting local communities are being made?
- Is it possible to promote greater interaction between RAs and existing, or soon to be created, Parish Councils?

Respondent 6:

Some areas in Chester le Street get more attention than others. Our representatives seem to be all in the South Pelaw area while the other parts get little notice.

Respondent 8:

I feel this whole exercise is not required – there has been a democratic decision to move to a new unitary authority – accept that.

Respondent 16:

I am concerned to know how the progress in the developments in the town e.g. the market area, the shopping in Front Street, can be monitored and reported without any 'parished' structure oversee it. I do not believe the new unitary authority can do this fairly and evenly with a confused 'parished' and 'non-parished' sub structure.

Respondent 20:

What is going to happen to the Civic Centre if all the council work is based at County level. Will the public have any say in where money is spent. The Civic Hears was a very large amount of money spent with a resulting eyesore.

Respondent 21:

Personally I believe that our town was spoilt when the market was moved away. It would have been better to have left it where it was and given in an under cover bus station where I to market is now. Durham, Stanley and Consett are much better provided for than us.

Respondent 43:

Why pay more council tax to make more jobs for councillors when we have never needed them in the past.

Respondent 57:

Is it not too late now. We already had a vote that was overruled.

Respondent 65:

As a town council with business and residential area we need to have our say on many items of how it is run and what we can achieve. What is good and not good for our area.

Respondent 66:

73% of us voted against this scheme and the then chairman of the county council said the referendum wasn't worth the paper it was printed on. How democratic is that? I still think it will cost millions more than the previous set up and has been imposed on us for purely political reasons.

Respondent 74:

What is the point of a unitary authority and another town council just more costs and keep councillors on expensive.

Respondent 75:

This is only to preserve existing councillors jobs – we do not need them. This is a waste of money – some of us have to work hard to pay council tax – not all of us have it paid for us

Respondent 76:

We feel this whole cost is wasteful from an administration point of view and any extra cost of any sort on our rates is abhorrent.

Respondent 91:

The representative on the town or parish council should be a local person who knows and understands there areas not a newcomer who has no idea about what locals want or need.

Respondent 92:

Is anyone going to take notice of peoples views this time. The last survey was totally ignored by the government.

Respondent 110:

Local people should be represented by a 'local' person who knows them and the area first hand.

Respondent 114:

No.

Respondent 117:

I have completed the attached questionnaire as requested but feel that the format of the 'comments' spaces results in much repetition and I have, therefore, set out my specific comments that I hope will clarify my views. I believe it is important to say that I am retired, have lived in the District all my life, lived in Council housing as well as private, have experienced both a Parish Council and an unparished area and both my children have been educated in local schools. I believe I am very well placed, therefore, to comment constructively on the questionnaire based on my lifetime experience in the District.

1) When we were asked to vote earlier in the year on a Unitary Authority our expectation was that Council Taxes after initial setting up cost would reduce or at least remain steady after taking into account natural inflation etc. Despite Council claims at the time, the majority of people did not vote to keep the District Council, a significant majority of people failed to vote and the decision to disband the District Council was rightly taken. To produce a questionnaire that includes an option to increase council taxes by £200 per annum in addition to the other elements of Council Tax increases that will occur is ridiculous and at best insensitive.

2) As set out in the document, the advantages play an important part in deciding the value of creating a Town Council and I am afraid it is clear that you are struggling to justify these. Increased representation in over 60 years has not brought success to the town as we have witnessed a gradual degradation whilst the Council have looked backwards not forwards. An example has been to build the town future around a market place or should I say, "the dying heart", when it is clear from the attendance this is not what the majority of the public is seeking. There does not appear to be any overall planning strategy for the town centre to provide a mix of shopping but rather a free for all that has allowed the main street to consist mainly of Building Societies, Charity and Coffee shops. This has resulted in the closing of many smaller businesses to be replaced by "cheap shops" that will not attract visitors.

The historical increased representation has also seen us ridiculed nationally with a need to have special teams brought in to run the Council business and to have planning debacles such as the failed Bail Hostel. I am afraid I see most of your suggested advantages as reasons not to have a Town Council.

3) There is certainly a need for a focal point for residents to contact 'Operational Departments' i.e. the people who do the work. We do not want a bureaucratic high cost additional layer of government that is simply a continuation of a failed District Council under another name. I am afraid I see this questionnaire as simply a further attempt by the District Council to retain an inefficient structure after having already wasted our taxes challenging the legality of the changes we voted for.

4) As indicated in the previous comment I believe there is a need for a local contact point but this needs to be connected to the 'Operational Units' that do the work. There is a need to recognise that Society has moved on in recent years and whilst we do still have some vulnerable people in the areas such as the elderly, the very old generations are unfortunately rapidly passing on. Those of us who make up the current elderly population are in general very able to use telephones, literate and increasingly able to use our own computers. I have never found it necessary to contact a Councillor in over 50 years and I would suggest that today when they are contacted this is normally by telephone or email. More use should be made of existing methods of communication e.g. this questionnaire could have reached most of the electorate if it had been added as a tear off to the end of the District News. Planning issues can already be accessed on line at the Council Website and for those who do not have computers, key major issues can be raised via focus groups or as an adjunct to existing regular publications. You must accept that significant Planning issues are not usually

processed within short time spans and this should present an opportunity for ample time for local representation to the County Councillors. Perhaps there is a need for a quarterly Planning Digest for significant schemes to be incorporated into the County News magazine.

5) I believe there is a need for Councils to recognise that the old communication methods via Councillors are no longer effective or necessary. I see my Council as a business that supplies me with a service and is no difference from my energy or water suppliers. If I have a problem with them, I simply pick up the telephone to contact their operational centre and if I do not have any success, there is a clear complaints procedure or I have access to other providers such as Citizens Advice Bureaux or Ombudsmen. This is the current method that everyone has to follow including the most vulnerable and there should be no requirement for the Council to be different.

A similar process needs to be implemented for Councils and this can be achieved by the creation of small local multidiscipline progress centres for specific local issues such as holes in the road, individual lighting failures etc that incorporates all the modern communication methods as well as a reception desk for those who do not have access to these. We should maximise the benefits of centralised services by the economy of scale and not create additional local office blocks that will incur ongoing high costs. These progress centres can also act as contact points for focus groups or indeed County Councillor surgeries but there should be at least one senior manager located in them with sufficient authority to deal with significant problems.

In conclusion, I will be surprised if you receive many comments on the questionnaire and as such, I do not believe a minimal response gives you the mandate to proceed in setting up a Town Council. I do not consider a 16 page document to be a short one as described in your covering letter and suspect many will have simply been shredded. A more positive response would have been achieved if you had simply asked the real questions in the District News:

- a) Do you want a Town Council at an extra cost of £200 per year per Household?
- b) Do you want more councillors?
- c) Do you need increased Public Service employment or a more diversified employment regime in the Chester le Street area?

I hope you find these comments useful.

The Questionnaire



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review into the future of the unparished area within Chester-le-Street

Questionnaire

The District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is undertaking a review into the future of the unparished areas of the District. The aim is to put forward recommendations to the new Unitary Authority as to whether there is the scope and need for such areas to be parished in the future. A plan showing the unparished area of the District is attached.

The Committee is seeking the community's views in a number of ways including this questionnaire which has been sent to a sample of residents who currently live in the unparished area of Chester-le-Street, parish councils and community and residents associations. Views received will influence recommendations to the new Unitary Council.

We would be grateful if you could take the time to complete this short questionnaire and return it to Colin Turnbull, Democratic Services Officer, Chester-le-Street District Council, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham DH3 3UT by **30th November 2008**.

It would aid the completion of the questionnaire if you first read the accompanying notes included with this questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and help.

Geoff Armstrong, Chairman of Chester-le-Street Overview and Scrutiny Committee

David Holding, Vice Chair of Chester-le-Street Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Questions

1. If you live within the unparished area of Chester-le-Street do you currently feel disadvantaged because you will not have a Town or Parish Council to represent your views or deliver local services after April 2009? Please tick box

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

2. From 1 April 2009 there will be no District Council Councillors and there will be two County Council Members serving your area. Do you think you will be disadvantaged then by not having a Town or Parish Council to represent your views?

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

3. Do you feel that the District ought to be fully parished?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Explain the reason for your answer

4. If your answer to Q3 is yes which of the following options would you prefer for the current unparished area:

- e) A single Town or Parish Council covering the whole of the area;
- f) The extension of existing surrounding Parish Councils to cover the area
- g) A mix of these with a single Town and Parish Council focussed on the Town Centre and existing Parish Councils extended to include areas such as Chester Moor and Pelton Fell.
- h) Another solution, please state your ideas.

5. Whatever your answer to Q4, do you feel that any new Town or Parish Council should seek to achieve 'Quality' Status. (See paragraphs 10 and 11 on introductory notes)

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

6. Evidence from the existing parish councils in Chester-le-Street suggest that a new town or parish council similar to these councils would cost between 21p per week and 54p per week more to council taxpayers in the unparished areas. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

7. As examples of 'Quality' Town Councils the costs of Aycliffe Town Council in Sedgefield and Peterlee Town Council in Easington suggests that once running a 'Quality' town council would cost council taxpayers in the unparished area between £3.85p and £4.14p per week. Would you be prepared to pay additional council tax at this level for the representation and services a 'Quality' town or parish council could provide? See paragraphs 19-22 on the introductory notes.

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

8. Do you consider that a formal review should be undertaken of the whole of the Chester-le-Street District Council area i.e. a Community Governance Review? (See paragraph 6 and 16 on the introductory notes)

Yes

No

Unsure

Comments

9. If you do not support the idea of a Town or Parish Council in the unparished area how do you feel this area can be represented in the future?

Please comment.

10. If you have any other views or want to raise any other issue please do so here?

11. On 26th November (between 6 and 8pm) we are proposing to have an extended focus group where by invitation only members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can meet interested people from the community to hear views first hand. Would you be interested in coming along if invited?

Yes

No

If yes could we have your contact details?:

Telephone:

E-mail:

12. Your name and address (Optional)

Equality and Diversity Monitoring.

Your answers to the following questions will help us understand the demographics of respondents and if there are any specific groups we still need to consult other groups.

This information will be treated separately from your responses to the earlier questions and will be treated anonymously. You only need to complete this information if you are happy to do so.

A. Are you: Male Female

B. How old are you?

<18 18-25 26-35
36-45 46-55 56-65
65+

C Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? (This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Longstanding means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year)

Yes No

D What is your religion or belief?

Christian Hindu Jewish
Muslim Sikh Buddhist
None Other Please State

E how do you describe your sexuality

Straight

Gay Woman/Lesbian

Bisexual

Gay Man

Other

Please State _____

F To which of these groups do you belong

1. White

English

Welsh

Scottish

N. Irish

Irish

British

Other

Please State _____

2. Travelling Community

Gypsy/Roma

Traveller of Irish descent

Other

Please State _____

3. Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any Other Black Background

Please State _____

4. Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other

Please State _____

5 Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Chinese

Bangladeshi

Other

Please State _____

6. Other Ethnic Group

Please State _____



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review into the future of the unparished area within Chester-le-Street

Introductory Notes

The following notes are aimed at helping you understanding:

- the current period of change in local government;
- why we are carrying out the review and what we will do with the findings;
- what town and parish councils do; and
- an indication of costs associated with town and parish councils.

It might help you complete the questionnaire if you read these notes first.

Local Government Reorganisation

1. The Government have decided that in future the existing two tiers of local government, the County Council and District Councils will be replaced by a single tier know as a **Unitary Council**. From 1st April 2009 all council services will therefore be delivered by a single unitary council to be known as Durham County Council. All councils in the county are currently working in partnership to set this new council up. Currently you are served by both county and district councillors. From the first of April 2009 each ward will be served by two county councillors. This may change in the future as the Boundary Commission (a national body) are currently carrying out a review of the electoral divisions throughout the county. They will make their views known whether there should be any further changes in autumn 2009.

2. The government propose no change to the current arrangements for town and parish councils. The new council has proposed that town and parish councils will be given a stronger role in the future. The County Council's bid for local government review stated that all areas of the county should be parished in the future. You can find out more about the role of Parish and Town Councils in paragraphs 8 to 22.

3. The county council have been consulting communities in the county over the summer on what is known as '**Action Area Partnerships**'. These will be partnerships which work together to meet the needs of communities. There is likely to be such a partnership for Chester-le-Street. These partnerships do not affect parish and town councils but is likely parish and town councils will have a role on these partnerships. The 'Action Area Partnerships' therefore will **not** replace parish and town councils.

The Scrutiny Review of the Unparished areas of Chester-le-Street

4. Chester-le-Street's Overview and Scrutiny Committee plays a role in monitoring the performance of the District council and its partners. It holds the council's Executive to account. It also engages in developing and implementation of council policies and strategies. In doing so it considers the communities point of view. The whole aim of scrutiny is to improve services. In the last government inspection of the council the Scrutiny function was found to be 'effective'

5. In the council's final year the Scrutiny panel is carrying out a review into the unparished are of the district. It is doing this because this is not currently a focus of the County Council as it develops the new unitary council. The District council wanted to understand whether there is the scope and desire to establish any new parish or town council in the future to ensure that all communities in Chester-le-Street have the best representation possible.

6. It is **not** the intention of the council's overview and scrutiny review to establish any new parish or town councils before April the first. This is for a number of reasons:

- The Boundary Committee (the national electoral body) have strongly recommended councils not to establish any new parish or town councils while they are carrying out there electoral review in the county (they will not report on their recommendations until autumn 2009);
- New legislation now requires councils considering new parish arrangements to carry out what is called a '**community governance review**', this involves a full assessment of arrangements within a specific area or across the whole district. It can therefore look at existing arrangements right across Chester-le-Street and not just in areas where a parish council does not exist. It includes the need to undertake statutory community consultation with the county council and stakeholders including communities affected. There are costs that go with such a review. The district council does not have the resource or the time to fully undertake this at the current time particular against the Boundary Committee advice and the fact that the new unitary council will be the ultimate decision maker on any proposals or recommendations

7. It is the intention of the council's overview and scrutiny review to make recommendations to the new unitary council as to how it feels the new unitary ought to proceed. It will be developing its recommendations by:

- understanding the legal and financial implications of parish and town councils and 'community governance reviews';
- visiting existing and developing parish and town councils in the region; and
- Informally seeking the views of communities, town and parish councils and resident and community associations.

Roles of Town and parish councils

8. Town & Parish Councils are the first tier of government and are the first point of contact for anyone concerned with a community issue. They are made up of democratically elected councillors. A Town Council has the same powers as a Parish Council, it is simply that the Council has decided to take on the title 'town' as more appropriate. Town and Parish Councils are an essential part of the structure of local democracy and play a vital role in acting on behalf of the communities they represent. They:

- Give views, on behalf of the community, on planning applications and other proposals that affect the area;
- Undertake projects and schemes that benefit local residents;
- Work in partnership with other bodies to achieve benefits for the parish;
- Alert relevant authorities to problems that arise or work that needs to be undertaken; and
- Help the other tiers of local government keep in touch with their local communities.

9. They have a wide range of powers which essentially relate to local matters, such as, looking after community buildings, open space, allotments, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters and car parks.

What 'Quality' Town Council status means

10. The Quality Town & Parish Council Scheme was launched in 2003 with three main aims:

To provide a benchmark of standards for Town & Parish Councils.
To enable them to work more closely with partners in the delivery of services.

To enable them to more effectively represent their communities.

11. In order to achieve Quality Status, Town & Parish Councils must demonstrate they have achieved the standard required by successfully completing a number of tests based on:

- Electoral mandate
- Qualifications of the Clerk
- Council Meetings
- Communication and Community Engagement
- Annual Report
- Accounts
- Code of Conduct
- Promoting local democracy and citizenship
- Terms and conditions
- Training

What might be the advantages and disadvantages of a Town or parish council?

12. Advantages might be:

- Increased representation
- Right to be consulted on planning applications
- Ability to undertake projects for the benefit of local residents
- Partnership working with other bodies for the benefit of the Parish
- Ability to precept for funds

13. Disadvantages might be:

- Costs will be borne by residents
- An additional layer of government

14. What are the current arrangements in Chester-le-Street?

There are currently 11 Parish Councils in the District serving the village areas that were formerly part of the Rural District Council, these are:

- Bournmoor
- Edmondsley
- Kimblesworth & Plawsworth
- Great Lumley
- Little Lumley
- North Lodge
- Ouston
- Pelton
- Sacriston
- Urpeth
- Waldrige

The remaining areas of the Council do not have a Parish Council, these are:

- Chester Moor
- Chester-le-Street town area (excluding Waldrige Park which is within Waldrige Parish)
- Pelton Fell
- Newfield

15. The number of electors in the Parish Council areas is 26,159 and in the unparished area is 15,570. The area of the District that does not have any Parish Councils is indicated on the attached map.

How might a new town or parish council be created?

16. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 introduced two ways in which Town or Parish Councils can be created. Firstly by a principal Council undertaking a 'Community Governance Review' and secondly in response to a

Community Governance Petition signed by the requisite number of local electors as determined against three thresholds:

- An area with 499 or less local electors – at least 50% of that electorate
- Area between 500 and 2500 electors – at least 250 of that electorate
- Area of more than 2500 electors – at least 10% of that electorate

17. In Durham County Council's successful unitary bid there was clear reference to the importance of Town and Parish Councils and a clear undertaking for the new Unitary Council to use its power to establish new Town and Parish Councils.

18. Currently the independent Boundary Committee for England is undertaking a review of the electoral arrangements in Durham to ensure they reflect the way in which the new Council will operate in the future, and how it will engage with local communities, including Town and Parish Councils. The Boundary Committee has requested that Community Governance Reviews be delayed until its final report has been published. Accordingly, the District Council is undertaking an exercise to identify whether there is a demand for Town and/or Parish Councils in the area of the District that is currently unparished, with a view to making a recommendation to the new Unitary Council.

What are the potential costs of a town and parish council and who pays?

19. Although it is not possible to give an accurate assessment of the cost of setting up and running a Town or Parish Council, certain costs could not be avoided:

- Employment of Clerk
- Rental of office space and utility costs
- Office equipment (e.g. computer, printer, copier, telephones)
- Stationery
- Miscellaneous running cost

20. Based on information from other Councils who have undertaken similar exercises, set up costs for a Town Council based on the Chester-le-Street town centre area could be between £100,000 and £200,000. For a Parish Council based on an area such as Pelton Fell could be in the region of £10,000 to £20,000.

21. Running costs would be dependant on the level of service provided but could be expected to be at least twice the set-up costs in the early years increasing as the service provision grows. The 11 existing Parish Councils in the District currently precept for amounts that vary from £3,000 (Edmondsley) to £44,000 (Pelton). The effect on the Council Tax of the Parish Council precepts based on a Band D property varies from £10.98 (Ouston) to £28.22 (Sacriston), which equate to 21p and 54p a week respectively.

22. As examples of 'Quality' Town Councils the costs of Aycliffe Town Council in Sedgefield and Peterlee Town Council in Easington suggests that once running a 'Quality' town council would cost council taxpayers in the unparished area between £3.85p and £4.14p per week.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy - Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Final Report Second Draft

Appendix 3:

Extended Focus Group Analysis Report



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review into the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street

Extended Focus Group Analysis Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the results of the Extended Focus Group for the unparished areas Overview and Scrutiny Review
- 1.3 The focus group took place on Wednesday 25th November 2008. The focus group started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.45 pm. It was by invitation only. Those invited were:
- Parish Councils
 - Residents and Community Associations
 - Those who had volunteered participation in the focus group having completed positively the relevant question on the community questionnaire.

- 1.4 Participants were as follows:

Members of the public:

Angus Craver

Hugh Evans

A Foster (representing Waldrige Parish Council)

John Curry

Stephen Hann

A Hall

Mike Sekowski (also a District Councillor) representing Pelton Parish Council)

Members

Councillor David Holding (Chair) Chester-le-Street District Council

Councillor Geoff Armstrong Chester-le-Street District Council

Councillor Ralph Harrison Chester-le-Street District Council

Councillor David Thompson Chester-le-Street District Council

Councillor Martin Gollan Chester-le-Street District Council
Councillor Steve Barr Chester-le-Street District Council
Councillor John Shiell (also Durham County Councillor)

Councillor Alan Bell, Durham County Council

Officers:

Ian Forster	Director of Corporate Resources
Colin Turnbull	Democratic Services Officer
Shelley Marshall	Democratic Services Assistant and Chairman's PA

- 1.4 In summary only one participant considered that there should be no further governance arrangements. This limited opposition to any new parish or town council arrangement came at the very end of the meeting. There were strong arguments put forward in respect of some form of parish or town council arrangement. In particular some of the participants felt that some interim arrangements were needed to avoid any loss of representation between vesting day and the start of any new town and parish council. The details of the viewpoints put forward are included in the following sections.

2. Views in Favour of Town and Parish Councils

- 2.1 Viewpoints recorded at the event in support of a Town and Parish council were as follows:

- Strongly in favour of town council
- Workload is going to be to great
- Issues previously set out
- If there is a cost what will be the cost if we do not have the structures in place
- There was a process three or four years ago
- Two fantastic county councillors which are locally based
- What will costs will be to Chester-le-Street if there is no one on the ground
- Serious issues, should not talk about costs but benefits
- Could it be done with no cost? Parish extensions?
- Money would be best spent establishing a parish or town rather than immediately go in existing parishes but agree that if go for a town council in the centre it should be
- Working together to build on cultural links and feel there is a lot of support for this in some areas
- Empowerment White Paper – more co-opting of groups to Parish Councils
- A Chester-Le-Street council ought to be a conglomerate of various groups that represents the interests of the town
- Emphasis the issue of ensuring that interim arrangements are in place
- Urge representatives get together and create understanding of the benefits that a town or parish council would bring and sell this to the public

3. Views in Favour of Town and Parish Councils

3.1 Viewpoints recorded at the event against a Town and Parish council were as follows:

- What you are trying to do is bringing in another tier of local government
- Not going to be any better than the council as it is

4. Views in Favour of other models

4.1 Viewpoints recorded at the event for other models of governance were as follows but were largely the views of councillors:

- 22 RA's that take part in the life of local democracy
- Example of Crag Head Trust backed up by community partnership
- Depends on the quality and integrity of the people who are engaged
- Pelton potential to join partnerships

5. Other points of view made.

5.1 Finally, other points of view were as follows:

- Stanley have taken a £100,000 loan to establish their new town council
- Birtley – residents decided they did not want it and it was abandoned
- If you have a parish residents have accepted the costs with a new one there will be an additional cost
- It will be 2011 maybe later before we get something and this is absurd
- Arrangements are crazy
- As long as people can ride the bike the Christmas present will be valued
- Are people fearing loss of democratic representation or models of achieving economic development?
- How will AAP's be comprised
- What are MAA's
- New unitary are working on a top down approach
- Looking at AAPs but will not deliver
- Parishes closer to local people
- Example of 7 Members down to 2 – workload increases members will not cope
- Stronger areas might attract more resources
- Newfield as an example feels often left out of picture
- Places like Newfield ought to be represented
- Chester le Street is going and DCC is taking its place - it needs to be given a chance to deliver

- How will government allow groups with Parish Councils
- What kind of changes what sort of legislation what can be done by central government
- AAPs £150,000 left after staffing costs
- Need a development group under the town council
- Need to emphasise the Limbo situation between 1st April and the setting up of any proposals must ensure that the County is requested to ensure that there are interim arrangements
- Concerns about the war memorial site



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy - Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Final Report Second Draft

Appendix 4:

Government Guidance on 'Community Governance Reviews

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Refreshing Local Democracy: Review into the Future of the Unparished Areas of the District

Appendix 4:

Government Guidance on ‘Community Governance Reviews’

General

1, A community governance review involves looking at the forms of corporate governance. This is no “one size fits all” vehicle. Paragraph 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.’ Paragraph 35 of the Guidance states ‘[p]rincipal councils must consider the wider picture of community governance in carrying out their reviews...’

Non-parish forms of community governance

2. Paragraph 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.’

3. 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.’

Parish form of community governance

4. Parish councils have the advantage of democratic accountability. Paragraph 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. The Act helps to highlight the importance of parish councils. Paragraph 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. Paragraph 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.'

What can be the Style of a parish council?

6. 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 Paragraph 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 Paragraph 110 of the Guidance).

Should there be grouping or degrouping of parishes?

7. A community governance review can recommend the grouping or degrouping of parishes by principal councils. As Paragraph 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' (Paragraph 113 of the Guidance).

Should parishes be abolished and dissolved?

8. Paragraph 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

Paragraph 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.’

How can a council assess whether to voluntarily undertake a review?

9. 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 Paragraph 28 of the Guidance states ‘[p]rincipal councils should use their knowledge and awareness of local issues when deciding whether to undertake a review...’ Paragraph 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.’ Examples of when a review should be avoided are given in the Guidance.

Paragraph 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.

10. 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.’

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 Paragraph38).

What should the terms of reference be?

12 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 Paragraph 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. Paragraph 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...’

What are the Consultation requirements?

13. 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. Paragraph 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.

What are the criteria for undertaking a community governance review?

14. The statutory criteria in section 93 of the Act are set out in Paragraph 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 Paragraph 52 of the Guidance).

What recommendations and decisions on the outcome of reviews?

15. 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 Paragraph 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 Paragraph 92 of the Guidance).

16. In deciding what recommendations to make the Council must have regard to the section 93 criteria 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 Paragraph 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 Paragraph 51 of the Guidance). The Council must publish its decision and the reasons for its decision.

What about implementation?

17. 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 Paragraph 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.'

18. 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.'

19. The Guidance also 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 valid community governance petition...)'



Chester-le-Street District Council

Report to: Executive

Date of Meeting: 2nd February 2009

Report from: Director of Corporate Services

Title of Report: Review into the Future of the Market
Final Report

Agenda Item Number:

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for members to consider and agree the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the scrutiny review into the future of the town centre market.
- 1.2 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:
1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultations required in respect of the work of the task and Finish Group are fully identified in the attached Appendix.

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE & 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.
- 3.3 The scrutiny topic has a direct impact on the following area of the **People and Place** priority:

- Investment in the Town Centre.

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- 3.4 The work of the Task and Finish group supported a key project of the the ***People and Place*** priority delivery plan in respect of the future of the market place. Scrutiny recommendations will be incorporated into the 'Handing over the Baton' Report to be presented to the new Unitary council in March 2009

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report to this council at the current time.

4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications relating to this report at the current time.

4.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications relating to this report at the current time.

4.4 Other Services

The review will create an impact upon service departments required to support Members in relation to information requests and providing support to the investigative process.

4.5 Diversity

There are no known diversity implications relating to this report at the current time. Accessibility to the Market place will be considered as part of the review

4.6 Risk

There are no risk implications relating to this report at the current time other than human resource capacity issues as a direct result of Local Government Re-organisation. This issue has been managed through a different way of scrutiny working by engaging consultancy and Town Centre Development Manager engagement. The Town Centre Development Manager has fully supported the Task and Finish Group in reaching its findings, conclusions and recommendations.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no specific crime and disorder implications to this report at the current time. The review has taken into account any particular crime and antisocial behaviour issues related to the Town Centre marketplace.

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 attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.9 LGR Implications

The proposals are a fundamental part of the councils Transition Plan. Therefore no agreement of the County Council was required to conduct this piece of work. However it is unlikely that any significant recommendations will be implemented in the lifetime of this council. Once agreed the Review Report will be incorporated into the 'Handing over the Baton' Report to be presented to the new Unitary council in March 2009

5. **BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW**

5.1 Through the development of the new single priority 'People and Place' a number of Action Learning Sets (ALS) has been developed to deliver on some of the key themes and projects. ALS2 – Investment in the Town Centre is considering the potential for the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. A specific project 'Research the Future of the Market' . Has been agreed as part of the **People and Place** priority delivery plan, and approved by the Executive.

5.2 Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other different retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart project. Its attractiveness has been approved and other work of the Action Learning Set has developed significant programmes of events throughout the year to improve it further. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore a right time to consider options for the markets future.

5.3 The Action Learning Set was very clear in that it wishes to raise awareness of and fully explore the viability of the options for the future of the market

5.4 The review involved looking at how the market's sustainability can be achieved over the next 5 to 10 years. It looked at other options in managing the markets including private sector engagement.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

6.1 The objective of the review was to:

- Evaluate the future of Chester-le-Street market in terms of its over the next five to ten years.

6.2 To achieve this review considered the following key issues and questions:

- Which are the top performing Market Towns?
- What do the best do?
- What do the traders think?
- Is the perceived decline in market performance a local phenomenon?
- Are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces; such as the credit squeeze?
- In times of perceived economic difficulties markets should offer better value for money, what affect does the presence of discounters such as Aldi and Wilkinson's have on the market?
- What are the factors that are recognised to appeal to shoppers?
- Should the public sector continue to manage what is a private sector activity?
- Which companies run private markets and where?
- How do they compare?
- How does the relationship between such operators and local authority landlords' work?
- What rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?
- What is the sustainability of Chester-le-Street's market in the medium and longer term (five or ten year's time)?
- Suggest a way to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability?
- What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to make in the light of the research findings?

7. METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The review methodology is detailed below.

7.2 Consultancy Guidance

Principle research support was provided by Smartspeed Consultancy Services. This company will:

- identify the top performing market towns and why they are the 'best';
- Obtain feedback from traders as to the current status of the market;
- Research the factors that appeal to visitors / shoppers to visit a (local) market;
- Identify and evaluate privately run markets;
- Analyse information gained to evaluate sustainability over the next five to ten years;
- Undertake report writing and reporting to inform the Task and Finish Groups discussions and interim and final reports.

7.3 Visits

On the guidance of the consultants visits were arranged to appropriate markets and operators to understand how they operate successfully. Findings are fully detailed in Appendix 1.

7.4 Evidence Gathering

The Task and Finish Group sought to engage traders and public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. This was undertaken through a series of techniques including questionnaires, consultation events and online surveys. Findings are fully detailed in Appendix 1.

7.5 Report Findings

The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings which was submitted to the last People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7.6 Timeline

The following timetable was proposed:

- Initial informal discussion on Draft Scoping Report 22nd July 2008
- Initial presentation, Scoping report and Task and Finish Group membership agreed 30th July 2008
- Visits to other markets and operators by 13th September 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10th September 2008

- Web based questionnaire by end September with article in next District News by 30th September 2008
- Meeting with Traders by 30th September 2008
- Consultant report of findings and Options by 10th October
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd October 2008
- Task and Finish Group informal meeting to discuss evidence gained by 14th November and agree recommendations
- Findings of Task and Finish Group reported to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd December 2008

7.7 This report was completed slightly behind this target and this has been due to reduced capacity within the Legal and Democratic Services Team.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:

1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO:

- Transition Plan & People and Place Priority

AUTHOR NAME: Ian Forster
DESIGNATION: Director of Corporate Services
DATE OF REPORT: 15 January 2009
VERSION NUMBER 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Appendix 1

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

Final Report

January 2009

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Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

Foreword of the Chair and Lead Member

In April 2008 Chester-le-Street District Council will no longer exist. A new unitary authority known as Durham County Council will be created.

Chester-le-District Council has made great efforts to invest in its Town Centre. Our job is not finished and we will be handing over the reigns to the County Council with the expectation that they will carry on our good work. Our Town Centre Master Plan will help the new authority do just that.

The market has historical and popular attraction for residents of the district and beyond. It is an important part of the civic heart of the town both in terms of its location and nature. It is vitally important to people and place in the district. The way people shop has been changing over the last decade and the current economic climate has been threatening this important part of Chester-le-Street life.

This scrutiny review looks at what needs to be done to make secure a sustainable future for the market. We have listened to the views of traders in compiling our findings. We urge Durham County Council to listen to our findings and adopt our recommendations.

We would like to thank the traders for helping us gather our evidence as well as the operators of other markets we visited during the course of our review.

Cllr Geoff Armstrong

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Committee
Lead Member

The review was carried out between June 2008 and December 2008.
The Lead Officer was Robert McMullen, Town Centre Development Manager

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

Future of the Market Task and Finish Group
Cllr G Armstrong (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Lead Member)
Cllr J W Barrett
Cllr W Laverick
Cllr P Nathan
Cllr f Wilkinson
Cllr J Proud
Cllr S Greatwich
Cllr R Harrison
Cllr K Potts
Cllr M Potts
Cllr D Thompson
Cllr D L Robson

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The council's 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. 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.
- 1.2 At their meeting on 30th June 2008 and in response to the council's single priority of '**People and Place**', the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake three scrutiny reviews all linked to the corporate priority. One of the key components of '**People and Place**' is 'Investment in the Town Centre'. The council has invested significantly in the town centre and the Civic Heart over the last five years. Its work is not finished and the Town Centre Master Plan needs to be implemented. Historically the market has been a significant attraction to residents of Chester-le-Street and beyond. Despite the investment in it, it has suffered from changing shopping patterns and personal taste. Projected Market income has not been realised over the last few years and the relationship between the council and market traders is not very good.
- 1.3 In view of this it was considered necessary for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to request a task and finish group to research the future of the market. This report is the outcome of the task and finish groups work. It provides recommendations to inform decisions by the new unitary council in Durham.

2 Purpose of the Review

- 2.1 The objective of the review as to evaluate the future of Chester-le-Street market in terms of its sustainability over the next five to ten years.

3 Scrutiny Review Process

- 3.1 Scrutiny reviews are in-depth studies into issues which have been identified by scrutiny members as important to the community and Council of Chester-le-Street.
- 3.2 Scrutiny reviews investigate issues by a process of gathering evidence through speaking to individuals and groups that are involved or affected. The review panel then formulates realistic evidence based recommendations which are presented to the Council's Executive.
- 3.3 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

Stage 1 Scope	The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.
Stage 2 Investigate	The panel gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges site visits where appropriate.
Stage 3 Analyse	The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the panel.
Stage 4 Clarify	The panel discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.
Stage 5 Recommend	The panel formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.
Stage 6 Report	Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.
Stage 7 Monitor	The panel undertakes to monitor agreed recommendations on a regularly agreed basis.

4 Background

- 4.1 Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other improved retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart. Its attractiveness has been improved and the work of the Action Learning Set has developed a significant programme of events throughout the year to improve footfall and dwell time. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore the right time to consider options for the market's future.

- 4.2 The income target for the Market for 2007/8 was £203k whereas it made only half that figure. The targets remain static, but as the market declines this target gets further and further away. Nevertheless a slight improvement in rental has taken place in 2008 as the result of the events programme initiated this year and which is to enthusiastically driven by the Town Centre Development Manager. A question that these circumstances raise is 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. The review seeks to look at such issues and make recommendations for the future.

5 Terms of Reference

- 5.1 The terms of reference of the review was to look to answer the following questions:

- Which are the top performing Market Towns?
- What do the best do?
- What do the traders think?
- Is the perceived decline in market performance a local phenomenon?
- Are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces; such as the credit squeeze?
- In times of perceived economic difficulties markets should offer better value for money, what affect does the presence of discounters such as Aldi and Wilkinson's have on the market?
- What are the factors that are recognised to appeal to shoppers?
- Should the public sector continue to manage what is a private sector activity?
- Which companies run private markets and where?
- How do they compare?
- How does the relationship between such operators and local authority landlords' work?
- What rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?
- What is the sustainability of Chester-le-Street's market in the medium and longer term (five or ten year's time)?
- Suggest a way to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability?
- What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to make in the light of the research findings?

6 Methodology

- 6.1 The task and finish group was working to a clearly agreed timetable. The timetable was a useful tool by which progress could be monitored and also

provided a basis for progress reports to the main task and finish and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

6.2 The council agreed its methodology as part of the scoping report approved by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 30th July 2008. The methodology is set out in the following paragraphs.

6.3 Interviews were conducted with the Council's Town Centre Development Manager and the council's consultants Smartspeed Consulting Limited. Their detailed report forms Appendix 1.

6.3 **Consultancy Guidance**

As indicated principle research support was provided by Smartspeed Consultancy Services working closely with the Town Centre Development Manager. This company:

- identified the top performing market towns and why they are the 'best';
- Obtained feedback from traders as to the current status of the market;
- Researched the factors that appeal to visitors / shoppers to visit a (local) market;
- Identified and evaluate privately run markets;
- Analysed information gained to evaluate sustainability over the next five to ten years;
- Undertook report writing and reporting to inform the Task and Finish Groups discussions and interim and final reports. The consultants final report from which recommendations are drawn are set out I annex 1 of this report

Visits

6.4 On the guidance of the consultants visits will be arranged to appropriate markets and operators to understand how they operate successfully. The following visits were made:

Insert Schedule and learning

Evidence Gathering

6.5 The Task and Finish Group sought to engage traders and public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. This involved website publicity and a meeting with the market traders on 25th October 2008.

Report Findings

6.6 The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings to which was presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation purpose on 3rd December 2008. A detailed report on the findings was agreed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on XXth January 2009.

7 Legislative & Strategic Context

- 7.1 Provision of a market is not a legislative duty. The council has continued to provide a market in view of its importance to the town, its people and visitors
- 7.2 It is considered that the market is of strategic importance in helping maintain Chester-le-Street as a tourist and shopping destination within the region.

8 Findings of the Review

Views of Traders

- 8.1 The traders at Chester-le-Street were very forthcoming regarding the survey conducted at the market this summer. The views collected from the traders were generally constructive in nature and a summary of these comments is below:
- The market has declined (more so in the last 18 months)
 - Other markets are declining also
 - The red brick area is a point of contention
 - Flow and footfall is reduced
 - More traders are required (need to be incentives)
 - Advertising of the market is low
 - Parking costs are affecting visitor levels
- 8.2 The traders offered several solutions to help with the improvement of trade in the marketplace, a summary of these are as follows:
- Free parking on market days
 - Discounted rent for new traders
 - More meetings with the Council on Friday afternoons
 - Incentives for certain trader types (that are currently missing)
 - Work with bus companies to configure bus routes
 - Develop advertising for the market
 - Sign the market from the high street
 - Negotiate use of the red bricked area next to arch
- 8.3 The shoppers attending the markets were asked questions about why they had come to the market in Chester-le-Street, and were asked 'what made a great market'. Time and time again the main comment

that was divulged was that of variety. The secondary factors that were recorded from the conversations experienced included:

- Car parking costs
- More traders to make it 'worthwhile'
- Weekday entertainment to help build up the weekday markets

The consultants advise that the feedback from the interviews this summer corresponds with the survey conducted last summer. The overriding theme of more traders to build the market was clear from this section of the project.

Evidence from Market visits

8.4 Full details of market visits are set out in Appendix B of the consultants report. The following is a summary of the points raised from the consultants visits to markets in the region:

- The markets visited were positioned at the 'heart of the town'
- There were a mixture of self-erecting stalls and 'gazebos'
- All markets visited have witnessed a decline in activity in the market
- Fee structure is roughly in line with that of Chester-le-Street, if not erring on the more expensive side (per stall, not per square foot)
- The markets run by privately owned organisations appeared more focussed on generating a profit.
- All of the towns visited had markets that struggle against the presence of supermarkets
- Two of the towns have promotion pots – where the traders contribute to a fund for advertising and promoting the market (which they get a say in what happens with the money)
- Art and 'features' are part of the market areas in the towns that have had recent refurbishment
- The other council run markets appear to be struggling to source and manage an events programme to support the market.
- The shops that surrounded these markets appeared to be 'in tune' with the market, providing a wide range of goods and service that compliment the market traders.
- Good levels of communication were recognised at each of these markets – in both directions between the management and the traders.
- Blyth and Stanley had free parking; Darlington and South Shields did not. The cost of parking was discussed at South Shields as being a deterrent – but not at Darlington.
- Clear policies were enforced 'flexibly' at the markets visited
- There has been a general drop off in terms of coach visits due to parking / drop off arrangements at some of the markets

- The level of ‘banter’ has decreased across all of the markets – this was mentioned at all of the markets and was felt that part of the market experience had been lost.

8.5 In addition the following main themes were also picked up from member’s visits:

- Traders are put at the centre of the focus. They are provided with flexibility and deals as appropriate, but also penalised if they don’t adhere to the regulations implemented.
- Promotion of the markets and the use of the space was aimed to maximise footfall.
- The gazebo style stall looks very good, but brings with it a raft of other issues, including costs, health and safety and further negotiation regarding available stall size.
- At Chester-le-Street there is a clear want, and need, to meet with the Council on a regular basis to support each other in moving forwards.

8.6 The consultants take the view that Chester-le-Street’s market is ahead of many of the local markets in terms of trader levels and visitor levels. Other markets are however regarded as being ‘more successful’. From a breakeven point of view this is at least partially true. The improvements that have been made at other markets are not a massive leap away from the market’s current position and therefore put Chester-le-Street in good stead for moving forwards. Despite the differences in the markets visited there are a number of ideas and options that can be used at Chester-le-Street. There are also a number of parallels to the work that has already been conducted, giving the Council a good platform to proceed from.

Consultant’s evidence of good performing markets.

8.7 The consultants contacted several markets which were ‘doing well’. These were:

- Stockton
- Catterick
- Barnard Castle
- Durham
- Hexham

8.8 There were recurring themes from the operators of such markets why they felt their markets were performing. These are:

- They have a flexible approach towards the traders, both in terms of regulation and pricing.
- Diversity of traders is key to ensure that ‘under one roof’ the variety of goods area available so that ‘value for money’ is present.

- Promotion of the market is pro-active, with some of the markets levying a promotion charge to the cost of the rent. This promotion charge is then used as part of the ongoing conversation with the traders as to how to best promote the market.
- All of the towns who have large supermarkets present, either adjacent to the market or out of town, recognised the pull that these organisations have. Market attendance has dropped inline with the opening of these stores.
- The majority of the people interviewed acknowledged that their markets had witnessed a downturn in traders and shoppers over the last 12 to 18 months.
- The websites used to promote the markets discussed were actively maintained.

Quantative Research

8.9 During Summer 2007 a quantitative research project was undertaken by Chester-le-Street District Council Regeneration Team to understand more about what makes the market at Chester-le-Street work. The information that has been compiled from this piece of research supports the research and analysis gained from this research project. Full details of the research can be seen in Appendix D of the consultants report. In summary , most of the respondents:

- Were female
- Were aged between 46 and 65 years
- Attended the market on a weekly basis
- Travelled less than 20 miles to get to the market
- Appreciated the variety of items on sale in the market
- Believed that more traders and the presence of toilets would vastly improve the market

8.10 Drawbacks to this information include:

- Vagueness of some of the responses
- Layout of the questionnaires could require interpretation
- Potentially limited set of results – only conducted during the Summer months may have provided a skewed view of the shoppers perspective

Research into 'local phenomenon'.

8.11 One of the key questions laid out at the start of this review asked if the decline witnessed in the Chester-le-Street market was a local phenomenon, or if this was indeed a widespread issue. During the phone interviews and market visits this question was answered through the experiences of the people working and running the markets. This is not a local phenomenon.

8.12 The consultants point out that general statistics for trading in traditional markets are not monitored by the Office for National Statistics and so

other forms of research had to be conducted. Using the Internet to review news stories over the past four years there is a clear trend in a decline in 'high street' retail generally. Although this does not specifically refer to traditional markets they are inextricably linked. Research provided by the National Market Traders Federation ('First National Survey of Retail Markets') confirms that this is not a local phenomenon. That report, which was written in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, details that although market days and stalls have increased across the UK in the past five years, the level of trading and participation at the markets by traders is declining across the country.

- 8.13 The consultants consider that the pressures on market traders from the presence of 'large box' retailers such as Tesco (adjacent to the Chester-le-Street market) and ALDI (in the vicinity of Chester-le-Street market) is clear when discussing this matter with traders and shoppers. This said, there is also a factor that needs to be considered. People who shop at the market appear to shop there for the experience of the market, and this cannot currently be re-created in a large retailer's premises.
- 8.14 Members are recommended by the consultants to take into account the current economic pressures being faced by all businesses at the time of writing this report need to also be considered. The 'credit crunch' has now been in effect for the past fifteen months, which has changed perceptions to shopping and ultimately the level of shopping that is taking place. How strong this factor is in affecting the level of trade taking place in the market is difficult to ascertain but cannot be discounted from the research.
- 8.15 From the interviews conducted by the consultants with shoppers and the analysis of the 2007 survey there is a clear age profile that patronise the market. This is the '46+' category and raises the question "will markets die out with this generation?" From the research conducted the consultants advise that the decline of markets is not a local phenomenon. Work must take place to maximise the volume of shopping taking place within the market during trading days and a revised forecast of activity (or revenue) should take place once the current economic conditions have become positive once more.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The consultants report draws the following conclusions which are supported by the Task and Finish Group:
- The market is currently making a loss. Profitability needs to return to the market if Chester-le-Street is to remain as a 'Market Town'. If profitability is not made in the next two years then a decision needs to be made as to whether

outsourcing the market to another operator would be a better option, or to consider the closure of the market.

- The general trend in traditional markets is that of a declining trade. The recognised markets in the North East are all suffering from the same issues that Chester-le-Street is. This is not a local phenomenon, but other areas are clearly dealing with the issue in a positive way and are developing and evolving their markets to address the current issues.
- The fixed stalls at Chester-le-Street are 'dead space' during the rest of the week when markets are not taking place. There is an opportunity to use this space for alternative revenue generating activities.
- The marketing spend at Chester-le-Street is not in line with the other markets in the local area and needs to be increased in order to attract more traders and more customers into the town.
- There is a lack of signage on the A1. Signage on the main roads leading into Chester-le-Street needs to be reviewed.
- The number of Traders needs to increase in order to populate the market and attract more shoppers. New traders arrive first - shoppers then follow.
- The event area is under utilised (used approximately 12 times per year) and could be used for self-erect market stalls. The event area is in a key location to maintain the continuity between the main shopping street (Front Street) and the market. Increasing usage of this area should help both the shopping streets and the market to share the current footfall.
- A flexible approach to managing the market (re: incentives for traders) could help in attracting new traders. This has been demonstrated at other markets in the local area and should be seriously considered.
- The rents at Chester-le-Street are roughly in line with the other regional markets, but the stall area provided makes it relatively expensive for the services provided.

Market	Cost per foot (depth assumed constant)
Chester-le-Street	£1.50
Darlington	£4.00
South Shields	£1.70
Blyth	£1.00 (N.B. This is due for an increase) ¹
Stanley	£2.00
Stockton	£1.70

- Public toilets are a necessary feature for the public and to the traders. The lack of toilet facilities has been commented on during this research and last year's research also.
- Better communication between the traders and the Council would support improvement and development of the market. Without a long term view on this partnership the success of the market will be compromised.
- Privately run markets may reduce some of the Council's costs, but this arrangement does not guarantee a more effective market.
- From visiting the other markets in the region that are considered to be performing well it is interesting to note that Chester-le-Street is still doing well in relative terms. This should be recognised when considering the next steps in the strategy to develop the market.

9.2 The review concludes that the market at Chester-le-Street is in a position where improvement and growth can be created. It is considered that in the short to medium term there remains justification for the market to be provided by the District Council and subsequently the new unitary Council. In the short to medium term a phased improvement plan based on the consultant's recommendations ought to be developed and the market managed accordingly. Should the improvement plan fail to deliver the required change then consideration ought to be given to outsourcing the market. The District council would suggest that should the required change not result from the implementation of the improvement plan thee County Council ought to carry out a serious outsourcing exercise. The consultant's recommendations for the future are fully set out in section 6 of their report.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The review recommends that:

1. The responsibility for the management of the market is retained by the local authority and subsequent local authority.
2. A phased improvement plan is developed in line with the recommendations in the consultants report and should the implementation of the improvement plan fail to achieve the intended outcomes then the County Council should seriously consider an outsourcing exercise.
3. The findings of the review and the proposals for the future are submitted for the consideration of the new Unitary Council as part of the Handing Over the Baton Report with a recommendation that the market ought to be continued to be operated by the local authority unless the improvement plan fails to deliver the necessary change.

10.2 It is recommended that this report is agreed and reported to the District Council's Executive on 2nd February 2009



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



People & Place

**Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street
Final Report Second Draft**

Appendix 1

January 2009



Research the future of the market

Project Update

Smartspeed Consulting Limited

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Chester-le-Street is considered to be a 'Market Town'. However evidence would suggest that this label is no longer appropriate.

A project known as 'Investment in the Town Centre' is considering the potential for the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. A specific project 'Research the Future of the Market' has been agreed as part of the Council's *People and Place* single priority, and approved by Chester-le-Street District Council's Executive.

Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other improved retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart. Its attractiveness has been improved and the work of the Action Learning Set has developed a significant programme of events throughout the year to improve footfall and dwell time. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore the right time to consider options for the market's future.

The target for 2007/8 was £203k whereas it made only half that figure. The targets remain static, but as the market declines this target gets further and further away. Nevertheless a slight improvement in rental has taken place in 2008 as the result of the events programme initiated this year.

A question that these circumstances raise is 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 Chester-le-Street District Council and the new Unitary Authority do in the light of such circumstances?

This research was commissioned to ask these questions; it should also ask a fundamental question - whether the public sector should continue to manage what is a private sector function. It will finally address questions relating to the sustainability of the market in five or ten years time and suggest a strategy to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability.

1.2. Objectives

- Identify the top performing market towns and ask why they are the 'best'.
- Obtain feedback from traders as to the current status of the market.
- Research the factors that appeal to visitors / shoppers to visit a (local) market.
- Identify and evaluate privately run markets.
- Analyse information gained to evaluate sustainability over the next five to ten years.

1.3. Schedule

Chester-le-Street Market research	Tuesday 8 th July 2008 Saturday 12 th July 2008 Friday 25 th July 2008
Telephone Interviews	Tuesday 12 th August 2008 Wednesday 13 th August 2008 Thursday 14 th August 2008
Quantitative analysis	Wednesday 25 th September Thursday 25 th September
Regional market visits	Monday 15 th September Thursday 18 th September Saturday 20 th September Friday 26 th September Wednesday 8 th October

2. Report Summary

During the summer of 2008 this project reviewed the factors that attract shoppers to local (traditional) markets. This work supported the quantitative research conducted in 2007 and detailed that more traders providing a greater variety of goods are required (as denoted by the rise of car boot sale activity).

The infrastructure that is in place at Chester-le-Street market provides rigid stalls that hamper further utilisation of the market square during non-market days and lack public conveniences – noted by both the traders and the shoppers.

From visiting other local markets that are recognised as ‘doing well’ it is clear that Chester-le-Street is positioned to take advantage of its heritage as a market town by implementing a number of low cost improvements to bolster its current standing.

Resources are a key issue faced by Chester-le-Street District Council in order to progress the development of the market, an outline plan of activity is recommended at the end of this report.

3. Methodology

To understand why the market is operating the way it is, and to design a strategy, it was necessary to obtain more information than a quantitative research project would yield. Therefore a qualitative methodology was designed in order to more deeply understand the culture, economics and perceptions that affect the success of Chester-le-Street market. As the market is a system of individuals and organisations operating with boundaries and rules there is a wide margin for interpretation. A qualitative approach allows us to bring together the various information sources and derive a common thread, or themes, that will illuminate the real choices that can and need to be made in future strategies. The following sub-headings provide an overview of the compendium of techniques used during this project.

3.1. Market Surveys (Traders / Shoppers)

The initial question of ‘what do our traders and shopper feel about the market?’ was the starting point for this research project. The approach here was to approach members of the public and the traders with a short series of questions. This was a semi-structured approach as a short conversation was undertaken with each participant, sometimes leading away and around the set questions. By adopting this method a rich level of information was gained, which may not have been gathered if a rigid questioning procedure were used.

3.2. Best local markets – site visits

A well-used tool is that of benchmarking, however this is not directly applicable to this project due to varying social demographics, local attractions and management. To take advantage of this principle a series of site visits were undertaken to respected local markets. Each market was understood to be ‘doing well’, or have similar attributes to that of Chester-le-Street. A semi-structured approach was undertaken for this part of the research also. A checklist of questions provided a suitable backbone for our visits to each market, which was augmented by conversations with traders and market officers. The conversations that were specific to the individual market generated a vast array of additional information that provided further insight and ideas.

3.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews

Supporting the activity with the local markets research were the phone interviews. To deliver an economical solution to the research required was the rationale behind this approach. Conversations were conducted with a variety of markets who from local knowledge, Internet research and nationwide competitions were regarded as ‘good’ markets.

3.4. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis

During the summer of 2007 a survey was conducted in Chester-le-Street so that an understanding of where people were travelling from and why they came to the market was gained. This information has been analysed and supports the research conducted during this project.

3.5. Private run markets – interviews with operators

With differing objectives and infrastructures there is a clear difference in the approach between a privately run market and one that is run by a local council. Interviews with the private sector operators of markets assisted with gaining new insights into the potential options for the future of the market.

3.6. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market

To get a firm grasp on the financial situation of the market, and so as to provide context to the research analysis was conducted on the financial information available from the council. This provided a window to the bottom line details that affect decisions about the future of the market.

4. Summary of findings

In this section the research findings are summarised so that the important themes are laid out.

4.1. Chester-le-Street Surveys (Traders / Shoppers)

The traders at Chester-le-Street were very forthcoming regarding the survey conducted at the market this summer. The views collected from the traders were generally constructive in nature and a summary of these comments is below:

- The market has declined (more so in the last 18 months)
- Other markets are declining also
- The red brick area is a point of contention
- Flow and footfall is reduced
- More traders are required (need to be incentives)
- Advertising of the market is low
- Parking costs are affecting visitor levels

The traders offered several solutions to help with the improvement of trade in the marketplace, a summary of these are below:

- Free parking on market days
- Discounted rent for new traders
- More meetings with the Council on Friday afternoons
- Incentives for certain trader types (that are currently missing)
- Work with bus companies to configure bus routes
- Develop advertising for the market
- Sign the market from the high street
- Negotiate use of the red bricked area next to arch

The shoppers attending the markets were asked questions about why they had come to the market in Chester-le-Street, and were asked 'what made a great market'. Time and time again the main comment that was divulged was that of variety. The secondary factors that were recorded from the conversations experienced included:

- Car parking costs
- More traders to make it 'worthwhile'
- Weekday entertainment to help build up the weekday markets

The feedback from the interviews this summer corresponds with the survey conducted last summer. The overriding theme of more traders to build the market was clear from this section of the project.

Information about the days attended and the questions asked can be found in appendix A.

4.2. Best local markets – site visits

Despite the general decline of markets (both in attendance and revenue generation) in the UK there are still notable markets of interest to this research project.

4.2.1. South Shields (run by South Tyneside Council)

South Shields was visited on a sunny Saturday morning and was noticeably busy from the outset. There was a good selection of stalls around the old town hall, which in itself provides a very attractive backdrop. Cafes surrounded the market and provided a pleasant complimentary and relaxed feel to the market. Some of the traders provided 'banter' which drew in the crowds to these stalls. With bus stops adjacent to the market and the main shopping street leading directly from the market it appears to be in a good location. The stalls were gazebos, which offered the traders plenty of display area and are erected by the Council's staff. Parking was paid and ample.

4.2.2. Blyth (run by Blyth Valley District Council)

The main market square at Blyth has been undergoing some major renovation works. The visit to Blyth was interesting for a number of reasons, including the fact that Chester-le-Street has been through a very similar transformation in the last two years. The visit was on a busy Friday morning, with bright dry weather. As the main market square was cordoned off due to construction work the market has been moved next to a public car park. This still provides plenty of foot traffic to the market, which appeared to be well visited by shoppers. The stalls were self-erected, although this is a point under current discussion as the Council may opt for Council erected 'gazebos'. Parking was free and ample.

4.2.3. Stanley (run by Nobles Promotions)

During market days the market in Stanley can be found taking up the entirety of the high street. The visit to this market was on a Thursday morning with bright sunshine. Self-erected stalls were present and this gave the market a very earthy feel to it. There was a wide range of traders covering all the major categories of selling, this complimented the types of shops that were adjacent to the stalls (a lot of discount shops were present) and trade seemed to be supporting both the market stall traders and the shops. The new bus station gave a good focal point for the high street and ensured that shoppers poured out from the bus station right in to the heart of the market. Privately run the operators appeared to run a tight ship and had been promoting the market proactively. Parking was free, although difficult to find spaces.

4.2.4. Darlington (run by Darlington Borough Council)

Darlington town centre has been recently refurbished and was visited on a bright Monday morning. Their 'pedestrian art' was clearly visible as were the gazebos that they use. The gazebos have their own power and were clean, large in size and emblazoned with the Council's slogans. The stalls were laid out around the indoor market and the shops adjacent to the stalls were again complimentary. The shops around the town centre were big names and included department stores. Paid parking was ample and the market itself appeared busy.

4.2.5. Stockton Market (run by Stockton Borough Council)

A well presented market in the centre of the town. The market area is pedestrianised and appears busy. The town was busy on the day of the visit and this was reflected in the amount of trade appearing to take place in the market. The market was full of traders and the general feedback was very positive from the traders. Stockton market has levied a fee on the traders to help with promotion although it was stated that most of the publicity was generated through word of mouth.

4.2.6. A summary of the finding can be read below:

- The markets visited were positioned at the 'heart of the town'
- Mixture of self-erecting stalls and 'gazebos'
- All have witnessed a decline in activity in the market
- Fee structure is roughly in line with that of Chester-le-Street, if not erring on the more expensive side (per stall, not per square foot)
- The markets run by privately owned organisations appeared more focussed on generating a profit.
- All of the town's visited had markets that struggle against the presence of supermarkets
- Two of the towns have promotion pots – where the traders contribute to a fund for advertising and promoting the market (which they get a say in what happens with the money)
- Art and 'features' are part of the market areas in the towns that have had recent refurbishment
- The other council run markets appear to be struggling to source and manage an events programme to support the market.
- The shops that surrounded these markets appeared to be 'in tune' with the market, providing a wide range of goods and service that compliment the market traders.
- Good levels of communication were recognised at each of these markets – in both directions between the management and the traders.
- Blyth and Stanley had free parking; Darlington and South Shields did not. The cost of parking was discussed at South Shields as being a deterrent – but not at Darlington.
- Clear policies were enforced 'flexibly' at the markets visited
- There has been a general drop off in terms of coach visits due to parking / drop off arrangements at some of the markets

- The level of 'banter' has decreased across all of the markets – this was mentioned at all of the markets and was felt that part of the market experience had been lost.

Despite the differences in the markets visited there are a number of ideas and options that can be used at Chester-le-Street. There are also a number of parallels to the work that has already been conducted, giving the Council a good platform to proceed from.

The notes from the visits can be found in appendix B.

4.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews

Following the initial research into which markets were regarded as 'doing well' a number of phone interviews took place.

The markets that were successfully contacted were:

- Stockton
- Catterick
- Barnard Castle
- Durham
- Hexham

From talking with the Market Officers (or equivalent) there were some obvious consistent themes coming back as to the reasons that they believed their markets were thriving in this current economic climate.

In summary:

- They have a flexible approach towards the traders, both in terms of regulation and pricing.
- Diversity of traders is key to ensure that 'under one roof' the variety of goods area available so that 'value for money' is present.
- Promotion of the market is pro-active, with some of the markets levying a promotion charge to the cost of the rent. This promotion charge is then used as part of the ongoing conversation with the traders as to how to best promote the market.
- All of the towns who have large supermarkets present, either adjacent to the market or out of town, recognised the pull that these organisations have. Market attendance has dropped inline with the opening of these stores.
- The majority of the people interviewed acknowledged that their markets had witnessed a downturn in traders and shoppers over the last 12 to 18 months.
- The websites used to promote the markets discussed were actively maintained.

There are two key lessons here that we can apply to Chester-le-Street:

- 1 – We can review our pricing plans to attempt to draw new traders into the town
- 2 – We can develop a low effort route to achieve pro-active marketing.

For a full listing of the notes for each interview please see appendix C.

4.4. Comparison to Member visits

Councillors from Chester-le-Street District Council visited several of the local markets around the region, conducting their own research for this project. The markets visited included Blyth, Darlington, Chester-le-Street, South Shields, Stockton and Stanley. The themes that come out from this tranche of research reflected the findings from the other approaches used during this project. The key points:

- Traders are put at the centre of the focus. They are provided with flexibility and deals as appropriate, but also penalised if they don't adhere to the regulations implemented.
- Promotion of the markets and the use of the space was aimed to maximise footfall.
- The gazebo style stall looks very good, but brings with it a raft of other issues, including costs, health and safety and further negotiation regarding available stall size.
- At Chester-le-Street there is a clear want, and need, to meet with the Council on a regular basis to support each other in moving forwards.

Chester-le-Street's market is ahead of many of the local markets in terms of trader levels and visitor levels. Other markets are however regarded as being 'more successful'. From a breakeven point of view this is at least partially true. The improvements that have been made at other markets are not a massive leap away from the market's current position and therefore put Chester-le-Street in good stead for moving forwards.

4.5. Research into the 'local phenomenon'

One of the key questions laid out at the start of this project asked if the decline witnessed in the Chester-le-Street market was a local phenomenon, or if this was indeed a widespread issue.

During the phone interviews and market visits this question was answered through the experiences of the people working and running the markets. This is not a local phenomenon.

General statistics for trading in traditional markets are not monitored by the Office for National Statistics and so other forms of research had to be conducted. Using the Internet to review news stories over the past four years there is a clear trend in a decline in 'high street' retail generally. Although this does not specifically refer to traditional markets they are inextricably linked.

Research provided by the National Market Traders Federation ('First National Survey of Retail Markets') confirms that this is not a local phenomenon. This report, which was written in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, details that although market days and stalls have increased across the UK in the past five years, the level of trading and participation at the markets by traders is declining across the country.

The pressures on market traders from the presence of 'large box' retailers such as Tesco (adjacent to the Chester-le-Street market) and ALDI (in the vicinity of Chester-le-Street market) is clear when discussing this matter with traders and shoppers. This said, there is also a factor that needs to be considered. People who shop at the market appear to shop there for the experience of the market, and this cannot currently be re-created in a large retailer's premises.

The current economic pressures being faced by all businesses at the time of writing this report need to also be considered. The 'credit crunch' has now been in effect for the past fifteen months, which has changed perceptions to shopping and ultimately the level of shopping that is taking place. How strong this factor is in affecting the level of trade taking place in the market is difficult to ascertain but cannot be discounted from the research.

From the interviews conducted with shoppers and the analysis of the 2007 survey there is a clear age profile that patronise the market. This is the '46+' category and raises the question "will markets die out with this generation?"

From the research conducted the decline of markets is not a local phenomenon. Work must take place to maximise the volume of shopping taking place within the market during trading days and a revised forecast of activity (or revenue) should take place once the current economic conditions have become positive once more.

4.6. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis

During Summer 2007 a quantitative research project was undertaken by Chester-le-Street District Council Regeneration Team to understand more about what makes the market at Chester-le-Street work.

The information that has been compiled from this piece of research supports the research and analysis gained from this research project.

In summary - most of the respondents:

- Were female
- Were aged between 46 and 65 years
- Attended the market on a weekly basis
- Travelled less than 20 miles to get to the market
- Appreciated the variety of items on sale in the market
- Believed that more traders and the presence of toilets would vastly improve the market

Drawbacks to this information include:

- Vagueness of some of the responses
- Layout of the questionnaires could require interpretation
- Potentially limited set of results – only conducted during the Summer months may have provided a skewed view of the shoppers perspective

In appendix D you can see the full breakdown of the results.

4.7. Private run markets – interviews with operators

During the phone interviews and visits a number of conversations were conducted with organisations that privately run markets.

The first observation made was they were very much focussed on the profitability of the market, an obvious factor to consider, but one that is more prominent in the private sector approach.

The other key feature observed was the maintaining of rules to keep order and control in the market.

There are many forces at work in a market (including political and economic), and keeping control during the market times was clearly part of the private sector approach. Finally, a consistent theme from the private operators was that of promoting the market. This was done pro-actively and consistently.

One of the questions raised prior to this research commencing was ‘what rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?’ The only arrangement that this research is aware of is the of Stanley market (in partnership with Derwentside District Council). Their arrangement is:

- 3 year Licence
- 12 month break option with 3 month notice
- 50% of stall takings paid as rent
- Licencee to carry appropriate insurance
- Licencee responsible for site clearing

From the Council’s perspective the 50% of stall takings would generate an income of approximately £52,000.00 (assuming that the trader volume and stall charges remained constant with current figures).

During this project the researcher and the Town Centre Development Manager attempted to contact Spook Erections, which manage numerous markets (including car boot sales) without success.

From this brief analysis there are many factors that are identical between the private and public sector management approaches. The key difference is the level of effort put in by the private sector to maintain control, promote the market and to monitor profits.

4.8. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market

The income target is static – the actual revenue has halved in the last four years.

The 2008/09 period for results is currently showing a 50% attainment of the targets set.

The budget for the year states that the costs for running the market are:

Total direct expenditure	£117,790.00
Net direct expenditure	£33,120.00
=> Running cost	£150,910.00

The budget income is set at £206,400.00 (the static target)

This would give a 'profit' of £55,490.00

However, the figure is likely to be closer to £110,000.00

So, the new 'profit' would be - £40,910 (hence a loss)

From reviewing the budget there is approximately £90,000.00 worth of re-charges and capital charges. The questions that this raises are:

- Would a private organisation be burdened with these recharges?
- Are the recharges adequately apportioned?

From the trends of the markets income, coupled with the overall trends in markets it becomes clear that under the current working model Chester-le-Street market is not viable.

Without changes being made to entice new traders into the market, or without cutting the re-charge costs the market will remain a drain on public monies.

Please see appendix F for more information around these figures.

5. Conclusions

From the research conducted a number of conclusions can be drawn. This information helps to inform decision-making regarding the future of the market and as such the recommendations from this research project can be reviewed in section 6 of this document.

- The market is currently making a loss. Profitability needs to return to the market if Chester-le-Street is to remain as a 'Market Town'. If profitability is not made in the next two years then a decision needs to be made as to whether outsourcing the market to another operator would be a better option, or to consider the closure of the market.
- The general trend in traditional markets is that of a declining trade. The recognised markets in the North East are all suffering from the same issues that Chester-le-Street is. This is not a local phenomenon, but other areas are clearly dealing with the issue in a positive way and are developing and evolving their markets to address the current issues.
- The fixed stalls at Chester-le-Street are 'dead space' during the rest of the week when markets are not taking place. There is an opportunity to use this space for alternative revenue generating activities.
- The marketing spend at Chester-le-Street is not in line with the other markets in the local area and needs to be increased in order to attract more traders and more customers into the town.
- There is a lack of signage on the A1. Signage on the main roads leading into Chester-le-Street needs to be reviewed.
- The number of Traders needs to increase in order to populate the market and attract more shoppers. New traders arrive first - shoppers then follow.
- The event area is under utilised (used approximately 12 times per year) and could be used for self-erect market stalls. The event area is in a key location to maintain the continuity between the main shopping street (Front Street) and the market. Increasing usage of this area should help both the shopping streets and the market to share the current footfall.
- A flexible approach to managing the market (re: incentives for traders) could help in attracting new traders. This has been demonstrated at other markets in the local area and should be seriously considered.

- The rents at Chester-le-Street are roughly in line with the other regional markets, but the stall area provided makes it relatively expensive for the services provided.

Market	Cost per foot (depth assumed constant)
Chester-le-Street	£1.50
Darlington	£4.00
South Shields	£1.70
Blyth	£1.00 (N.B. This is due for an increase) ²
Stanley	£2.00
Stockton	£1.70

- Public toilets are a necessary feature for the public and to the traders. The lack of toilet facilities has been commented on during this research and last year's research also.
- Better communication between the traders and the Council would support improvement and development of the market. Without a long term view on this partnership the success of the market will be compromised.
- Privately run markets may reduce some of the Council's costs, but this arrangement does not guarantee a more effective market.
- From visiting the other markets in the region that are considered to be performing well it is interesting to note that Chester-le-Street is still doing well in relative terms. This should be recognised when considering the next steps in the strategy to develop the market.

The conclusions from this project are in line with previous expectations and understanding. However, this means that the market at Chester-le-Street is in a position where improvement and growth can be created. The next section will explore the recommendations from this research project in detail.

² This increase has recently been reported in the local press - <http://blyth.journallive.co.uk/2008/11/stallholders-in-blyth-hit-out.html>. Since the completion of the regeneration works at Blyth market and the return of market traders, several arguments have been played out in the local press where complaints about the rents and the suitability of the gazebos are being aired.

6. Recommendations

From the research conducted a number of options are available; this has been put into a phased approach as detailed below.

Phase 1: Preparation / Infrastructure

There are several features missing from the market as it currently stands. This first stage is to ensure that there is a solid foundation on which to build upon as the market develops.

- Provide full toilet facilities for both shoppers and traders within reasonable distance of the market.
- Introduce a (brown) sign on motorway to encourage coach drivers and tourists to visit the town.
- Remove of some of the fixed stalls and move towards a greater proportion of self-erecting stalls being used. This will allow the market square to be better used during the rest of the week and to allow more suitable coverings to be put in place to protect both shoppers and traders.
- Implementation of a 12-month event plan (in conjunction with other local councils) – funding and support would be required to implement this.
- Implementation of a 12-month marketing plan – funding required to allow expansion plans to proceed (or a levy being applied to the traders). A budget to extend the work already done would need to be agreed; a figure in the region of £10,000.00 would be a good starting place if dedicated to marketing and not events. Examples of marketing opportunities could include:
 - Banners indicating the days of the market and its location
 - Bags promoting the town and the market
 - Flyers to be distributed in local shops
 - Advertisements in local newspapers and selected magazines
 - Basic Search Engine Optimisation to increase website traffic

By introducing a levy on the stallholders this £10,000.00 budget could be extended further. It would also be proposed that the money spent would be done in conjunction with the traders – through regular consultation.

- Introduce incentives to acquire new traders (to increase overall trader volume and hence shopper)
 - Reduce the rent during fallow months (January, February and March)
 - Offer '2 for 1' on quiet trading days (e.g. Tuesday)

- Apply subsidies to new traders for a fixed period of time
- Implement regulations to give further control and support to the market (see Appendix E).

Phase 2: Profit Centre for the Council, with a flexible approach to running the market

Once the fundamentals are in place there is the opportunity to develop a better working relationship, bridging the gap between the Council and the Traders. By working together the full testing approach that marketing and improvement requires can be embraced. Keeping the market under the control of the Council brings many benefits including integration with the rest of the town and is proposed as the preferred option.

- Develop working relationships with traders to implement a continuous improvement culture. This will allow for more ideas and improvements to be made over a longer period of time. This will also allow for flexibility in approach to take place. Meetings could be held more frequently in the early stages of growth, such as a monthly frequency. Once the changes start to take effect this could then be moved a quarterly frequency.
- Expand the market onto the event area when events are not taking place. This should improve the footfall at the bottom end of this main shopping street as well as footfall through the market itself.
- Actively promote the market by working with the traders to encourage other traders to participate at Chester-le-Street and to generate more ways to promote the market.
- Track market profitability on a monthly basis and use this information to support further improvements and developments.
- Gradually remove the fixed stalls in the marketplace to allow other revenue streams to be implemented on non-market days. This could include car parking during the non-market days.
- Actively market to coach drivers to draw their passengers to the market.

If profitability has not returned to the market by September 2010 phase 3 could be considered.

Phase 3: Depending on phase 2 results - privately run market (3 year contract)

Private operators bring with them a sense of urgency and a focus on profit

maximisation. Should the Council struggle to achieve the performance that the market needs then this focus could help to improve the market.

- Engage with private management organisations to tender for the contract of running the market.

Consideration of scenarios (for awareness only)

Scene setting:

We've made a number of changes to the way the market has been run in Chester-le-Street. We have introduced flexible arrangements for the traders and promoted the town heavily. Every month we meet up with the traders to discuss how things are going and generate a whole plethora of ideas to continue to build upon the Chester-le-Street brand, this includes how to spend our marketing budget. Every three months the local market officers from the other districts meet up and we have a rolling plan of events designed to increase the number of shoppers visiting the town, however...

Scenario 1:

There has been a massive drop off in trade over the last two years –the market has failed despite doing the work that we outlined in 2008. We still fail to attract new traders and don't know why it is happening.

Scenario 2:

The market failed to achieve profitability under public sector management and so a private sector operator was brought in. After three years of running the license they can't turn it around and we're stuck for ideas.

Scenario 3:

The market has become a huge success and more resources are required. Chester-le-Street is a market town with a capital 'M' once more. We become the envy of the local area and we go from strength to strength. The only question we have is how can we expand our service offering to continue this growth.

The questions that are raised are to put this report in context.

- What happens if the market fails?
- What happens if the market becomes a runaway success?
- Can we cope with either eventuality?

This report has looked at the current state of the market and options as to how it could be moved forwards. There are many factors outside the control of the Council who operate the market. By being aware of the potential outcomes the Council can be better suited for deciding what course of action is best needed.

7. Appendix A – Details of visit to Chester-le-Street Market

Chester-le-Street Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

TESCO is located on the left hand side of the photo.

The main shopping street leads off from the edge of the market area on the right hand side of the photo (running from top to bottom)

The market stalls not within the yellow line are no longer present – this is the event area.

TUESDAY

Date of visit: Tuesday 8th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Very quiet – lots of blue stands empty

Comments:

Traders were very friendly, but complained a lot about their situation. Low levels of shoppers attended. Several traders claimed not to be able to breakeven on the Tuesday market.

FRIDAY

Date of visit: Friday 25th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Full of shoppers and traders

Comments:

Good mix of traders and shoppers observed during the market. Friday appears as a well-attended market.

SATURDAY

Date of visit: Saturday 12th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Vibrant and busy

Comments:

It was clear that Saturday is a different trading style to Friday and Tuesdays with many second hand goods stalls; this was part of the attraction to shoppers.

QUESTIONS

Shoppers:

- Why do you visit CLS market?
- How often?
- How is the credit squeeze affecting your buying decisions?
- How has this (or any other) markets changed over the last 5 – 10 years?
- What do you look for in a good market?

Traders:

- How does CLS market compare today with 10 years ago? Number of shoppers?
- What is the support like from the Council?
- Access to the pitches?
- What impact has the credit squeeze had on you?
- What impact has Aldi / Wilkinsons had on you?
- What other markets do you trade at? Any comments?

8. Appendix B – Visit Notes

8.1. Review of Darlington Market

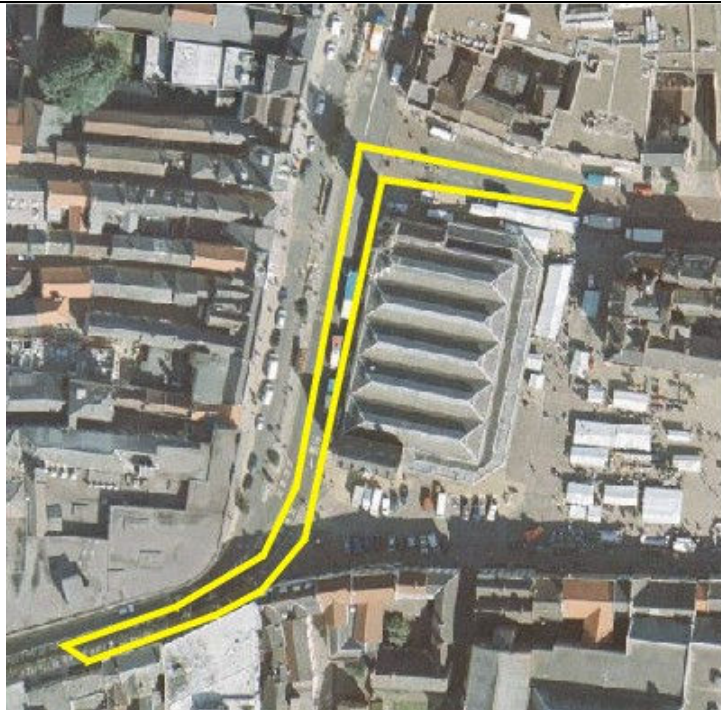


Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 The grey building in the centre of the photo is the indoor market.
 In the bottom right hand corner is the old market square (market displayed).
 Opposite the indoor market are large department stores

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good – it looks great • The marques look very professional and are in good condition
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable • They have traders who 'do the rounds' • They have professional traders who are 'resident'
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a formal traders association • Senior traders and Alan Draper are 'the voice' • Budget is approx. £5k from the Council • Continental markets should be on a monthly schedule • The stalls are costed according to the richer and poorer ends of the high street • Advertising is self-fuelling – profits reinvested • Local radio has been used

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each trader contributes 70p toward the advertising pot • Events team at the Council then arrange promotions • Subsidy given to new traders as this can help increase footfall • Buy 4 get 1 free (on Saturdays) • Pedestrian art • Darlington has a good selection of shops already to draw shoppers • Speciality markets on Sundays double the footfall
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30 / £60 (half / full gazebo)
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently sustainable
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 18 and 26 doubles
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80p per hour • Abundant
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good spread of shops
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazebos are hired out on non-market days • Reputation building is a key objective • A few questions were raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'What does the market need to do in the town?' ○ 'What will that look like and do?' ○ 'What does the town do?' • Many traders have forgotten how to trade • Charity stalls are sometimes used • Footfall counters are used by the Council to monitor attendance (not particularly accurate system) • Show man ship and vibrancy is required • Insurance is mandatory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ £5 to be added to Council's policy for one day ○ £47 for the year privately (product and public) • Standards of working agreed

8.2. Review of South Shields Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

Main shopping street on right hand side middle of photo

Building in the centre of the photo is the old town hall

Bus stops at the bottom of the market

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean – good access to sites / trader carparking (£1.50 per day) • Marques are now old, but look good still. They offer a good display area. • The market was vibrant and busy
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downturn recognised
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional carrier bags
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £26 per stall
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakeven
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 out of 108 spaces - typical
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See note regarding new ASDA • Paid parking around South Shields – plentiful but complained about

Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of cafes adjacent to the market square • Certain traders have been encouraged to take part in the market and flexibility has been taken to arrange this – this has included the support being given to a local artist.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market was being held on a fine day • A new ASDA supermarket will offer 2 hours free parking – this is expected to be located near to the market. This is seen as a positive development. • Wilkinsons is located in the corner of the market square • Lynn has a trading standards background • They have a policy to help ensure that variety is maintained • Promotion activities have been semi-proactive • The council has been slow at supporting • Flexible decisions have been made to keep traders happy, but under control • All decisions are accounted for • Lynn focuses on the relationship with the traders • More space could be sold (/108) but this would affect the quality of the market and the layout • Public toilets are adjacent • Traders need their own insurance • Coach visits now have problems with their drop off points • Ferry terminal and bus stops are in ideal locations • There is some banter from the traders (especially the meat auctioneers)

8.3. Review of Blyth Market

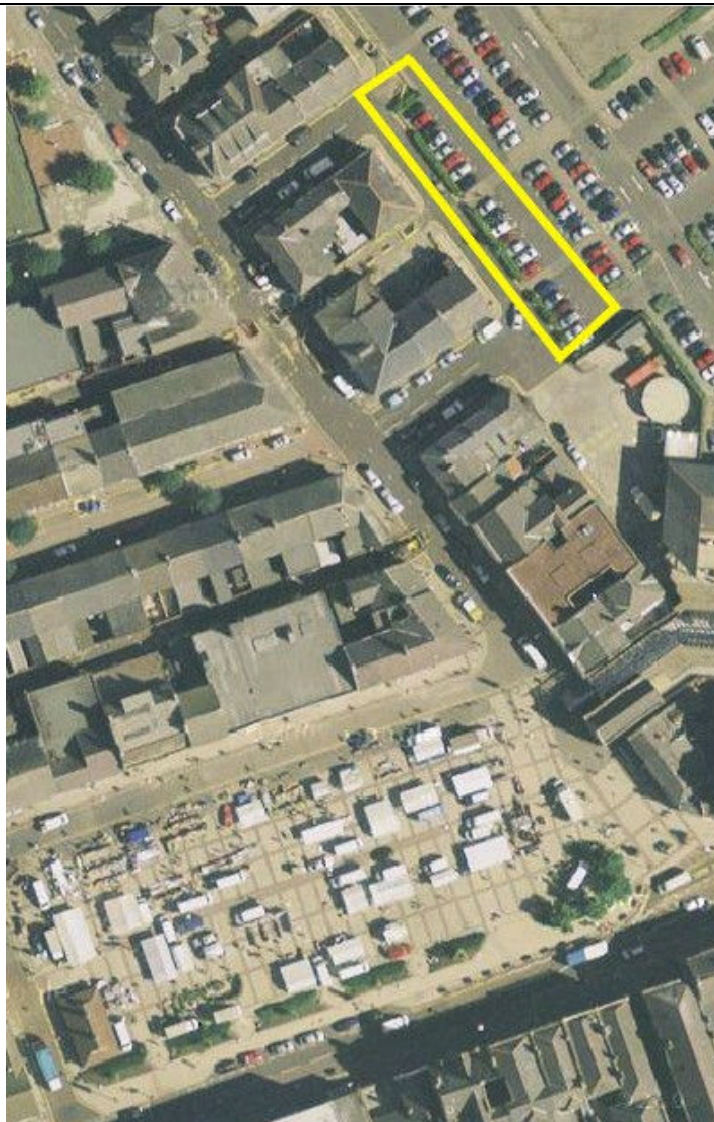


Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 The redevelopment of the town centre is at the bottom of the photo (where the market is shown)

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self -erecting stalls – tidy in appearance
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declined
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1 fee levied on all traders each time they take a stall at the market • This money is discussed quarterly at a meeting between the Council and the market traders and a rolling plan of activity is agreed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> upon to promote the market.
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium stall ranges from £18 to £29 depending on the day of the market • This is under review due to the cost of the new changes proposed.
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector – determined due to political reasoning.
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative – they are attempting to breakeven
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 max (30 visible today during visit)
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant and free
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre features (when completed)
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Heart of the town centre' Bill Tarbit • New Morrisons Superstore to be built next to current shop • ASDA on the outskirts negates the need for people to visit the town centre • Regeneration in the area has been approached so that all the areas of the town have been tackled. • Water and art features being introduced into the market to attract visitors • New stalls are going to be marquees • Rent offset ideas are considered • Events programme planned for the next 6 months • Market is staffed by 1 market officer • There has been a loss of the team – council is struggling

8.4. Review of Stanley Market

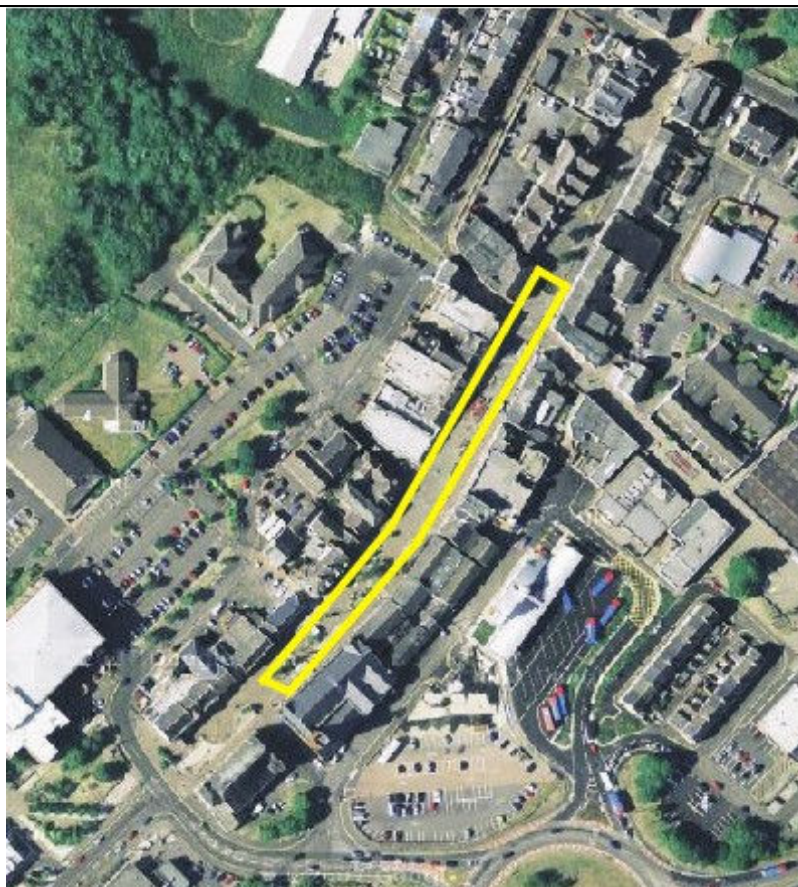


Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 Main shopping street is pedestrianised.
 ASDA is located just off the photo - bottom left.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market stalls are self-erected and give a less standardised image than other markets visited. The display stands used were appropriate for the types of merchandise being offered – this did include items being located on the street floor. Overall the market area is in good condition with adjacent shops being supportive in appearance.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained a full 'cast membership' since taken over by Nobles.
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is done through local and national pro-active working.

Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2 / foot
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit Sustainability /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profitable.
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 stalls were present on the day of this research
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking is free around Stanley and the congestion on the roads around the market and carparks was clearly visible.
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shops that surround the market compliment the market. There are many cafes and discount shops adjacent to the market itself and this appears to be synergistic with the market as opposed to working in direct competition.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We visited McKays and Woolworths whilst visiting the market. Both shops mentioned that they receive extra footfall during market days. One of the days is a Saturday which one would normally expect to be higher anyway. • The flowers surrounding the market stalls on the high street, combined with recent redevelopment make the Stanley market a refreshing and vibrant place to visit.

8.5. Review of Stockton Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
Main shopping street is pedestrianised.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 8th October 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidy.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the promotion comes from word of mouth. • Previous promotions have included carrier bags and sponsoring local football teams. • 50p surcharge for promotions levied on stall holders
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20.50 per 12ft frontage
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly profitable

Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible – some free.
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good array of shops surrounding the market. • Classed as an attraction in itself.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full on wet weather days – clauses in their regulations about the need to stay. • This is operated more like a private sector run market. • The traders work with the councils promotions group to decide on the best way to use the money to promote the market. • Located on the central street in Stockton. • Bus stops adjacent. • Self-erect stalls (uniform use of blue and white sheets). • Good range of traders and subsequent variety of products available – from fruit & veg to disability equipment. • Close to Thornaby and Middlesborough.

8.6. Review of Morpeth Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 29th October 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The market is on the central crossroads of the town. It is integrated within the heart of the main shopping area.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable at 17 stalls per market day
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerable marketing takes place – the market manager has access to a good marketing fund and uses local, regional and national publications.
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authority Castle Morpeth Council
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General
Market Profit /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The market is a profitable organisation

Sustainability	
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plentiful in the area but a charge is made
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morpeth is an attractive town with several tourist attractions nearby. The market is very popular with traders, who also trade at Chester-le-Street. Although it's more expensive to trade at Morpeth trader feel that it presents value for money
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

9. Appendix C – Telephone Interview notes

9.1. STOCKTON

- Spoke with Colin Watson (Market Manager) – 077152 95910
- Over the last 12 months they have maintained the number of traders they have at the market (about 90% are weekly regulars).
- Full on wet weather days – clauses in their regulations about the need to stay.
- They pride themselves on being flexible to accommodate their traders.
- The market is seen as good value for money in Stockton and this helps to attract shoppers.
- Shoppers largely go to the market because of the diversity of traders they have.
- Types of traders are regulated, so they don't have too much of any one type (including new versus old) – this helps to give the market the diversity that shoppers like.
- The cost per 12ft frontage is £20.50, with every extra 6ft adding £10.00 to the cost.
- The 50p is a promotion surcharge which the traders own, but the council appear to manage.
- The traders work with the councils promotions group to decide on the best way to use the money to promote the market.
- Previous promotions have included carrier bags and sponsoring local football teams.
- Much of the promotion comes from word of mouth.
- Thornaby market is also under the local council's control and this going through a period of change. The town centre is being redeveloped and this has led to half of the regular traders to move one. The large ASDA store is also detracting from the market.
- Billingham market is also under their control and has been hit badly by the opening of a large TESCO next to the market.
- Colin has seen the general downturn in markets over the past 12 months.
- This is operated more like a private sector run market.

9.2. CATTERICK

- Main contact is Greville Worthington
- Phone number 01748 812 127
- They have noticed a downturn in spending over the last 12 months
- They have a privately funded website to help promote the market
- Promotion is often in the form of radio and local papers

- From reading their website there appears to be a number of other attractions to the market:
 - Kiddies entertainment
 - Giveaways
 - Entertainers
 - Free car parking
 - Promotion for coach drivers
 - 'Cheap rent' scheme

9.3. BARNARD CASTLE

- Spoke with Julie Fletcher 01833 690 000
- The last 12 months has been quiet
- Same number of stalls
- Slight decrease in shoppers
- The summer markets do better due to general tourism
- These levels are inconsistent over the year, but the traders don't appear to be bothered by this.
- Promotion is on the website
- Julie visits other markets on other days actively recruiting traders – these visits are on non-competing days
- Julie agrees that working with the traders on their customer service is a good thing and can certainly help both the trader and the market
- She has good rapport with the traders (but they know where the line is!)
- There is a good variety of traders on the market – she tries to limit the trades to one of each
- She has seen a trend of shopping that follows the credit squeeze
- They have about 20 stalls at their market

9.4. DURHAM OUTDOOR MARKET

- Spoke with Colin on 0191 384 6153
- The market is run by Durham Markets Company Ltd
- Colin is willing to host a visit if required
- It was felt that it's better for a market to be run by a non-council operator (I interpreted this as being mainly due to lower costs and focus).
- They take a management fee, remove the running expenses and then split the profit with the council 50/50
- Things have been 'ficking over nicely' during the last 12 months compared to other markets.

- The farmers market has remained static, the outdoor market has had a loss of traders and the indoor market is staying full.
- Colin stated that markets are labour intensive to run, and they benefit from having the indoor market so close to the outdoor market.
- Promotion was mainly made towards the coach drivers ('crack the driver and you've cracked the visitors'). They give the driver a food voucher to get a free meal when stopping at the market. Colin said that coach drivers often get to make the choice about where they stop on a long trip.
- Colin also stated that Durham benefits from the having the cathedral as part of the attraction of visiting Durham.

9.5. HEXHAM

- Spoke with Keith Gray – Market Superintendent
- Two years ago the market was dying – today it is doing well and has expanded.
- During the same period the profitability of the market has gone from a loss of around 30 – 40 k to a positive one.
- To recruit traders they ran a marketing initiative (their budget is £1200 per year) and they proceeded with an advertorial in the market traders news, followed by press from the local papers. They also used an online advert for traders which cost them around £150.00.
- They have self-erecting stalls to reduce time and cost, these can be bunched up into a 'bazaar' type format when there are less traders present, so that the market does not appear sparse.
- The traders have noted that there is a general downwards trend being faced currently.
- Keith stated that the most important thing is to look after your traders.
- They entered a NABMA competition and did well their first year, but did not win.
- They flex their prices to encourage and maintain their traders. New traders are offered a discount to allow them to ramp up their selling activities and become established.
- There is a good variety of traders on the market, this includes clothes, organic meat, fish and game, jacket potatoes, plants, brocksbushes and music.
- There are generally more shoppers visiting the market compared to 2 years ago.
- A kaizen approach has been taken as many of the changes over the last 2 years have been very small – but there have been quite a number.
- The market has now expanded to cover most days of the week.

10. Appendix D – 2007 Market Visitor Survey Results

How did you get to the market today?

Method	Walk	Car	Bus	Train	Other	No resp.
Number	31	91	30	0	0	4
%	19.9	58.3	19.2	0	0	2.6

How far have you travelled to be here?

Location	C-L-S	<20 miles*	>20 miles	No resp.
Number	25	118	3	10
%	16.0	75.6	1.9	6.4

*Most common locations included: Sunderland, Sacriston, Durham, Pelton and Birtley

Gender

Gender	Male	Female	No resp.
Number	49	91	16
%	31.4	58.3	10.3

Ages of respondents

Range	19 – 29	30 – 45	46 – 65	Other	No resp.
Number	19	35	75	31	7
%	11.4	21.0	44.9	18.6	4.2

Frequency of visits to the market

Frequency	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Other	No resp.
Number	91	17	14	32	2
%	58.3	10.9	9.0	20.5	1.3

Popularity of trading days

Day	Tuesday	Friday	Saturday	No resp.
Number	34	102	80	4
%	15.5	46.4	36.4	1.8

Reasons to visit the market

Reason	Fabric	Clothing	Food	Household	Other	No resp.
Number	25	32	64	66	116	8
%	8.0	10.3	20.6	21.2	37.3	2.6

Proposed improvements to the market

Item	More stalls	Toilets	Better Parking	Entertainment	No resp.
Number	77	72	5	15	27
%	39.3	36.7	2.6	7.7	13.8

11. Appendix E – Proposed Regulations

Chester-Le-Street District Council Market Regulations and Conditions

1. Opening times, accessibility and attendance

1.1 The market will be accessible for vehicles from 0730hrs on Tuesday and from 0700hrs on Fridays and Saturdays and all vehicles must be clear of the market by 0930hrs. Any trader who is not at the market by 0830hrs will lose their position on that day unless they have made prior arrangements with the market officer.

1.2 Any trader failing to inform the market officer that they are going to be absent will be charged a reserve fee of £5 per stall.

1.3 No vehicles will return to the market until the market officer closes the market, which will normally be at 1500hrs on Tuesday and 1530hrs on Friday & Saturday.

1.4 Traders must observe the trading hours and keep their stall open whilst the market is in operation and may only pack their goods away early if they have the market officer's permission.

1.5 Where a regular trader is absent for three consecutive market days or their attendance falls below 75% of the available market days in any 13-week period, their pitch will be considered vacant and may be reallocated by the Market Officer.

1.6 Traders are required to exhibit their stall number and register their name, address, telephone number and email address with the market officer. A valid form of identification is also required (i.e. driving licence, passport or other official document).

1.7 All tolls and fees must be paid to the Market Officer promptly on demand. Traders are liable for all tolls and fees when a stall or pitch has been occupied, (i.e. when goods have been displayed, offered for sale or sold).

1.8 Casual traders will be allocated pitches using a points system. One point will be awarded to the trader for each day that they attend, whether or not they are allocated a pitch. The casual trader with the most points will be allocated the first available appropriate stall. There is a separate system for each trading day (e.g. points awarded for a Saturday do not count for Friday).

1.9 Traders are not permitted to bring animals onto the market or any stall. This rule does not apply to guide dogs.

1.10 The Market Officer has the right to change the layout and position of stalls, pitches, mobiles and trading positions especially in bad weather in order to concentrate the market.

1.11 Traders must keep their goods within the boundaries of their stall.

1.12 Boxes, tables or dress rails cannot be put on the market square without the permission of the market officer. Permission will not be given if the boxes, tables or dress rails obstruct a neighbouring trader's position. These will be charged an additional rent.

1.13 All regular traders have been issued with a blue and white tarpaulin to fit each stall. All casual traders must use a blue and white tarpaulin to cover their stall. However this may be waived if the Market Officer considers it appropriate.

1.14 It is the responsibility of each trader to put tarpaulins on their stall, take them off and store them from week to week. These tarpaulins remain the property of Chester-Le-Street District Council at all times. If a trader decides to cease trading or to leave the market the tarpaulins must be returned to the market officer

1.15 Traders may use a their own tarpaulins providing it complies with the colour and standard expected by the District Council and at the discretion of the Market Officer.

1.16 Casual traders will pay a returnable deposit of £5 for any tarpaulins borrowed from the Market Officer.

2. Weather conditions

2.1 In severe weather conditions it may be necessary to cancel the market. The market will be cancelled at the discretion of the Market Officer having taken appropriate advice from the meteorological office.

2.3 The Market Officer will decide before mid-day if the weather is sufficiently inclement to adversely affect trade. In such circumstances the Market Officer may issue a 50% credit note that should be used by the trader for the next week's stall rental.

3. Goods for Sale

3.1 Any trader selling foodstuffs shall comply with:

- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006
- E. C. 852/2004
- All food sellers must be registered with a local authority

3.2 No person shall display, offer for sale or sell any goods or hold sales by auction on the Market Square except on market days and in accordance with these Regulations

3.3 Goods not intended for open sale and display must not be brought onto the market.

3.4 All stallholders must give access to their stall and stored goods to the Market Officer or Trading Standards Officers to enable them to inspect goods brought onto the Market

3.5 No person shall display, offer for sale or sell, keep or store on the Market Square any of the following

- i. Any laser product commonly referred to as laser pointers or laser pens
- ii. Any alcohol or tobacco
- iii. Any gunpowder, fireworks or other explosive substance or any naphtha, bottled gas, petroleum, paraffin oil or other flammable substance.³
- iv. Any weapon, including air guns, ornamental weapons and replica weapons.
- v. Live animals
- vi. Pornographic material
- vii. Counterfeit goods –e. g. clothing copy DVD's perfume
- viii. Any items the sale of which is deemed by the Market Officer to be detrimental to the efficient operation or image of the Market.

Traders who contravene the above will be reported to the police and/or trading standards officers and will forfeit their pitch immediately.

4. Waste and litter Disposal

4.1 Chester-le-Street District Council cleans the market daily. However Market Traders have the responsibility to ensure that their pitches and stalls are kept free of litter and debris. Traders should deposit such waste materials in the rubbish cage that the Council provides. There may be occasional markets when the cage is not available – in such circumstances traders should ensure that waste material is appropriately bagged and removed. The Market Officer has the duty to ensure that the

³ The sale of lighter fuel, glues and other solvents to adults may be permitted at the discretion of the Market Officer.

market is a safe place; any trader who fails to maintain their pitch or stall appropriately may be asked to leave the market.

5. Public liability

5.1 Every trader shall arrange and maintain a policy of insurance against public liability and third party claims in the sum of at least £5,000,000 for any one incident, a certificate for which should be available for inspection by the Market Officer.

6. Appropriate Conduct and Behaviour

6.1 Chester-le-Street District Council is committed to ensuring that all citizens in the District, its staff and all those associated with the Council receive fair and appropriate services and treatment, irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity, race, sex, marital status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or other social factor.

6.2 Traders operating within the Market Place, the Civic Heart or its environs are expected to apply the same high standards in their dealings with customers officers and fellow traders.

7. Market tariffs

7.1 Tuesday

One stall £14.00	Casual trader one stall £17.00
Two stalls £23.00	Casual trader two stalls £29.00

Tuesday Standage

£13 per stand approximately 12ftX10ft

7.2 Friday

One stall £18.00	Casual trader one stall £21.00
Two stalls £29.00	Casual trader two stalls
Three stalls £49.00	

Friday Standage

£17 per stand approximately 12ftX10ft

7.3 Saturday

One stall £16.00
Two stalls £29.00
Three stalls £41.00

Casual trader one stall £17.00
Casual trader Two stalls £31.00

Saturday Standage

£16 per stand approximately £12 X10ft

Appendix F – Costs and Income

Chester Le Street Market

Year	Budget	Total Income
2001/2002	268,810.00	237,125.80
2002/2003	253,300.00	246,689.96
2003/2004	267,970.00	217,844.75
2004/2005	240,000.00	200,910.91
2005/2006	216,900.00	175,315.18
2006/2007	206,400.00	130,347.78
2007/2008	206,400.00	103,822.64
2008/2009	206,400.00	TBC [expected to reach £112k]

Appendix F (continued) – Costs and Income

BUDGET 2007/08 (1)	REGENERATION (3)	Inflation (4)	Growth (5)	Account Code (6)	Cost Centre (7)	Sub- Analysis (8)	BUDGET 2008/09 (9)
£		£	£				£
	REGENERATION PROGRAMMES MANAGEMENT						
	EMPLOYEES						
46,450	Salaries	1,390	-47,840	A1000	CH003		0
0	Agency Fees	0	0	A8000	CH003		0
	TRANSPORT & PLANT						
2,000	Car Mileages	60	-1,460	E7000	CH003	MIL001	600
	SUPPLIES & SERVICES						
800	Equipment	20	-20	G1000	CH003	EQU001	800
1,000	Printing & Stationery	30	-780	G2000	CH003	PRT001	250
170	Publications	10	-10	G2005	CH003	PUB001	170
350	Postages	10	-160	G4000	CH003	CPO001	200
200	Telephones	10	140	G4005	CH003	TEL002	350
200	Hospitality	10	-10	G6040	CH003		200
100	Publicity	0	0	G2015	CH003		100
1,100	Project Costs	30	-130	G7010	CH003		1,000
52,370	TOTAL DIRECT EXPENDITURE	1,570	-50,270				3,670
	Less-						
0	Income from Grants & Contributions	0	0	R4000	CH003	CON001	0
0	TOTAL DIRECT INCOME	0	0				0
52,370	NET DIRECT EXPENDITURE	1,570	-50,270				3,670
	Add						
1,570	Insurances	50	-50	A5000	CH003		1,570
1,260	Office Accommodation	40	-1,300	N1010	CH003		0
18,780	SUPPORT SERVICES (SLA)	560	-560	N3010	CH003		18,780
21,610	TOTAL RECHARGES	650	-1,910				20,350
73,980	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,220	-52,180				24,020
	MARKET						
	EMPLOYEES						
17,050	Salaries	1,020	1,400	A1000	JE001		19,470
1,070	Wages	40	-40	A1100	JE001		1,070
	PREMISES						
2,000	Buildings-Structure	60	-2,060	C1000	JE001	BRP001	0
	Energy-						
1,350	Electricity	40	-40	C2000	JE001		1,350
460	Water	10	-10	C2000	JE001		460
35,610	Rent & Rates	1,070	-3,420	C3000	JE001		33,260
	TRANSPORT						
100	Car Mileages	0	0	E7000	JE001	MIL001	100
	SUPPLIES & SERVICES						
100	Equipment	0	0	G1000	JE001	EQU001	100
0	Clothing	0	0	G1200	JE001		0
200	Printing & Stationery	10	-10	G2000	JE001	PRT001	200
500	Telephones	20	-20	G4005	JE001	TEL002	500
0	Licences	0	0	G7030	JE001		0
300	Promotion	10	-10	G7050	JE001		300
2,000	Security Arrangements	60	940	G3005	JE001	SVP001	3,000
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS						
	Payments to Other Services:-						
29,040	Internal Recharges	870	-870	J2000	JE001	INT006	29,040
28,940	Internal Recharges	870	-870	J2000	JE001	INT007	28,940
118,720	TOTAL DIRECT EXPENDITURE	4,080	-5,010				117,790
	Less						
79,000	Fees-Friday	2,370	-2,370	R2015	JE001	MKT*	79,000
110,000	Fees-Saturday	3,300	-3,300	R2015	JE002	MKT*	110,000
17,400	Fees-Tuesday	520	-520	R2015	JE003	MKT*	17,400
206,400	TOTAL DIRECT INCOME	6,190	-6,190				206,400
-87,680	NET DIRECT EXPENDITURE	-2,110	1,180				-88,610
	Add						
110	Insurances	0	0	C7000	JE001		110
2,910	Insurances	90	-90	A5000	JE001		2,910
35,680	Capital Charge	1,070	-15,790	C9000	JE001		20,960
3,700	Office Accommodation	110	-1,560	N1010	JE001		2,250
6,890	SUPPORT SERVICES (SLA)	210	-210	N3010	JE001		6,890
49,290	TOTAL RECHARGES	1,480	-17,650				33,120
-38,390	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-630	-16,470				-55,490



Chester-le-Street District Council

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	2nd February 2009
Report from:	Director of Corporate Services
Title of Report:	Review into the Marketing of Activities for Young People - Final Report
Agenda Item Number:	

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for members to consider and agree the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the scrutiny review into the marketing of activities for young people.
- 1.2 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:
 1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultations required in respect of the work of the task and Finish Group are fully identified in the attached Appendix.

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE & 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.

3.3 The scrutiny topic has a direct impact on the following area of the ***People and Place*** priority:

- Strengthening Partnerships
- Neighbourhoods.

3.4 Scrutiny recommendations will be incorporated into the 'Handing over the Baton' Report to be presented to the new unitary council in March 2009

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report to this council at the current time.

4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications relating to this report at the current time.

4.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications relating to this report at the current time.

4.4 Other Services

The review will create an impact upon service departments required to support Members in relation to information requests and providing support to the investigative process.

4.5 Diversity

There are no known diversity implications relating to this report at the current time. Accessibility to facilities for young people was considered as part of the review

4.6 Risk

There are no risk implications relating to this report at the current time other than human resource capacity issues as a direct result of Local Government Re-organisation. Due to reducing capacity within the Corporate Services Directorate the Acting Head of Leisure Services was lead officer and worked closely with the member champion for Sport to deliver the report.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

There are no specific crime and disorder implications to this report at the current time. Improving the take up of activities could have a positive impact on 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 attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.9 LGR Implications

The proposals are a fundamental part of the councils Transition Plan. Therefore no agreement of the County Council was required to conduct this piece of work. However it is unlikely that any significant recommendations will be implemented in the lifetime of this council. Once agreed the Review Report will be incorporated into the 'Handing over the Baton' Report to be presented to the new unitary council in March 2009

5. **BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW**

5.1 At their meeting on 30th June 2008 and in response to the council's single priority of '**People and Place**', the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake three scrutiny reviews all linked to the corporate priority. This specific review has been undertaken because of specific perceptions of parents that not enough is available for young people when in fact the council actually delivers a significant range of services and activities for them.

5.2 Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other different retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart project. Its attractiveness has been approved and other work of the Action Learning Set has developed significant programmes of events throughout the year to improve it further. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore a right time to consider options for the markets future.

- 5.3 The review is therefore based on direct feedback to District Councillors, and in particular the member Champion for Sport, that there is a lack of awareness amongst young people and parents about what is actually available within the District. The review could have significant outcomes in better engagement of young people in activities and improved viability of Leisure services provided by the council. The outcomes could include improved enjoyment of leisure time, improved health resulting from increased engagement in sport, reduced crime and improved cohesion and social capital.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

- 6.1 The objective of the review was to:

- Consider the feasibility of Improvements to current marketing of activities provided to young people to secure improved awareness, take up of activities and engagement in sport resulting in improved use of leisure services provided by the council and its partners.

- 6.2 To achieve this review set out to consider the following key issues and questions:

- How aware are young people of the facilities the council has and the activities it provides?
- How aware are parents of the facilities the council has and the activities the council provides?
- Who markets leisure activities for young people well and how do they do it?
- How do private sector facilities market their services?
- How does the council market its activities for young people including how services are promoted at first point of contact?
- How well does this compare with market leaders?
- What are the opportunities for building best practice into the councils marketing arrangements?
- What is the scope for developing communication channels for young people including potential for young peoples web site with young peoples engagement in its design or the development of SMS texting?
- What are the capacity issues for change and how can they be addressed including process change, training and development?
- How can parents engage better with leisure services to help young people take up access to sport, including opportunities for related 'sports cafes'

- What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to consider making in the light of the research findings?

6.3 Due to capacity issues during the lifetime of the review it was not possible to address all these questions. The review did focus on its purpose and objectives.

7. METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 Visits

There were capacity limitations in undertaking this review. Evidence gathering was based on visits to other providers.

7.2 Report Findings

The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings which was submitted to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th January 2009.

7.3 Timeline

The following timetable was proposed:

- Initial informal discussion on Draft Scoping Report 22nd July 2008
- Initial presentation, Scoping report and Task and Finish Group membership agreed 30th July 2008
- Visits to other providers by 13th September 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10th September 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd October 2008
- Task and Finish Group informal meeting to discuss evidence gained by 14th November and agree recommendations
- Findings of Task and Finish Group reported to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd December 2008

7.4 This report was completed slightly behind this target and this has been due to reduced capacity within the Legal and Democratic Services Team.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The final report is set out in Appendix 1. Members are recommended to:

1. Agree the review findings, conclusions and recommendations

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERED TO:

- Transition Plan & People and Place Priority

AUTHOR NAME: Ian Forster
DESIGNATION: Director of Corporate Services
DATE OF REPORT: 15 January 2009
VERSION NUMBER 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Appendix 1

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



*People
& Place*



Review into the Marketing of Activities for Young People

Final Report

January 2009

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Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review into the Marketing of Activities for Young People

Foreword of the Task and Finish Group Lead

In April 2009 Chester-le-Street will no longer exist as a District Council. A new unitary council called Durham County Council will be created and will deliver services for young people.

We are passionate about the provision of sport and leisure in the District. We know how this can improve the wellbeing of our residents of all ages. We want to ensure that activities for young people and their take up are improved through the transition to the new organisation. Parents have been telling us that we do not do a lot for young people when in fact we do. It was clear to us that there were reasons for this mis-perception and we felt that the answer lay in how we marketed the activities and services we provide. In view of this we have undertaken a scrutiny review in order to produce recommendations which we hope can be addressed by the new unitary council.

We have visited a number of different service providers both within the county and beyond to understand what they provide and how they go about marketing it. This review produces recommendations on the issues that we feel that will make a difference and provide much improved services for young people.

We thank those service providers for the time they have given up in helping us with our evidence collection. We urge the new unitary council to consider our findings and views.

Cllr Tracie Smith

Lead Member, Task and Finish Group
Members Sports Champion

The review was carried out between June 2008 and December 2008.
The Lead Officer Was Simon High, Acting Head of Leisure Services

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review into the Marketing of Activities for Young People

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

Marketing Activities for Young People Task and Finish Group
Cllr. G Armstrong (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Cllr. J. Barrett
Cllr. J. Shiell
Cllr. T. Smith (Lead Member)
Cllr. Wilkinson
Cllr. J Proud

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review into the Marketing of Activities for Young People

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2009 Chester-le-Street District Council will no longer exist. It will be replaced by a new unitary council, Durham County Council, who will deliver local authority services across the county of Durham. The responsibility for delivering facilities for young people will therefore shift to the new unitary in April.
- 1.2 In order to guide the delivery of Chester-le-Street District Council's services in its final year the council developed what it called its 'Transition Plan' The council's Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the council's previous planning document, 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. The council's choice to move towards a single priority (its focus for the final year) of what it calls '**People and Place**' was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.
- 1.3 At their meeting on 30th June 2008 and in response to the council's single priority of '**People and Place**', the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake three scrutiny reviews all linked to the corporate priority. This specific scrutiny topic has a direct impact on the following area of the **People and Place** priority:
- Strengthening Partnerships.
 - Neighbourhoods
- 1.4 This specific review has been undertaken because of specific perceptions of parents that not enough is available for young people when in fact the council actually delivers a significant range of services and activities for them.

2 Purpose of the Review

- 2.1 The purpose of the review was to look at ways in which the council could better market some of the activities it provides for young people particularly in the leisure service.
- 2.2 The work of the Task and Finish group will support a key project of the **People and Place** priority delivery plan in respect of the engagement of

young people. Scrutiny recommendations will be incorporated into the 'Handing over the Baton' Report to be presented to the new unitary council in March 2009. In effect the review seeks to implement what improvements can be made prior to vesting day but largely influence improved service delivery within the new organisation.

3 Scrutiny Review Process

- 3.1 Scrutiny reviews are in-depth studies into issues which have been identified by scrutiny members as important to the community and Council of Chester-le-Street.
- 3.2 Scrutiny reviews investigate issues by a process of gathering evidence through speaking to individuals and groups that are involved or affected. The review panel then formulates realistic evidence based recommendations which are presented to the Council's Executive.
- 3.3 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

Stage 1 Scope	The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.
Stage 2 Investigate	The panel gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges site visits where appropriate.
Stage 3 Analyse	The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the panel.
Stage 4 Clarify	The panel discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.
Stage 5 Recommend	The panel formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.
Stage 6 Report	Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.
Stage 7 Monitor	The panel undertakes to monitor agreed recommendations on a regularly agreed basis. This will be a responsibility of the new Unitary Authority.

4 Background

- 4.1 The council and its partners provide a significant range of activities and sports initiatives within the District, including those centred around the key Leisure facilities at the Leisure Centre and the Riverside Complex.
- 4.2 The review is based on direct feedback to District Councillors that there is a lack of awareness amongst young people and parents about what is actually available within the District. The review could have significant outcomes in better engagement of young people in activities and improved viability of Leisure services provided by the council. The outcomes could include improved enjoyment of leisure time, improved health resulting from increased engagement in sport, reduced crime and improved cohesion and social capital.

5 Terms of Reference

- 5.1 The objective of the review was to:
- Consider the feasibility of Improvements to current marketing of activities provided to young people to secure improved awareness, take up of activities and engagement in sport resulting in improved use of leisure services provided by the council and its partners.
- 5.2 To achieve this review set out to consider the following key issues and questions:
- How aware are young people of the facilities the council has and the activities it provides?
 - How aware are parents of the facilities the council has and the activities the council provides?
 - Who markets leisure activities for young people well and how do they do it?
 - How do private sector facilities market their services?
 - How does the council market its activities for young people including how services are promoted at first point of contact?
 - How well does this compare with market leaders?
 - What are the opportunities for building best practice into the councils marketing arrangements?
 - What is the scope for developing communication channels for young people including potential for young peoples web site with young peoples engagement in its design or the development of SMS texting?

- What are the capacity issues for change and how can they be addressed including process change, training and development?
 - How can parents engage better with leisure services to help young people take up access to sport, including opportunities for related 'sports cafes'?
 - What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to consider making in the light of the research findings?
- 5.3 Due to capacity issues during the lifetime of the review it was not possible to address all these questions. The review did focus on its purpose and objectives.

6 Methodology

- 6.1 The task and finish group was working to a clearly agreed timetable. The timetable was a useful tool by which progress could be monitored and also provided a basis for progress reports to the main task and finish and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.
- 6.2 The council agreed its methodology as part of the scoping report approved by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 30th July 2008. The methodology is set out in the following paragraphs.
- 6.3 Interviews were conducted with the Council's Acting Head of Leisure Services

Visits

- 6.4 It was decided at an early stage to visit a range of leisure providers within the region to gain an understanding of they how they are tackling the issue of engaging young people in sports and leisure activities. These visits were planned to include large and small public sector providers and a leisure trust. The following visits were made:
- Thursday 20th November 2008:

Met officers from Wear Valley District Council at Bishop Auckland Leisure Centre.
 - Wednesday 3rd December 2008:

Met officers from Sunderland City Council at Sunderland Aquatic Centre
 - Thursday 18th December 2008:

Met officers from North Country leisure (A leisure trust covering the Districts of Tynedale, Alnwick and Copeland) at their head offices in Hexham.

Evidence Gathering

- 6.5 Due to the current pressures being faced by both officers and members in the LGR process no additional or other evidence gathering measures were undertaken.

Report Findings

- 6.6 The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings which was presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation purpose on 14th January 2009.

7 Legislative & Strategic Context

- 7.1 The provision and marketing of activities for young people is not a legislative duty. The council has continued to provide activities in view of their importance to young people, parents and the general well being of the district.

At present the provision is twofold;

1) Activities delivered from the various venues/facilities that the council manages and operates, which are;

- Chester le Street Leisure Centre
- Riverside Sports Complex
- Roseberry Grange Golf Complex

2) Activities delivered at a neighbourhood level, using community centre's, schools etc by sports/community development teams and usually dependant on external grant funding due to the limited level of mainstream funding available within existing council budgets. Examples include

- Positive Futures programme
- Game on League
- Community coaches scheme
- Fisch and Mend projects

- 7.2 Due to capacity issues and resource constraints the marketing of the various activities is undertaken using traditional methods, these include;

- Annual programmes for each facility detailing activities, times, charges etc. These are available from all Council venues, local libraries and other outlets on the general distribution list.

- The sports development team have a distribution list for all the young people who have already been on courses and they post out internally created flyers with details of new courses during holiday periods.
- For specific projects i.e. positive futures or the game on league the team undertakes some targeted marketing via existing forums/groups ie youth engagement service.
- Information is placed by the team on the leisure part of the Council website and the County Durham Sport Website

7.3 In a strategic context the various activities provided help the Council in its efforts to;

- Support the achievement of LAA targets within County Durham with specific reference to
 - 1) LAA No 3: Self reported measure of overall people's health & well being
 - 2) LAA No 5: Obesity among primary school age children in year 6
 - 3) LAA No 12; Dealing with local concerns about anti social behaviour by police and the local council
 - 4) LAA No 23: Participation in regular volunteering
 - 5) LAA No 24: Young people's participation in positive activities

8 Findings of the Review

8.1 The main learning points from the visit to **Wear Valley District Council** were;

- A small number of traditional type facilities within a large rural area cannot effectively provide sport/leisure opportunities for young people due to travel distances/costs involved
- The Council made a strategic decision to redirect resources from the fixed facilities into a community based physical activity strategy for children and young people.
- A lack of suitable local venues to deliver activities from was a major problem, this was partly solved by a partnership approach with the education authority to build two new NOF sports halls that would be available to support community as well as school use.
- Local sports clubs are crucial in providing local sports opportunities however they are struggling to cope with the increasing demands place on their volunteers for coaching, administration, officiating, fundraising etc. The council, initially through a Sport England funded post, employed a 'club development officer' to support and help develop local clubs which has proved immensely successful. This post has now been mainstreamed.

- Due to the rural nature of much of the District the Council, again supported by Sport England funding, implemented the ‘wellness on wheel’s’ project. This in essence was a mobile gym with top of the range fitness equipment and dedicated staff. Its role was to be located within a community for a 10 week period and encourage local residents to take up exercise and sign post them to existing gyms at the end of the period. The project also extended to creating small community gym’s as a legacy project, these are based in small community venues and staffed by trained up members of the community. A number, i.e. Coundon, have been very successful and provide localised opportunities at a very cost effective charge.

8.2 The main learning points from the visit to **Sunderland City Council** were;

1) The present offer for young people can be summarised as follows;

- Young people have affordable access to mainstream facilities i.e. the aquatic centre via the life card scheme.
- Over 300 weekly sessions of neighbourhood youth work takes place across the city, this includes partnerships with the voluntary sector, delivered from 50 access points in a variety of settings i.e. MUGA’s, playgrounds, youth centre’s, community centre’s etc.
- There is a strong and active youth parliament, youth forums and engagement by young people in shaping services.
- There is a high quality youth information service

The key basis of the approach taken by the city council has been to ensure it is young people centred, it promotes a menu of activities that are not just sport and it gives young people some ownership of activities.

2) Some of the key initiatives are;

- A sports unlimited programme which supports the governments 5 hr physical activity offer, is based in mainstream facilities as well as schools and gives young people 10 week taster sessions at facilities where they are accompanied by a youth worker to give them support and encouragement.
- Removing barriers for young people to enter and use mainstream facilities. This includes a new affordable pricing framework with re-aligned age policies and membership packages and changing attitudes and tolerance levels of both staff and other users in facilities towards access and use by young people.
- Introducing the ‘lets go card’ for young people 14 to 16 who are in receipt of free school meals or are looked after children. This provides them with £33.00 credit per month to spend on activities with all council leisure centres included in the scheme.

3) In terms of marketing the main marketing channels used are;

- Websites
- Leaflets/flyers/posters. These are very high quality and adhere to strict corporate brand guidelines
- Press advertising including local radio
- Council publications
- Distribution strategies including all council buildings, schools and local businesses.

8.3 The main learning points from the visit to **North Country Leisure** at Hexham were;

- The enthusiasm/attitude of staff is absolutely crucial in successfully engaging with young people. As such the trust invests heavily in staff training, especially with coaches, to ensure they have the right skills and understanding.
- Young people need access to a mixture of activity programmes. At the moment dance is very big with young people, they employ a dance co-ordinator at Copeland to work in schools and after school.
- Due to the location of facilities in Tynedale the trust attempts to deliver activities/programmes locally using village halls and schools. As part of this process it has developed a partnership with four secondary schools.
- Getting into schools to connect with young people is key; the trust has a football team company working in 80 schools and piggybacks other programmes on the back of this.
- Grant funded sports development schemes should not be parachuted into leisure facilities they should be embedded into a more strategic and long term view that offers benefits all round.
- The community sports network is a crucial framework for bringing various partners together i.e. the school sports partnership and national parks have got together for a 'fat camp'.
- When promoting new activities free vouchers/discount vouchers work better than flyers.
- It's difficult to quantify level of marketing resources, in reality most is spent on training and developing staff as they do the most important part of marketing.
- Successfully connecting with young people can't be done with traditional brochures/programmes they won't read them, at Copeland they use text messaging.

8.4 In summary the key lessons learned from these three visits were;

- Community based delivery of activities/programmes is crucial and this is only realistic in partnership with local venues ie community centre's, village halls, schools.
- Adequate mainstream resources must be made available to support community based delivery, at present this is too dependant on external grant funding.
- Young people must be welcomed and supported in using the main facilities; this requires appropriate access and pricing policies, attitude and training of staff and activity programmes that are fun and challenging.
- The community/voluntary sector is absolutely crucial in creating and sustaining opportunities for young people, particularly through sports clubs. Support must be provided to help sustain and grow these clubs.
- Engaging with young people is not easy, access through schools is by far the best way of reaching most young people and so partnerships with schools to deliver programmes both in and out of school time should be fostered.
- The role of front line staff in successfully engaging/working with young people is by far the most important one; as such significant resources should be invested in their training and development.
- A partnership approach is fundamental, both with other services in the local authority and external partners.

9 Conclusions

9.1 The conclusions of the Task and Finish Group are:

- The service would be improved if the coaches, those who delivered the service, and the receptionists, those who were the first point of contact, worked together proactively to market the service. The coaches could give the receptionists a better understanding of the activities available and the receptionists could then pro- actively market activities by advising young people of the activities available rather than simply reacting to their transaction request. This could be supported by better use and display of activity information at receptions (e.g. a what's on this week display).
- Services could be improved by providing a post activity questionnaire to young people to get an understanding of their enjoyment of the event, their understanding of what is available and what they would also like to see.
- Take up could be improved by coaches and other community leisure staff making regular school visits, particularly in the run up to key school holidays, offering some tasters (e.g.) the golf coach

at Roseberry Golf Course has a practice tee). The council regularly has staff from other professions visiting schools that could do some additional promotion as well.

- The principle of community/locality based delivery should be acknowledged as a key element in engaging children and young people in positive activities.
- A review of funding supporting community based delivery should be carried out with the aim of ensuring that mainstream funding is increased.
- A comprehensive training and development package should be planned and implemented for all staff who have direct contact with children and young people to ensure they are able to successfully engage and motivate them.
- A comprehensive review of leisure facility access, pricing and membership policies in respect of young people should be carried out as part of a wider strategic effort to increase their use of mainstream facilities and activities.
- Leisure services should embed partnership working, with a range of internal and external partners, as a key mechanism in improving levels of engagement and involvement with children and young people.
- Support should be provided to local sports clubs using the template provided by the club development officer role at Wear Valley Council.
- Marketing and promoting activities and young people to children and young people is properly resourced and new technologies are fully explored and where possible used i.e. SMS messaging.

9.2 These conclusions should form the basis of future improvement to service delivery by the unitary authority.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The review recommends that:

1. That the conclusions reached in Paragraph 9.1 of this report should form the basis of future improvement to service delivery by the unitary authority.
2. The findings of the review and the proposals for the future are submitted for the consideration of the new Unitary Council as part of the Handing Over the Baton Report with a recommendation that they consider the adoption of detailed recommendation above when considering improvements to the activities provided for young people.

10.2 It is recommended that this report is agreed and reported to the District Council's Executive on 2nd February 2009

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Appendix 1

'Communities in Control' White Paper Summary

On July 9th 2008, Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, launched the empowerment White Paper 'Communities in Control, real people, real power'

The Communities in control White Paper: real people, real power aims to pass power into the hands of local communities. The government want to generate vibrant local democracy in every part of the country, and to give real control over local decisions and services to wider pool of active citizens.

The White Paper addresses seven key issues which are treated from the perspective of individual citizens: being active in your community; access to information; having an influence, challenge; redress; standing for office; and ownership and control.

The White Paper highlights how the intention is to shift power, influence and responsibility away from existing centres of power into the hands of communities and individual citizens. This is because they believe that individual communities can take difficult decisions and solve complex problems for themselves.

The role of the government should be to set national priorities and minimum standards, while providing support and a fair distribution of resources.

Because of the growing disenchantment with formal political mechanism and turnout at elections has been declining, the shift is now is on 'empowerment' passing more and more political power to more and more people through every practical means.

It is envisaged that Councils will remain at the heart of local democracy but many councils should do more to promote community participation (for example a federations of community organisations as a community empowerment/engagement mechanism)

The White Paper recommend to introduce a new 'duty to promote democracy' to help councils promote involvement through clearer information, better trained staff and more visible councillors in the community.

Also to extend the 'existing duty' to involve local people in key decisions, which will come into effect in April 2009, and cover policy authorities and key arts, sporting, cultural and environmental organisations.

An Empowerment Fund of at least £7.5m will be set up to support national third sector organisations turn key empowerment proposals into practical action.

The 'Communities in control' white paper also addresses three key problems:

- 1) Declining levels of democratic participation in England – demonstrated through declining national and election turnouts and falling membership of political parties.

- 2) Declining perception of influence over decision-making and
- 3) Declining levels of satisfaction with local government in England

The disappointing trends described above are indicative of citizens feeling inadequately empowered to influence local decisions and conditions.

The 'Communities in Control' White Paper has three general aims:
To pass power into the hands of local communities;
To generate vibrant local democracy;
Give control over local decisions and services to a wider range of people.

Its intended effects are improved perceptions and attitudes-e.g. increasing the number of people who believe they can influence local decisions.
The White Paper policies should positively influence performance of local services.

The White Paper explained that by removing barriers to participation and creating incentives, government and citizens and communities can and should work together to seize opportunities and solve problems.

The White paper defined **engagement** as the process whereby public bodies facilitate citizen and community participation in order to incorporate their views and needs into decision-making processes. This includes reaching out to communities to create empowerment opportunities.

The White Paper defined **empowerment** as helping citizens and communities to acquire the confidence, skills and power to enable them to shape and influence their local place and services. It also includes the provision of support to national and local government agencies to develop, promote and deliver effective engagement and empowerment opportunities.

The White Paper is responding to evidence that at the moment in the UK there is unmet demand for opportunities for people to get more involved. While it is always important to be cautious of what people say they would do in a survey and what they would actually do.
The White Paper looks at the issues of 'empowerment' in more detail. It makes an assessment of the Barriers and incentives on people's participation. It is clear that there a number of barriers at which prevent people from participating. For example among the barriers are:
Lack of interest or understanding about local government
Negative perceptions and lack of trust in public institutions
Lack of awareness of how to get involved and inaccessible recruitment practices
Lack of time to participate
Lack of confidence and perceived lack of skills
Stereotyping of those who participate
Scepticism about the difference participation will make
Earlier experience of poorly executed participation
Financial costs of participation
Fear of repercussions

Structural disincentives and cultural resistance
Socio-economic status

Among the incentives and factors that make people want to take part include:
A desire to serve the community, change things and/or make a difference
Personal invitation to become involved
Practical or rational reasons (for instance, personal benefit)
Positive experience of participation
The existence of activist cultures and social capital
Local leadership and/or institutional culture
Socio-economic status, confidence and skills

The Community Facilities Review (CFR) report in one of its recommendations makes reference of the role of centre base community development workers. The White Paper says that community development workers can help citizens to shape their own areas. It also adds that are keen to encourage other frontline workers to do community building. As stated in the CFR report the White Paper coincides with the same suggestion/recommendation that independent multi purpose community led organisations can also play a vital role in empowering local people that's why and in addition the government is establishing a £70m Community Builders Scheme to help them to become more sustainable. Grassroots Grants, developed by the Office of the Third Sector, offer small sums of money from an £80m fund from 2008 to 2011. – In addition there is £50m Community Endowment Fund – to help locally-based groups to survive and thrive in longer-term sustainability of the sector.

The Government want to encourage more neighbourhood councils. So they will build on the existing 8,900 parishes and town councils by encouraging new village, neighbourhood and community councils, particularly in urban areas.

The White Paper plans to build on the work with faith communities in order to remove the barriers to commissioning services from faith-based groups. The DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) also plans to publish a strategy for increasing dialogue and collaborative social action between people with different religions and beliefs and those with none within their local community. To boost local activity, DCLG will also be announcing a multimillion pound programme of investment and support alongside the strategy; and consider ways to support local communities in developing events which celebrate and promote social action.

Ownership and control

This is of particular significance to the CFR report as the White Paper suggests the desire to see an increase in the number of people helping to run or own local services and assets, and to transfer more of these assets into community ownership.

These assets the White Paper identifies are: community centres, street markets, swimming pools. Parks or a disused schools, shop or pub.

A new 'Asset Transfer Unit' will be set up to provide information, research and good practice.

Cleary in Chester le Street we have good sample of good practice in relation to the White Paper community empowerment with initiatives such as Grange Villa CC, Pelton Fell Community Group and the new Community Centre in Sacriston.

Further more the Communities Facilities Review Group believes Newcastle Banks may be further models of good practice.









The White Paper on its definition of **empowerment** reinforces points raised in the CFR report on community engagement and cohesion, the importance of community volunteer's better training and multi-purpose community led organisations.










Next Steps






The Communities in Control White Paper contains numerous proposals, some of which will require legislative changes, others will be implemented by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), who plan to work closely with other government Departments and partners. The white Paper contains an implementation annex which sets out commitment, timescales, outcomes and lead Department for each of the main proposals.


















Jorge Lulic
August 2008









Appendix 2 – Current Status of Community Facilities

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
Pelton Fell Village Hall   	Pelton Fell 200003836341	Management Committee one full time Community Development Worker plus part time administrative assistant plus time limited sessional workers	Currently - Very strong, have paid Community Development Worker and committed volunteers – strength in numbers, commitment and support from the Worker. Areas of legislation and knowledge would be needed	Chester le Street District Council (transfer in line with extended lease)	Community Development Worker funded for next 1 ½ years – Admin Assistant funded until March 09. Potential issues with running cost	Pelton Fell Community Group are a registered charity – No 1103645	Association currently occupying and running the business from Fellrose Court until all of the refurbishment work has been completed	All ages and gender	Currently building is being radically refurbished and should meet all requirements	Already confirmed capital and revenue funding to carry out radical repairs and refurbishment, including Lottery Funding	Mostly used by the local community and local groups	Yes	High	Northern Rock District Council (utilities and repairs) Greggs Trust, Lottery Fund and Pelton Fell Community Group apply for all funds to support initiatives and work undertaken through the centre
Pelton Community Centre  	Pelton 100110739590	Management Committee Centre Manager and one part time cleaner	Brand new Management Committee in place and making radical changes to the way things have operated in the past – they have responsibility for internal repairs with the DC having responsibility for external repairs	Chester le Street District Council owns this building outright and the Community Association currently have a tenancy agreement.	Centre Manager has less than six months funding through the Parish Council. Possible funding through DCC or youth initiative	Pelton Community Association are a registered charity – No 506250	Main hall and various meeting rooms including kitchen.	All ages and gender	Centre is very dated. Some aspects of the centre need significant repair. Improvements have been made internally but roof requires substantial repair and requires minor DDA works	Unknown – would require a full condition survey to assess	House bound club. Keep fit. Dance school linked to Riverside Amateur Group Bingo [elderly]. Kids club Toddlers, Positive Futures, Youth Workers (linked to RA and Youth Centre) New IT Suite Connexions Salsa Class	Have a plan in operation but needs work	High priority regarding support as a community facility	Subscription Fees Bar Sales All fees have been recently revised. Centre. District Council cover limited external maintenance Committee allocated £450,000 from the Youth Task Force through DCC for capital works for a youth project, currently working up revenue bids to match. Allocated £50,000 Peoples Millions for garden area. Committee apply for all external funding to support initiatives
Kimbleworth & Plawsworth Community Centre   	Kimbleworth, Plawsworth 200003838058	Community Association have three core members, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary plus additional committee members. Caretaker paid by Community Association	The three core members of the association work full time and so are limited as to the amount of time available	Former Miners Welfare Chester le Street District Council is sole custodian trustees and Management Trustees for the building – Community Association not a registered charity. They would welcome support to assist with this process	The Association have a half year profit.	Legal Services Officer at the DC is registered as sole custodian trustees – No 525017 – Classified as a foundation therefore need to consult with CISWO, Charity Commission and Lambton Estates Only 13 years lease outstanding on land but Lambton Estates open to extending lease	Main hall and various meeting rooms and office space plus kitchen	All ages and gender	Would benefit from minor DDA works and minor refurbishment and electric rewiring	Investment required for asbestos removal, new windows and general maintenance	Used by Age Concern as a base and used by various other group.	No	High - The centre is well used by the community. The school utilise the centre for extra curricular activities	Community Association apply for funding for the centre. District Council cover limited maintenance costs

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
Page 260 Sacriston Community Centre £  	Sacriston 1001107441523	Active Management Committee and caretaker (paid for by the Community Association)	Need support in terms of adhering to Charity Commission law – Sacriston Community and Sports Trust are a company limited by guarantee. Association need to look at rationalisation of groups	New building is on an 99 year extended lease from the District Council to the Trust	Two phased programme for rebuild – Phase 1 completed and are seeking funding for Phase 2 – have funding for a part time youth worker	Needs to be looked at as there are three charities currently registered	Various including Café / kitchen	All ages and gender	New building complies with all legislation	New build - none	New building has rental space – has a high level of community usage – needs further exploration	Yes	High priority to keep but medium priority for support	Sacriston Community and Sports Trust apply for all funding
Newcastle Bank Community Centre £  	Chester North Ward 100110739990	Very strong Management Committee, have paid workers paid for by the Community Association	Good at seeking funding and running the Community Association	Chester le Street District Council are Managing Trustees for the Charity Scheme No 1083659	Running at a small surplus each year	Need to check with CISWO and Charity Commission is changes are required	Main hall, several rooms for hire and kitchen use	All ages and gender	Complies with DDA and other health and safety legislation	Old building, DC responsible for external and group responsible for internal works	Very well used by local and wider community	Yes	High priority – need supporting as it has good usage and runs very well	Can obtain external funding very well District Council cover limited maintenance costs
Great Lumley Community Centre -£   £	Lumley 100110740307	Has an active Management Committee Has a caretaker (paid for by DCC?) and 2 auxiliary cleaners (paid for by Community Association)	Mixed level of ability on Management Committee.	Believed to be owned by Durham County Council Community Association run it on a day to day basis	Running at a significant deficit – not financially sustainable Currently looking at external funding	Community Association are registered charity No 520805	Main hall, various meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, office, sports hall with changing facilities, crèche facilities	All ages And gender	Partially meets DDA compliance. Requires significant health and safety alterations e.g. toilet facilities, water supply etc	Needs significant investment	Art group History group, Resident Association Radio club Toddlers Pensioners House bound club Bookstart, Taekwondo well used by local community and wider community	No	High priority – but are other community facilities in village	Rental from room hire Subscription charges
Fence Houses Community Centre  	Lumley Ward 200003838057	The Management Committee is small with a couple of committed people – could be strengthened. Has a caretaker in tied accommodation and has a cleaner (both paid for by the Community Association). Have sessional paid workers	Urgent need for new committee members and existing member development	Former miners welfare hall - Chester-le-Street District Council are Managing Trustees. Run on day-to-day basis by Community Association	Association is breaking even but no financial returns completed on the Charity Commission Website.	Association need to register as a charity in their own right. Foundation is registered No 520847 This needs to be rectified with the Charity Commission	Large hall. Bar Office with IT facilities Various smaller rooms for rent	All ages and gender	Needs massive investment into windows and DDA compliance and insulation	At least £20,000 plus assistance with fuel bills	Dance Playgroup Indoor bowls Craft group Tai Kwondo Weightlifting Slimming club etc. Utilised by both local and wider community	No	Need to look into further. Possible link to hub and spoke model with Lumley and Bournmoor	LSC funding for badged learners Rental income Bar sales Annual subscription fees (400 members). Currently reliant on external grant funding. District Council do some repairs and maintenance
Ouston Community Centre  £	Ouston 100110802720	Active Management Committee has one or two strong members. Has a couple of new members since the AGM who are	Management Committee fragile. Training programme recently undertaken with Management Committee by	Ouston Community Centre Management Committee	Running at a loss, have negligible reserves and have reached a critical point. Management Committee	Community Association are a registered charity No 525101	Main Hall and various meeting rooms plus kitchen	All ages and gender	Requires substantial remedial work to the main hall and additional minor works to bring them up to standard	Unknown until full structural survey is carried out	Nursery, Community Association, Villagers Association, keep fit, dancing school, various	No but will work towards this	High - needs supporting and would require a feasibility study	Small amount of DCC funding for learning. After consultation Association has various funding applications pending for

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
 £		working well. Advertising for a Consultant Centre Co-Ordinator, paid for by the Community Association also have nursery staff	CVS. Support package from CFR Working Group coming to an end		currently have external support from the DC, DCC and CVS linked to the CFR Working Group which is coming to an end						other small self help groups			support for initiatives but need business plan for future needs
Lilac House £  (with the support of the Community Development Officer)	Sacriston Ward 100110367137	Lilac House Tenants and Residents Association Management Committee	Volunteer run Tenant and Resident Association – no paid workers – supported by the Community Development Officer at the CLS DC	Cestria Community Housing	Require year on year running costs. To apply for funding for a Community Development Worker / Youth Worker	Not a registered charity but Constitution has charitable aims	Two meeting rooms can be hired plus house is utilised for Resident Association work and partnership work with various agencies	All age groups and gender	Refurbished at the start of 2006 – ex District Council property, now maintained by Cestria Community Housing	Currently none as Cestria carry out all repairs to the property	Resident training in the computer suite, training courses, taster sessions, tenant and resident association usage and young people (art projects, music projects and youth club)	Yes – still needs some development	High	Small support grant from DC all other funding from external sources
Edmondsley Village Hall (Community Project) ££ 	Edmondsley & Waldrige Ward 200003837071	Management Committee are the Parish Council	Parish run with the assistance of volunteers	Parish Council	Running costs should be covered by the Parish Council but improvements to building require external funding	No	Main hall, stage, kitchen and a couple of rooms	Parish Council and Youth	Timber frame building, very old, single glazed and building has known asbestos blocks which needs to be addressed. Needs more DDA works	Requires a needs survey and general conditions survey so that it could meet any requirements	Only utilised by the Parish Council and youth group (occasionally)	No	Very important to keep a community facility within the village because of risk of Post Office and shop closures	Dealt with by the Parish Council and approach DC when required
Waldrige Fell Village Hall £ 	Edmondsley and Waldrige 200003839211	Trusteeship and management has been transferred to committee comprising of Scouts and local community members.	New committee from Scout Association so untried as yet but has professional support	District Council holding /custodian trustees (hold deeds only)	Just taken over by the Scout Association who are solvent	Registered charity. Scheme attached. Former miners welfare hall and any decision would need to involve CISWO and charity commission. Management committee have significant responsibilities under the scheme	Main hall, stage, smaller hall-mainly used for storage. Kitchen, Toilets	All ages and gender	In need of updating. Car park has significant repair need there are significant DDA needs and re-wiring needs and toilet needs	Unknown	In past:- Scouts Toddlers Craft group Dance classes Ceilidhs Private parties Children's activities etc	No	High – track record of working with children & YP. Only facility in the village	Unknown because of change to management committee
Chester Moor Village Hall £ 	Edmondsley and Waldrige	Management Committee consists of members from the boxing club who occupy the premises	The same committee has been in place for many years	Chester le Street Council Holding trustees	Boxing club and football club membership charges	Two registered charities exist Chester Moor & District Village Hall Ass 1081263 and Chester Moor Village Hall 1082302	Main hall utilised and set up as a boxing club	Boys and girls	Needs DDA alterations and renovation	£20.000 to make the hut DDA fully compliant	Boxing Club usage only but does have free capacity	No	High – one of two very small facilities to serve the whole village which is split by the A167 Need support to access internal funding	Boxing Club raise funds from club membership and external funders. District Council carry out boiler service
Grange Villa Enterprise	Grange Villa 100110802607	Have active Management	Part time administration	Private Enterprise	Make income from Café to	Registered Charity	Main hall and three other	All ages and gender	Brand new building so both	None	PCT, youth group, District	Yes	High – only facility in the	Self sustaining but dependent on

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
Page 262 Centre   		Committee but dependent on certain individuals	support and a caretaker paid for by themselves.		cover costs and a self sustained		rooms (2 rented by the PCT) and kitchen		building and fabric in excellent condition		Council and others		village needs development worker support	external funding for workers
Youth Centre   	Chester East 100110739928	Have active Management Committee and paid Youth Co-Ordinator	Stronger than it was. More informed Management Committee now in place	Durham County Council	Financially sustainable as owned and run by DCC	Registered as a Charity No: 520754	Various utilised by youth centre	Youth from 12 yrs upwards. Umbrella organisations renting space	Had some DDA work done but some still required. Upstairs not accessible and lift cannot be fitted. Sports hall out of use as has structural issues and building has some structural issues but plan in place by DCC	Part of Asset Management Plan by DCC	Youth	No		
Park View Community Association   	Chester East 100110802592	Management Committee	This is dealt with by DCC	Durham County Council	Financially sustained and owned (as part of the school) by DCC	Registered as a charity	Various utilised in line with Park View Community School	Various ages and gender	In a reasonable state of repair and is part of DCC assets	DCC owned	Indoor bowls, adult and community learning programme	DCC responsibility	Utilised as a sport and community facility and is very well used	Through DCC
Bullion Hall     (but require CVS support)	Chester Central Ward	Management Committee CVS delegated to Belinda Lewis	Very strong Management Committee. Good manager and good centre supervisor and caretakers	Owned by District Council on long term lease to CVS	Moving towards stand alone and sustainable	CVS Registered charity and company Limited by Guarantee	Main hall, lounge, ICT suite and office space rented out to charity organisations, kitchen, toilets and baby change and DDA compliant	Various ages and gender	Good state of repair and DDA compliant. Health and Safety inspection just been carried out	Yearly amount set aside for repairs as part of budget and specific grant funding sought for specific needs	Local community and wider community and has a vast range of activities taking place. Used by public, private and voluntary sectors	Yes	High – given level of usage and need for the building. Valuable resource medium need for support	Income from usage from hall, kitchen, office. Grant funding from DC, and for staff posts.
Volunteer centre    	Chester Central Ward 100110739935	CVS Management Committee	Exactly the same as Bullion Hall	Durham County Council owned but repairs carried out by DC. Equitable lease?	Exactly the same as Bullion Hall	Registered Charity Company Limited by Guarantee	Office space plus training/ meeting room. 2 small kitchen facilities plus toilets	Adults and young people	Has flood damage, windows need replacing / repair, roof needs serious repair, asbestos in building, floor needs replacing. Health and safety hazard	Huge, probably cheaper to re-build. Prime land for development	Offices house charities which offer services to special needs young people, elderly in hospital, volunteer bureau, etc	Yes	High priority as a resource and high priority in terms of need for support for building and groups within it	Same as Bullion Hall

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
Hermitage Comp. School *  	Chester West Ward 100110739892	Durham County Council LEA	LEA / School Governors	Durham County Council	Dependent on individual school	Not a registered charity	Main hall and various class rooms	Adults	Good structure as part of main school	None known	Learners and community groups	Linked to School	Low	Funded through DCC
Park View Lower School *  	Chester East Ward 100110740194	Durham County Council LEA	LEA / School Governors	Durham County Council	Dependent on individual school	Not a registered charity	Main Hall and various class rooms	Adults	Good structure as part of main school	None known	Learners and community groups	Linked to School	Low	Funded through DCC
Roseberry Sports and Community College *  	Pelton Ward 100110802770	Durham County Council LEA	LEA / School Governors	Durham County Council	Dependent on individual school	Not a registered charity	Main Hall, sports hall and various class rooms	Adults	Good structure as part of main school	None known	Learners and community groups	Linked to School	Low	Funded through DCC
Fyndoune Community College *  	Sacriston Ward 100110741416	Durham County Council LEA	LEA / School Governors	Durham County Council	Dependent on individual school	Not a registered charity	Main hall, sports hall and various class rooms	Adults	Good structure as part of main school	None known	Learners and community groups	Linked to School	Low	Funded through DCC
Waldridge Parish Rooms	Edmondsley & Waldridge Ward 200003837800	Parish Council	Run by the Parish Council	Waldridge Parish Council	Through Parish Council precept and hire charges	Not a registered charity	Unknown	Adults, young people and children	Reasonable structure	Unknown	Parish Council, community usage whilst Village Hall has been closed	No	Low with village hall in operation	Through Parish Council
Pelton Parish Rooms	Pelton Ward 100110739590	Parish Council	Run by the Parish Council	Parish Council	Through Parish Council precept	Not a registered charity	One large room	All ages and gender	Might be similar problems as the Community Centre as it is attached	Dependant on Community Centre structure	Parish Council, COSY Club, possible youth use	No	Very Low – attached to the community centre	Through Parish Council precept
Parish Centre Page 263	Chester East Ward 100110740250	Management Committee	Run by full time worker on behalf of the Parish Church	Church of England	Sustainable through usage?	Not a registered charity but an accepted one through charitable purpose	Very large Hall Smaller hall Various rooms some rented as office space. Kitchen plus café	All ages And gender	Good state of repair, DDA compliant	Do their own repairs	Dance classes, exercise classes, church use, community use, meetings, conferences. Exceptionally well used	Yes?	High priority in terms of need but low in terms of support	Funded through church income – letting of space in centre and room hire

Community Building	Geographical location/ ward + UPRN N. (Unique Property Ref No)	Management Committee and staffing (Governance)	Strengths and Weaknesses of Management (Governance)	Ownership	Financial sustainability	Charity Status / Legal Structure / Lease	Rooms Available	Provisional Age Group and Gender	State of building / DDA requirements etc	Estimated cost of repairs	Balance of usage – local or wider	Business Plan in place	Low, Medium or High Priority	Funding Arrangements
Methodist Church **	Chester North Ward 200003837435	Church Council but new management structure will be set up for new building	Strong church council and steering group. Plans to have worker but dependent on funding	Methodist Church	Aiming to sustainable by 5 th year	Not a registered charity but an accepted one through charitable purpose	Kitchen, hall various rooms	All ages And gender	Parts are about to be demolished and rebuilt	Carry out their own repairs	Uniformed organisations Sure start Pensioners lunches Coffee mornings Drama group Credit union Ladies forum, Empower 2, Age Concern Piano café for young people etc	Yes	High priority in terms of need for the community but Low in terms of support	Good income from usage and support from church funds. Confirmed funding from the Big Lottery and applying for further funding

* We have included the Comprehensive Schools as part of the report due to the community learning aspects of their usage but assessment of these buildings is not within the remit of the Community Facilities Review Working Group




** We have included this as an example of good practice.

Appendix 2 - Current Status of Community Facilities




Physical Sustainability

- £** This symbol means the Facility has higher annual expenditure than income and is surviving on reserves
- £** This symbol means the Facility is covering its costs each year and generally breaks even but does not make a surplus
- ££** This symbol means the Facility is covering its costs each year and makes a surplus

Physical Sustainability

-  This symbol means the Facility needs extensive expenditure to bring it up to modern health and safety and legislative standards.
-  This symbol means the Facility is in a safe and reasonable physical condition and meets all necessary standards but would benefit from some refurbishment
-  This symbol means the Facility is in excellent physical and decorative condition, meeting all required safety and legislative standards

Governance Sustainability

-  **£** This symbol means the Facility needs extensive support to bring it up to acceptable standards of governance and management
-  This symbol means the Facility is governed and managed to a reasonable standard but would benefit from some further capacity building
-  This symbol means the Facility is being governed and managed to the highest possible standards and would meet all necessary quality assurance standards

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Appendix 3 – Communal Rooms	
Communal Rooms Retained by the District Council	
Cedarwood	Fence Houses
The Close East – Leased to MIND	South Pelaw
Gairloch Drive (Front Street)	Perkinsville
The Green – Leased to Alzheimer’s Society	Nettlesworth
Sanders Memorial Homes	Chester-le-Street
Jubilee Close	Edmondsley
Wood Street	Pelton
Fellrose Court	Pelton Fell
Chester Moor Hut	Chester Moor
Hambledon Hut	Chester-le-Street
Communal Rooms to be transferred to Cestria Community Housing	
Loefield	Great Lumley
The Brooms	Ouston
Auckland	Chester-le-Street
Edenfield	West Pelton
Gibside	Chester-le-Street
Lambourne Close	Bournmoor
Oak Court	Sacriston
Holyoake, The Close	South Pelaw
Firtrees	South Pelaw

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Appendix 4

Extended Services In and Around Schools in Chester-le-Street District

National Policy Context for the Development of Extended Services with Schools

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DSCF) expects 'By 2010, all children should have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day. Well organised, safe and stimulating activities before and after school provide children and young people with a wider range of experiences and make a real difference to their chances at school. It gives them the opportunity to keep healthy, to acquire new skills, to build on what they learn during the school day or to simply have fun and relax'

What is an Extended School?

- Extended Schools provide a range of services often beyond the schools day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community
- Extended Services is delivered at or through schools and should be delivered in partnership with external service providers
- Services on offer should be developed through consultation with parents and children
- For Primary Schools, this means working with a range of local providers to enable children and families to have access to extended services. Example: Family Learning, Adult Learning, Health Services
- Secondary Schools/Community Colleges in the district will be expected to open from 8am to 6pm all year round.
- Secondary Schools/ Community Colleges work in local clusters with Primary Schools in their localities to pool resources and develop the **core offer** in and around their cluster.

Local Extended School Structure in Chester-le-Street District

- Chester-le-Street District has 4 School Clusters and each has appointed an Extended Services Co-ordinator to plan and co-ordinate a range of services through their school clusters. These Extended School Clusters include 4 Secondary Schools/Community College and 23 Primary Schools and their Nursery Schools and are known as:
 - a) Hermitage Learning Community School Cluster
 - b) Park View Community School Cluster
 - c) Roseberry Sports Community College School Cluster
 - d) Fyndoune Community College School Cluster

What is the Core Offer of Extended Services?

- **Childcare**- Provided on the school site or through local providers, with supervised transfer arrangements where appropriate, available from 8am to 6pm all year round. Example: Nursery, Creche, wrap-around. Schools have a choice over the delivery of childcare as they can work within their cluster with other schools and share resources to deliver the service.
- **A varied menu of activities to be on offer.** Example homework clubs, breakfast clubs, after school clubs, study support, sports and arts clubs
- **Parenting Support** including information for parents at key transition points, parenting programmes and Family Learning
- **Swift and easy referral to a wide range of services.** Examples speech therapy and child and adolescent mental health service
- **Wider Community Access.** Examples Adult Learning, IT/ICT, Sports and Arts facilities

Every Child Matters Agenda

Extended Services in Schools will contribute to the 5 outcomes that are key to children and young people's well-being through the Every Child Matters Agenda. These are:

To be healthy

To be safe

To enjoy and achieve

To make a positive contribution

To achieve economic well-being

Extended Services and Health and Social Care Services

- There is a range of specialist health and social services that children, young people and adults need to access at different times in their lives which support both their general well-being and ability to learn
- Schools should also aim to develop a healthy school and some of the schools within the district have worked towards achieving National Healthy School Status
- Examples of Health and Social Care Services that can be delivered within Extended Services in School Clusters to engage with the local population to improve health and well-being:
 - Integrated Health Care on school sites
 - Health drop –in and information sessions
 - Teenage Sexual Health Advice Centres
 - Smoking Cessation Classes

- Healthy Eating Advice Sessions
- Drug and alcohol awareness programmes

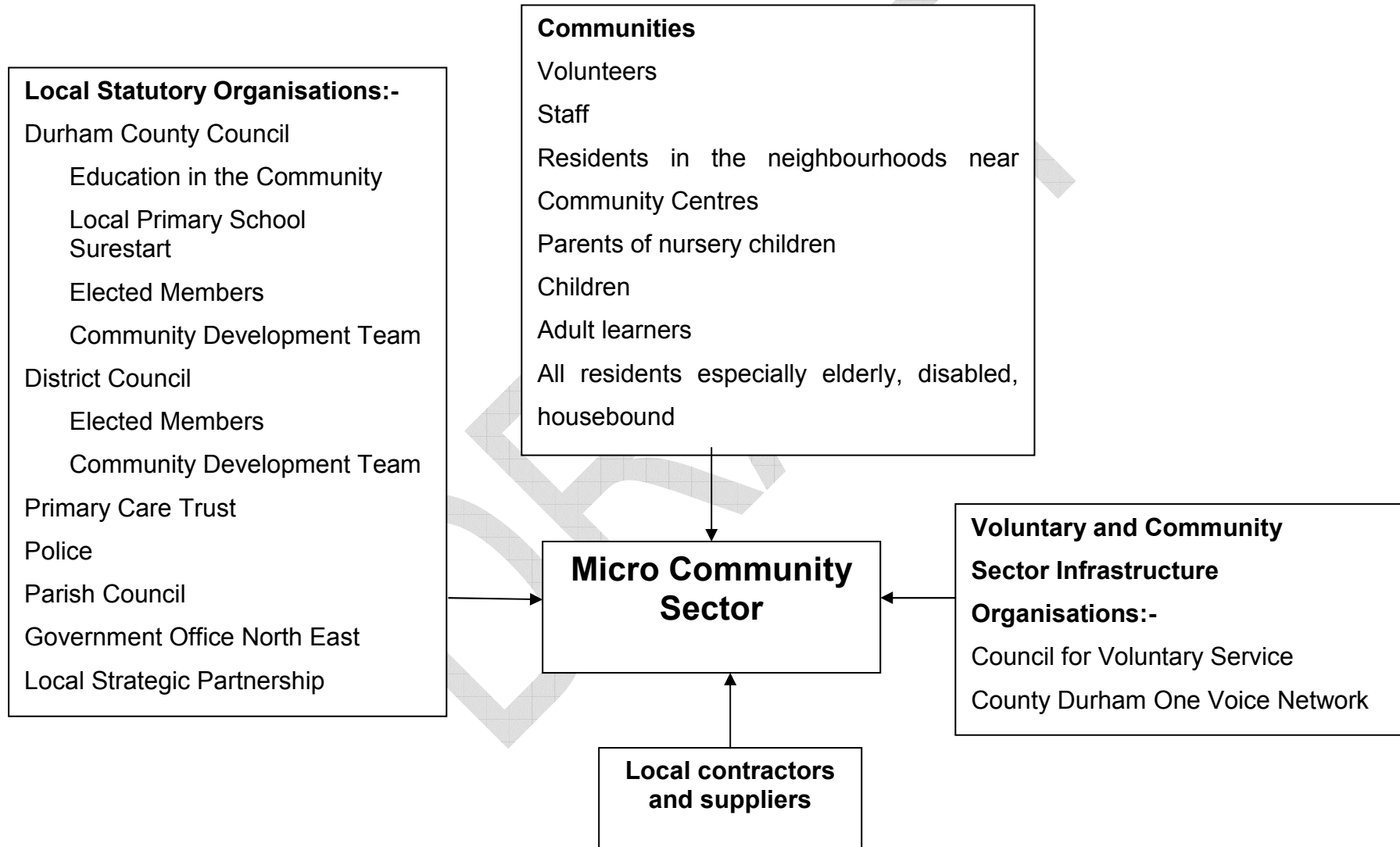
Extended Services and the LSP Learning District Partnership

- Extended Service Co-ordinators work in partnership with the Learning District Partnership to plan and co-ordinate the delivery of a range of learning activity across school clusters.
- Evidence of what has been achieved in the district since September 2007 can be seen through the Timetable of Family Learning, Vocational Training and Skills for Life in Nursery, Primary Schools and Community Colleges
- Park View Community College, Hermitage Learning Community, Roseberry Sports Community College and Fyndoune Community College all deliver a range of adult learning activity to the wider community and not to just parents.
- Some of these Community Colleges have Community Associations that have been established prior to the implementation of Extended Services in Schools and therefore contribute in fulfilling the requirements of Extended Services to meet the needs of the wider community
- The Map of Provision for September 2007 identifies adult learning activity that contributes to Extended Services in all 4 Community Colleges thus meeting the needs of the wider community
- The Learning District Partnership and its sub groups in planning learning activity at ward level across the district is mindful of Extended Services provision across school clusters and therefore seeks to complement and not duplicate activity at Community Venues unless demand requires this

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Appendix 5

Micro Community Sector – Stakeholder Map



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**Family Learning and other learning activity in Sure Start/ Children's Centres Primary/Junior Schools and Community Colleges across Chester-le-Street District
September 2008 to July 2009**

School or Venue	Title of activity	Type of activity e.g. Family Learning SFL PCDL NVQ level	Delivered From September 2008	Planned to be delivered From January 09	Provider	Funding Source
Pelton CC	Teaching Assisstants	NCFE Level 2	Yes		WEA	WEA
Pelton CC	Teaching Assisstants	NCFE Level 3	Yes		WEA	WEA
Pelton CC	Big Chef, Little Chef (healthy eating)	Family Learning	Yes		Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start/PCT
Bullion CC	First Aid Babies and Children	Family Learning	Yes (intermittently when requested)		St. Johns Ambulance	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre, Sacriston Clinic	Baby Save a Live	Family Learning	Yes (on request from parents accessing post natal and ante natal activities)		Sure Start	Sure Start

Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre, Sacriston Clinic	Early Days	Family Learning (parenting programme)	Yes	Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre, Sacriston Clinic	Family Nurturing	Family Learning (parenting programme)	Yes	Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Grange Villa Enterprise Centre	Lets Talk	Family Learning (communicati on)	Yes	Yes	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start/PCT
Grange Villa Enterprise Centre	Hannon (speech and language)	Family Learning		Yes	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start/PCT
Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre, Sacriston Clinic	Baby Play	Family Learning		Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre, Sacriston Clinic	Baby Massage, Baby Yoga, Toddler Yoga	Family Learning	Yes	Yes	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start/PCT
Bullion Lane CC	Weaning Parties	Family Learning	Yes	Yes	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start/PCT

Bullion Lane CC	Toddler Play	Family Learning		Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC, Pelton CC, Grange Villa Enterprise Centre	Stuart All Stars (physical activity)	Family Learning	Yes	Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC	Cook and Eat	Family Learning	Yes	Yes (march 09)	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC	Elklan Training (speech and language)	Family Learning		Yes	Sure Start/PCT	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC	Speakeasy	Family Learning		Yes	Sure Start	Sure Start
Bullion Lane CC	Being a Parent (ante natal and post natal sessions)	Family Learning	Yes	Yes	Sure Start/Northern Learning Trust	Sure Start/Northern Learning Trust/LSC

The Hermitage School	Christmas Confectionery	Family Learning	Before Xmas		EiC	EiC
The Hermitage School	SAM Learning/ Homework/Study Skills	Family Learning	Spring Term	Yes	Garry Stout/Steve Kime/Angus Byrne	Nil
The Hermitage School	VLE	Family Learning	Spring term	Yes	Garry Stout	Nil

The Hermitage School	Easter Confectionery	Family Learning	Leading up to easter	Yes	EiC	EiC
The Hermitage School	Drug & Alcohol Awareness	Family Learning		Summer term	Tim Robson	School
The Hermitage School	Sporting Activity	Family Learning		Summer term TBC	SAFC	Nil
The Hermitage School	Walk/Bike Ride	Family Learning		Summer term TBC	Garry Stout/Gill Dobson	School

Sacriston Infants	Family Learning through Football	Family Learning		January 09	SAFC	Cestria Housing
Sacriston Juniors	Family Learning through Football	Family Learning		January 09	SAFC	Cestria Housing
St.Bedes Primary / Plawsworth Road Infants	Family Learning through Football	Family Learning		January 09	SAFC	Cestria Housing

Edmonsley Primary/ St Bedes Primary/ Langley Park Primary/ Witton Gilbert Primary/ Sacriston Juniors	Seven Stories visit	Family Learning		February 09 /March 09	Seven Stories Book centre	Extended Services
Bullion Lane Primary School	Family Learning through Football	Family Learning	September 08		SAFC	Cestria Housing
Bullion Lane Primary School	The Big Knit	Family Learning	September 08		Ingrid (?)	Cultural Hubs
Bullion Lane Primary School	Big Family Breakfast/Famil y Bingo	Family Learning	Oct/Dec 08	Feb/Apr 09 May/Jul 09	School	None

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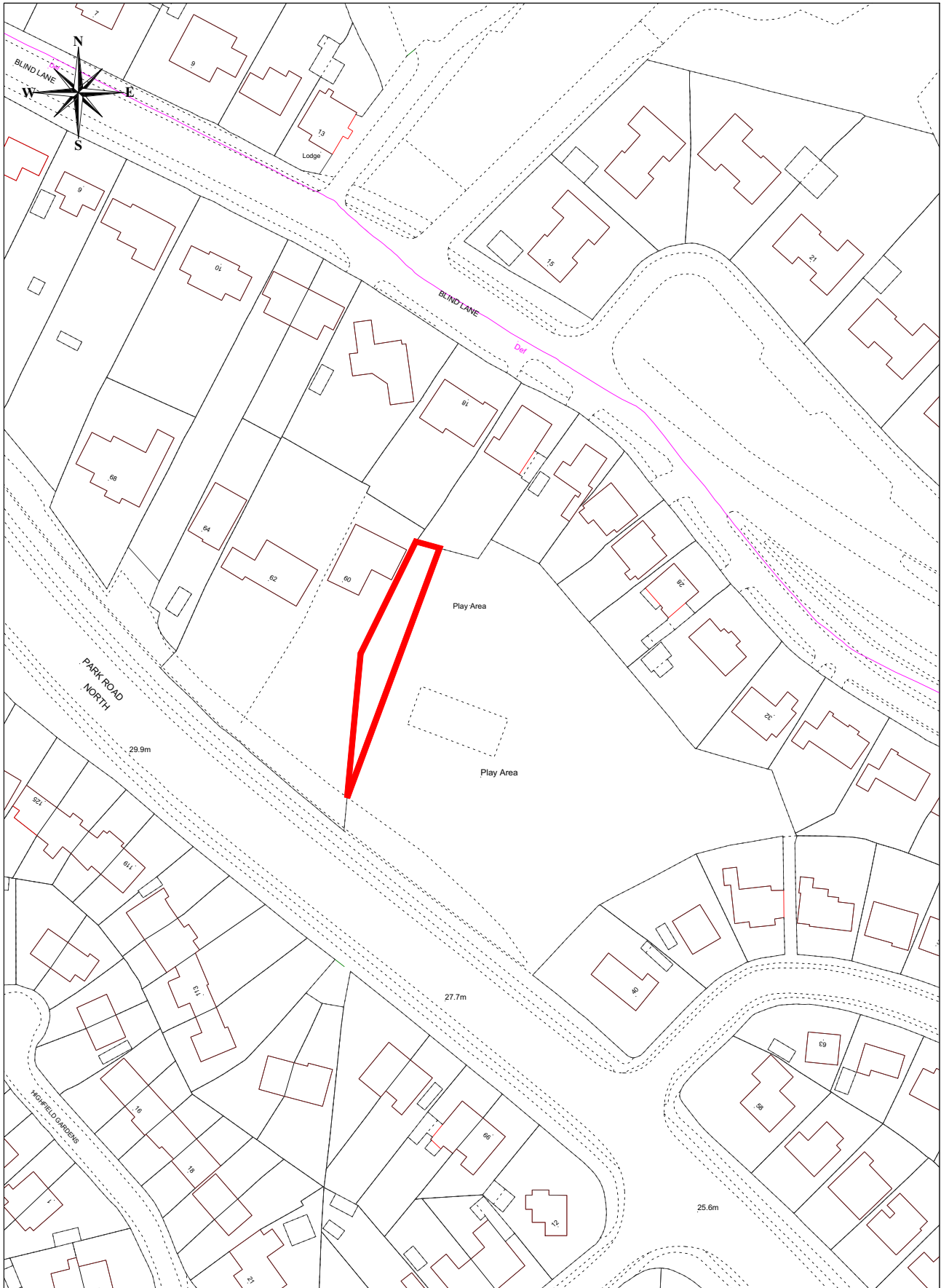
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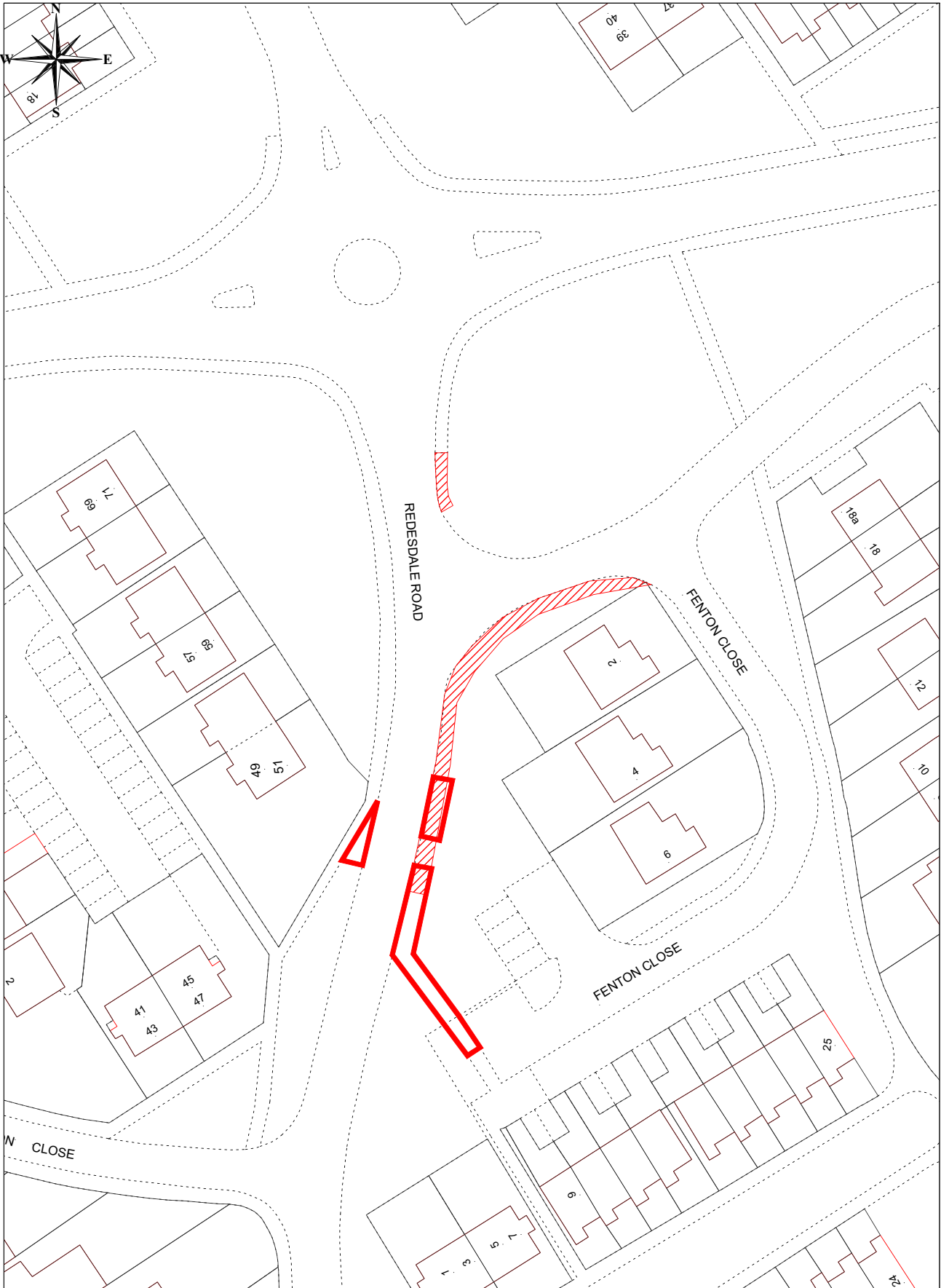
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