

Executive

Councillors; C. D. Christer, O. Johnson, D. Lavin, D. G. Llewellyn, M. J. Malone, C. Marshall, A. Taylor, A. Watson O.B.E

Dear Councillor,

Your attendance is invited at a meeting of the Executive to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 14th January 2008 at 4:30 p.m. for consideration of the undernoted agenda.



MIKE CLARK

Chief Executive Officer

Agenda

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal interests in matters on the agenda, identify the item on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

2. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY BOARD DEBATE

A list of items discussed at Scrutiny Board held on 8th January 2008 (to be circulated at the meeting).

3. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of this panel's meeting held on 10th December 2007 as a correct record. (Herewith A)

Attached Documents:

[MINUTES](#)

4. TRIAL CO-LOCATION OF CARELINE WARDEN SERVICE TO SHOTLEY BRIDGE HOSPITAL

To consider the report of the Director of Corporate Administration and Policy. (Herewith B)

Attached Documents:

[TRIAL CO-LOCATION OF CARELINE WARDEN SERVICE TO SHOTLEY BRIDGE HOSPITAL \(B\)](#)

5. GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME

To consider the report of the Director of Environmental Services. (Herewith C)

Attached Documents:

[GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME \(C\)](#)
[GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME \(APPENDIX ONE\)](#)
[GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME \(APPENDIX TWO\)](#)
[GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME \(APPENDIX THREE\)](#)

6. EXTENSION OF GREEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

To consider the report of the Director of Environmental Services. (Herewith D)

Attached Documents:

[EXTENSION OF GREEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE \(D\)](#)

7. TOWN AND VILLAGE CENTRE REGENERATION - DEALING WITH DERELICT AND LONG TERM VACANT PROPERTIES

To consider the report of the Chief Executive Officer. (Herewith E)

Attached Documents:

[TOWN AND VILLAGE CENTRE REGENERATION - DEALING WITH DERELICT AND LONG TERM VACANT PROPERTIES \(E\)](#)

8. DERWENTSIDE PLACEMAKERS SCHEME

To consider the report of the Director of Environmental Services.
(Herewith F)

Attached Documents:

[DERWENTSIDE PLACEMAKERS SCHEME \(F\)](#)

Agenda prepared by Gemma Donaghy, Democratic Services 01207 218249
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EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 10th December 2007 at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Watson (Chairman)

Councillors: C.D. Christer, O. Johnson, D. Lavin, D.G. Llewellyn, M.J. Malone, C. Marshall and A. Taylor.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D. Llewellyn declared an interest in Item 9 on the agenda – he advised he had been appointed as the Council's representative on Derwentside Industrial Development Agency.

43. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY BOARD DEBATE

A list of items discussed at Scrutiny Board were circulated, the Chair advised that the comments, if any, would be referred to as each agenda item was discussed.

44. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 10th December 2007 be agreed as a correct record.

45. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE – REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE SECOND QUARTER 2007/08

Councillor Malone presented the report which provided members with an update on performance for the Best Value Performance Indicators for the second quarter of 2007/08. Appendix 1 detailed the performance for all indicators and was included for members' information. The main text of the report concentrated upon areas where performance was a concern or where significant increases in performance had occurred. A detailed analysis of performance for all red risk indicators for the second quarter of 2007/08 was included in sections 3.6, 3.7 and

3.8. In addition significant falls or gains in performance for amber risk indicators were highlighted within sections 3.11 and 3.12 along with a short summary of performance for green rated indicators in section 3.14.

Quarter 2 Performance was detailed in Section 3 of the report. Of the 5 red risk indicators where performance for this quarter could be compared to that for the same period last year 3 had demonstrated an improvement in performance this quarter. On a positive note: recorded levels of violent crime have continued to fall throughout the first 6 months of 2007/08 and as a result this indicator has had the risk rating amended to amber for Quarter 3. Also sickness and absence levels were almost 22% lower than at the same period last year.

He highlighted the following:

- 55% of amber rated indicators have demonstrated an improvement in performance this quarter.
- 93% of green rated indicators had either continued to demonstrate an improvement in performance or retained their already high levels of performance. One exception to this was BVPI 128 which monitors the number vehicle crimes, this had demonstrated an increase in recorded crimes during the summer months. As a result the risk rating for this indicator has been changed from green to amber for Quarter 3.
- All red risk rated indicators had now completed action plans for 2007/08 and all action plans for Quarters 1 and 2 continue to be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Panels throughout the year.

Councillor Johnson referred to BVPI 82b and commented that the fall in performance was not due to the Council, the firm processing the recyclables was Premier Waste and they had experienced significant problems which had resulted in the authority not having access to the anaerobic digester at Thornley. This had resulted in a backlog and Derwentside not receiving credit for the recyclables.

The Divisional Head of General Services advised that there were two main issues firstly, the inability of the company to process the recyclables which would be addressed as the service was being put out to tender during Spring 2008. Secondly the ability of Premier to accept the waste from Derwentside, this had affected the performance figures as there was a backlog of approximately 1200 tonnes of waste collected by the Council which had not been processed by Premier and therefore, could not be included in the performance figures. The figures would look significantly better if each tonne collected was processed and dispatched in the same month as collection.

Scrutiny Board Comments: *Members welcomed the report, in particular the progress being made in relation to the red indicators. The Board also acknowledged the works being undertaken in relation to amber and green indicators.*

Options: Whether or not to commission further reports into the performance of any of the best value performance indicators.

RESOLVED: That the information contained in the report regarding best value performance indicators be noted.

Reasons: To ensure that any slippages in performance can be noted and indicators which posed concerns can be directed to the Action Planning and Scrutiny process.

46. VEHICLE RENEWAL – CARELINE / COURIER SERVICE

Councillor Lavin presented the report which requested Member consideration of the requirement for replacement vehicles for the Careline and Courier service. Members were requested to consider granting approval for the Council's Finance Department to secure the most advantageous terms for the Council, which for the Careline vehicles was likely to be over a five year period, whilst the Courier van was to be on an annual basis. Funding for the re-provision of these vehicles was earmarked within the Council's current budgets.

Scrutiny Board Comments: *The Scrutiny Board viewed the report and there were no issues of concern.*

Options: Whether to agree, amend or reject the proposals in the report regarding vehicle renewal.

RESOLVED:

1. That approval be granted for the acquisition of those vehicles detailed in the report.
2. That funding for those vehicles be subject to an options appraisal by the Finance Directorate and the most advantageous option to the Council be selected over the specified period of time.

Reason: The existing vehicles are either at the end of their lease or had been on short term lease and following discussions with the Transport Manager it was thought prudent to acquire them on a longer term arrangement.

47. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

ON THE MOTION OF COUNCILLOR M MALONE SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR JOHNSON THAT UNDER SECTION 100(A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY INVOLVE THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPHS 1 AND 3 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED).

48. REQUEST TO LEAVE THE AUTHORITY UNDER THE 85 YEAR RULE

Excluded under paragraph 1.

Councilor Malone presented the report which asked Members to consider a request from an employee in the Corporate Administration and Policy Directorate to be allowed to leave the Authority under the 85 Year Rule.

Scrutiny Board Comments: The Scrutiny Board had viewed the report and there were no issues of concern.

Options: Whether to agree or reject the proposal.

RESOLVED: That the member of staff detailed in the report be allowed to leave the Authority under the 85 Year Rule and approval granted to recruit a new officer on a part-time basis.

Reason: Due to changing working practices and the administration support functions becoming increasingly ICT oriented.

49. REQUEST TO RETIRE UNDER THE 85 YEAR RULE

Excluded under paragraph 1.

Councillor Malone presented the report which asked Members to consider a request from an employee in the Grounds Maintenance Section to be allowed to take Early Retirement under the 85 Year Rule.

Scrutiny Board Comments: The Scrutiny Board had viewed the report and there were no issues of concern.

Options : Whether to agree or reject the proposal.

RESOLVED:

1. That the request to allow the employee to leave the Authority under the 85 Year Rule be declined.
2. That approval be granted for the employee detailed in the report to be allowed to leave the Authority with early access to pension on compassionate grounds.

Reasons:

1. There was sufficient supporting evidence on file to justify compassionate consideration of the request.
2. The case was considered genuine and as a caring Authority the case was supported on compassionate grounds.

Prior to consideration of the following item Councillor D. Llewellyn declared an interest in Item 9 on the agenda as he had been appointed as

the Council's representative on Derwentside Industrial Development Agency. It was agreed that he remain in the meeting.

50. DERWENTSIDE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LTD – MERGER PROPOSAL

Excluded under paragraph 3.

Councillor Llewellyn presented the report which outlined a proposal submitted to the Council by Derwentside Industrial Development Agency LTD (DIDA) regarding the potential merger of economic development and business support services in Derwentside.

At the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held 16th October 2007 he had referred to a letter received from the Chairman of DIDA confirming that the DIDA Board had agreed to prepare an outline submission to the Council regarding the potential merger of economic development and business support services in Derwentside. This submission had now been received and had been appended to the report.

Scrutiny Board Comments: *Councillor L. Marshall had declared an interest in relation to the report, left the meeting and took no part in the discussions thereon. The Deputy Chief Executive in presenting the report made reference to paragraph 3.1 and his role in relation to DIDA Board and to the fact that owing to his position he had declared an interest at the DIDA Board meeting when the issue had been debated.*

Members of the Scrutiny Board supported the proposals included in the report whilst recognizing that the issue would be subject to a further report on the proposal.

Options:

1. Reject the proposal on the basis that there is insufficient evidence and clarity regarding the benefits that could be achieved; or
2. Authorise further work being undertaken by the Council, individually and in conjunction with DIDA, to test a full business case for the proposal and to develop a business plan if appropriate. This would include early testing of the acceptability of the proposal in the context of potential Local Government Reorganisation.

RESOLVED:

1. That authorization be granted for further work being undertaken by the Council, individually and in conjunction with DIDA, to test a full business case for the proposal and to develop a business plan if appropriate; and
2. A further report, incorporating business plan details, is submitted to Members should a positive business case be demonstrated.

Reason: This decision was made on the basis that the proposal put forward by DIDA had the potential to generate additional benefits for local people, both in terms of further improving service outcomes and delivering financial efficiencies.

Further work however, needed to be undertaken to test the deliverability of those potential benefits.

51. LAND AT STATION YARD CONSETT

Exempt under paragraph 3.

Councillor Marshall presented the report which requested consideration of disposing of an area of land at Station Yard, Consett to enable the adjacent Medical Surgery to expand and to provide parking for use by the occupiers of Citizen's House as well as members of the public.

In response to questions the Divisional Head of Land & Property advised that as part of the agreement 12 public parking spaces, including 2 for the disabled would be provided on the site.

Scrutiny Board Comments: *The Scrutiny Board viewed the report and there were no issues of concern.*

Options:

1. Proceed with a disposal.
2. Refuse to dispose of the site.

RESOLVED: That authority is granted to dispose of the site on the terms outlined in the report.

Reasons: That the disposal would enable the Medical Centre to be enhanced as well as providing twelve public parking spaces.

52. ANNOUNCEMENT – BIG LOTTERY FUND

Councillor Taylor announced that the Council had been successful in being allocated the following grants from the Big Lottery Fund:

The grant, over three years, will fully fund two revenue projects:

- £115,237 will fund the salaries of two new part-time Play Rangers, who will work across the District for 20 hours per week.
- £90,249 will pay for the salaries of eight casually employed Natural Play Leaders, who will host free play sessions across the District according to need during school holiday periods.
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She requested that a letter be forwarded to all Members advising of this success however, it was important that Members were made aware that the Big Lottery Fund had requested an embargo on release of this information until after their press release which was scheduled to be issued on 18th December.

CONCLUSION OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 4.56 p.m.

TITLE:	TRIAL CO-LOCATION OF CARELINE WARDEN SERVICE TO SHOTLEY BRIDGE HOSPITAL
TO/ON:	EXECUTIVE
BY:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
STATUS:	REPORT

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report, and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Member's attention.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report invites Members to consider an 'in-principle' decision to trial the re-location of the Careline Service to Shotley Bridge Community Hospital. The intention, if Members were minded to support such a trial, would be to seek approval from the Shotley Bridge Hospital Stakeholder Group prior to going ahead with the trial.

1.2 It is envisaged that at the end of the trial period a further report would return to the Environment and Health Scrutiny Panel demonstrating both the benefits of the co-location as well as identifying any problems which arise through the duration of the trial. At that point a final decision could be taken as to whether the trial should be made permanent or brought to a close and the staff return to their current base.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 **Current Location:** The Careline wardens, the two managers and administrative support for the service are based at the Morrison Busty Depot. The control centre service is now provided by Sedgefield Borough Council which means in terms of staff on site, there is no longer the twenty four hour presence of 2 Careline controllers in the building. The accommodation need now only cater for a small number of warden staff at any given time, plus the provision of an office and some storage space for equipment that is held by the wardens. It is

the view of the manager that the current accommodation does not provide the opportunity to integrate with other service providers due to its location.

3 POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF RELOCATION

3.1 The management of the Careline service believe there are a number of areas which could directly benefit from closer working. An increased role for the staff in the delivery of specialised equipment from the Home Equipment Loans Service for instance, could produce a better service for Careline users in terms of more timely deliveries from familiar staff.

3.2 Another area may be joint access to risk assessments; the current separate arrangements mean that each organisation often replicates the same effort in assessing individuals who may be receiving support from community health services, social services and Careline.

3.3 There could also be reciprocal agreements for joint visits between Careline and the community nurses which could provide a significantly higher level of care and greater resilience to both services.

3.4 Further developments may derive from the service gaining a more prominent profile increasing awareness of the service amongst GPs, other commissioners and providers. This in turn could lead to an increase in the user base of Careline targeted at those who would benefit most from the service. Such an increase could also be of benefit financially, for the long term viability of the service. In addition there may be a number of opportunities to examine the benefits of telecare initiatives which are aimed at the better management of patients with long term conditions particularly those which result in reduced admissions into hospital.

3.5 All of which will continue to fulfil Careline's mission statement toward helping that more people are able to maintain independent lives within their own homes.

4 PROPOSED ACCOMMODATION

4.1 Shotley Bridge Hospital:

- The accommodation at Shotley Bridge which this report proposes to explore is within the department allocated to the Integrated Intermediate Care Team. The team are located on the 5th floor of the tower block and include the base for the respiratory team, community rehabilitation, social worker and the community matrons.
- The intermediate care team include the twilight nursing staff and the out of hours nursing team for the whole of the District.

- Like the Careline wardens, the community nurses have a certain number of planned visits as well as responding to urgent calls from the out of hours GP services.
- The office accommodation itself is of a very high quality. There would be a need for some expenditure in securing connectivity for pc's and telephones, although these issues would need to be addressed in detail should agreement be forthcoming.

4.2 **Planning Issues**

- Introducing the co-location of the out-of-hours staff in the first instance would be the least costly approach to organising a trial since there would be no need to provide dedicated office or staff accommodation as the IIC department is thinly populated during this period.
- The introduction of the day staff into the scheme would need more preparation but it would not be envisaged that the office and storage accommodation would be moved until the trial had been assessed by the Council and the other stakeholders.
- The proposed co-location would also have the added security benefit of other staff working in the hospital through the evenings and the night as well as the advantage of developing relationships and insights into the workings of the other health and care workers in the community.

4.3 **Operational Issues for consideration:**

- However to this obvious advantage must be added the consideration that the operational activities during the bulk of the working day are so arranged as to place wardens across the District on their routine visits so as to reduce response times to emergency calls as they arise during the day.
- The situation is of course very different through the night. While there may be a small number of planned calls for the two wardens covering the night shift, they could be called to any home on the alarm system throughout their shift.

4.4 **Response Times:**

- At first glance the advantage of the Morrison Busty seems clear during the night shift at least. However the operational arrangements mean that the two wardens on shift always accompany each other for safety reasons. Therefore while the first call for warden assistance may see their journey begin from Annfield Plain, subsequent calls could find the team located anywhere in the District in response to a planned visit or a previous emergency call.
- The service plan targets for response times are as follows:

Percentage of warden calls answered within 15 minutes	50%
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Percentage of warden calls answered within 30 minutes	85%
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4.5 Communications:

It is not believed there should be any technology problems with the trial since the principal requirements for the Careline wardens would be access to the Internet and telephone connections.

5 COSTS

5.1 It is proposed that the trial be carried out on the basis that there are no extra costs attached to the service. There may be the need for some one-off costs in the creation of accommodation in the event of a permanent move and these figures would be reported to the Council. The aim in terms of revenue funding would be to achieve an arrangement which was cost neutral in its effect on the budget.

6 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 To limit the impact on staff it would be proposed that staff would still sign on at the Morrison Busty Depot and do the change-overs at this site but would then travel to Shotley Bridge Hospital.

6.2 Consultation: Two staff briefings were held on the 29th of November and the 3rd of December to discuss the proposals and seek the views of staff. Trade Union representatives have also been consulted and responded that there may be issues in relation to response times (which are highlighted elsewhere in the report) and concerns over the possibility of increased costs if mileage figures were to increase. However, the consensus of opinion was that staff were certainly willing to undertake the trial and there were no fundamental problems from the staff perspective.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The potential for improving the Careline service as outlined in section 3.0 makes a compelling case to trial a re-location of the service. The future for many such services would seem to lie in joint working with health and the other care services as promoted in the recent white paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'. In addition to the improved service for current users, there would also seem at least the potential to make greater use of the technology as well as more intensive and better targeted expansion of the client base.

7.2 In addition at its meeting on the 25th of September the Council agreed to take part in the Shotley Bridge Hospital Stakeholder group. This decision came during a period of growing concern for the future of the hospital in which time the Council has exercised its community leadership role to support and promote the

case for a first class community hospital at Shotley Bridge. As a stakeholder in the future of the hospital, the Council is able to propose and support service initiatives for the hospital. But in this case it can consider a service for which it has responsibility moving into the hospital, to develop closer working arrangements and enhance the service for the elderly and infirm of the District. It may also be important to consider during a period of change as now faced by local government, that a service with a clear vision of its future and one developing its joint working arrangements may feel rather better placed to respond to the fresh challenges the future might bring.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the council agree that an 'in principle' approach be made to the Shotley Bridge Stakeholder Group with a proposal to relocate the current mobile warden service to Shotley Bridge Hospital.

8.2 That the service carries forward a trial for a period of six months.

8.3 The Systems and Integration manager presents an evaluation at the end of the trial.

TITLE:	GO WARM: DOMESTIC INSULATION AND FUEL POVERTY SCHEME
TO/ON:	EXECUTIVE
PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
BY:	DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
STATUS:	REPORT

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report, and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1 Subject Matter and Purpose

- 1.1 This report describes the 'Go Warm' scheme which aims to reduce fuel poverty in the District and in other parts of the north east. A household is said to be in fuel poverty if 10% or more of income is being spent on energy (heating-fuel and electricity).
- 1.2 It seeks approval for the Council to endorse the DEFRA - funded 'Go Warm' scheme and to work alongside Domestic Energy Solutions to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty across the District. This will involve the targeting of areas with grants for home insulation, heating improvements, benefit entitlement checks and energy efficiency advice.
- 1.3 It is intended that the whole District will be covered over a period of three years. The work would need to be phased and it is intended that this is done by agreement between the Council and 'Go Warm' using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) figures, with Super Output Areas having the highest IMD score being targeted earliest. An initial list of the priority Super Output Areas is included at Appendix 1, although this may need to be revised in 2008 when new IMD figures are published.
- 1.4 A Capital Bid has been made for £500,000 to contribute to the energy efficiency grants offered through the scheme over three years between 2008/09 and 2010/11. The breakdown of the Capital bid / spend over the three years is estimated to be:

2008/09	-	£200,000
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2009/10	-	£200,000
2010/11	-	£100,000

- 1.5 The grants would be administered under the Council's existing financial assistance policy and would be for:
- loft 'top-up' insulation (where there is existing loft insulation but this needs topping up to meet current Building Regulation standards);
 - contributions towards excesses faced by qualifying households where Warm Front grant doesn't cover the full cost of a new heating system.
- 1.6 It is projected that the £500,000 Council funding would be matched by over £4 million of grants from Scottish Power and Warm Front over the same time period. Further details of the grants in place, and those for which Council support is being requested are included at Appendix 2.

2 Background

- 2.1 The 'Go Warm' scheme is being run by the company Domestic Energy Solutions, which was successful in bidding to DEFRA for funds to cover the starting costs of the scheme, while drawing on Warm Front and Scottish Power to supply the majority of capital monies needed to fund insulation measures in individual properties. 'Go Warm' has already started on the ground in Stockton and is about to commence in Middlesbrough. Other councils, including Durham City and Sedgefield Borough, have decided to endorse 'Go-Warm' in their areas.
- 2.2 'Go Warm' is targeting areas of the North East which have not already been covered by a 'Warm Zone' initiative (the Government's preferred approach to intensively publicise and implement anti-fuel poverty measures). This essentially means that 'Go Warm' is targeting County Durham, Teesside and Wearside.
- 2.3 'Go Warm' proposes to reduce fuel poverty by addressing two of the main contributing factors:
- Improving insulation levels and heating efficiency of housing by channelling available grants (100% grants for those on qualifying benefits and 70% grants for other households). Details of the grants are included at Appendix 2.
 - Increasing income levels of households by carrying out benefit entitlement checks and assisting residents to claim all the benefits to which they are entitled
- 2.4 'Go Warm' has appointed a team of assessors to undertake the initial assessment work. Members of the team visit each house in an area pre-selected by the Council in discussion with the 'Go Warm' manager. A letter (including the 'Go Warm' and Council logo) is sent out to each house in advance of the visit in order to notify residents that they will be visited, and of the opportunities on offer. An initial

assessment of each interested household is carried out, leading to the identification of:

- The need for insulation measures
- Requests to have a benefit entitlement check carried out

- 2.5 These needs / requests are then followed up by the installation companies contracted to the project, and / or benefit entitlement check personnel, as appropriate. The project promises a maximum 12 week delay period between the initial assessment and the installation of measures. A simple flow-chart showing the process is included at Appendix 3.
- 2.6 'Go Warm' will provide all the relevant information about home insulation and benefit entitlement changes achieved through the scheme.
- 2.7 The aim is to offer all households in "priority groups" (those on benefits, over 60 or calculated to be in fuel poverty) free insulation measures, i.e.:
- Cavity wall insulation
 - Loft insulation
 - Loft top-up insulation (where there is already some insulation, but this requires topping up to reach current building regulations standards).
- 2.8 This will be largely achieved by drawing on existing grants from two main sources: the Government's 'Warm Front' scheme and the Scottish Power Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC) scheme.
- 2.9 In addition, the 'Warm Front' scheme also offers people on qualifying benefits up to £2,700 towards a new heating system if they have no central heating, or their current system has major faults.
- 2.10 A contribution from the Council is required if free "loft top-up" insulation measures are to be offered to these groups, and if a contribution towards excesses on 'Warm Front' funded heating installations is to be made available. A Capital bid has being submitted for this purpose. Details of the grants available through the scheme, and the sum requested from the Council are included at Appendix 2.
- 2.11 Although the scheme will necessarily be phased as it is rolled out through the District, there is sufficient flexibility within it to cater for individual priority cases which may come forward from locations which are not currently the focus of the main 'Go Warm' activity. So if 'Go Warm' are working in (e.g.) Annfield Plain and an enquiry comes forward from someone in Burnhope who is eligible for free insulation measures, they will be fed immediately into the process.

3 Relevant material considerations/ options

- 3.1 Domestic Energy Solutions are the group that were successful in securing the funding from DEFRA for the grant scheme, so there is logic in terms of the funding gearing in working with them. Due to the funding they have available, and the other benefits that their project can offer, other Districts within the County are also signing up to the 'Go Warm' project. Domestic Energy Solutions offer the additional benefit of providing the only scheme that comprehensively addresses fuel poverty by including the Benefit Entitlement Check element as well as the actual grants and advice. This will provide the Council with quality data about home insulation levels and benefit take-up, so that the effectiveness of the project can be monitored.
- 3.2 The 'Go Warm' team will be working with other Councils in the region, so the programme of work will be co-ordinated on a regional level. This means that Derwentside Council will not be able to exclusively dictate when the 'Go Warm' team will be working in the District. However, if Derwentside comes forward as one of the first Councils to be involved, the likelihood of getting its priority areas targeted early is higher. 'Go Warm' have expressed the willingness to cover the whole District, if requested.
- 3.3 An allocation of Council Capital funds to supplement the grants already attached to the scheme is requested. The rationale for this is to ensure that as many households as possible take up and benefit from insulation measures as the 'Go Warm' scheme rolls out through their area. It may be viewed as a missed opportunity if some vulnerable households do not take up loft top-up grants or new heating systems because of affordability issues.
- 3.4 The Council already has a Financial Assistance Policy governing the allocation of energy efficiency grants to householders. Any grant from a Council budget could therefore be administered under this policy as an agreement between the Council and the individual householder.
- 3.5 Rolling out the 'Go Warm' scheme through the District will make a significant and measurable impact on fuel poverty and domestic energy efficiency levels. This will help the Council make progress towards its targets under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, and also towards the new performance indicators on fuel poverty and climate change included in the new Performance Management Framework.

4 Recommendations and Reasons

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Council agrees to endorse the 'Go Warm' scheme and to work alongside Domestic Energy Solutions to deliver energy efficiency improvements in the District.
- 4.2 The Capital Bid for the funding has been made and will be assessed against the Council's Corporate priorities. The scheme would be able to go forward when resources exist within the Capital Programme. Release of the resources would be controlled by the Asset Management Group in the usual way.
- 4.3 The project will help the Council make measurable progress towards its Home Energy Conservation Act target to improve the energy efficiency of housing by 30% between 1996 and 2011. It will also reduce fuel poverty by assisting vulnerable households in the District to reduce heat loss from their homes, save money on fuel bills and take up benefits to which they are entitled.

5 Background Papers

Home Energy Conservation Act progress reports 1996 - 2006

Appendix one

Derwentside District Council IMD

Ward Data					Households (2001 Census)
Ward	Durham County	SOA Code	SOA (Lower Layer)	IMD Score (2004)	Total Households
Stanley Hall	Derwentside	E01020673	005D	49.98	730
Craghead and South Stanley	Derwentside	E01020648	005B	49.52	625
Craghead and South Stanley	Derwentside	E01020649	005C	48.04	654
Craghead and South Stanley	Derwentside	E01020647	005A	46.94	772
Catchgate	Derwentside	E01020639	004C	45.76	636
Consett South	Derwentside	E01020644	009D	42.14	767
Annfield Plain	Derwentside	E01020626	004A	41.58	722
South Moor	Derwentside	E01020672	006E	40.13	646
Consett South	Derwentside	E01020645	009E	40.13	638
South Moor	Derwentside	E01020671	006D	39.46	627
Annfield Plain	Derwentside	E01020624	006A	39.38	642
Stanley Hall	Derwentside	E01020675	005E	37.23	742
Leadgate	Derwentside	E01020668	008D	36.73	626
Tanfield	Derwentside	E01020677	004E	35.29	635
Delves Lane	Derwentside	E01020652	008C	35.03	627
Burnhope	Derwentside	E01020633	010A	34.13	583
Havannah	Derwentside	E01020661	003A	33.73	663
Dipton	Derwentside	E01020653	004D	33.31	643
Delves Lane	Derwentside	E01020650	008A	32.82	622
South Moor	Derwentside	E01020670	006C	32.24	731
Leadgate	Derwentside	E01020669	008E	31.70	578
Esh	Derwentside	E01020658	011B	31.44	778
Leadgate	Derwentside	E01020667	007F	30.38	746
Blackhill	Derwentside	E01020630	009A	30.15	619
Ebchester and Medomsley	Derwentside	E01020656	002E	29.71	650
Havannah	Derwentside	E01020662	003B	29.25	674
Consett North	Derwentside	E01020643	007E	29.02	765
Blackhill	Derwentside	E01020631	009B	28.84	741
Annfield Plain	Derwentside	E01020625	006B	28.45	607
Catchgate	Derwentside	E01020638	004B	26.97	638
Stanley Hall	Derwentside	E01020674	003D	26.11	716
Consett North	Derwentside	E01020641	007C	25.35	660
Burnopfield	Derwentside	E01020636	001C	25.27	767
Cornsay	Derwentside	E01020646	011A	25.01	664
Tanfield	Derwentside	E01020676	001E	23.52	666
Consett East	Derwentside	E01020640	007B	23.41	675
Delves Lane	Derwentside	E01020651	008B	23.19	716
Dipton	Derwentside	E01020654	001D	23.14	628
Benfieldside	Derwentside	E01020629	002C	21.56	614
Esh	Derwentside	E01020660	011D	20.94	679
Havannah	Derwentside	E01020663	003C	20.88	721
Tanfield	Derwentside	E01020678	003E	20.15	575

28,208

APPENDIX 2

'GO WARM' Grants (text in italics refers to proposed Council funded elements)

'Go Warm' is defining the "priority group" it wishes to target with 100% grants as: households on income-based benefits, over-60s households and households calculated to be in fuel poverty at the time their assessment is carried out.

There is a slight difference in the proposed make-up of the grant for households in the priority group which are on income-based benefits, as these qualify for assistance from 'Warm Front'.

1) Households in priority groups and on income-based benefit:

Measure	Cost to Householder	% grant (S.Power)	% grant (Warm Front)
Cavity wall	£0	100	-
Loft (virgin)	£0	100	-
Loft (top-up)	£0	37	63

These measures will be funded through the Scottish Power EEC scheme, apart from loft-top-ups, which will be part-funded by 'Warm Front'.

In addition, households on qualifying benefits will be eligible for up to £2,700 through 'Warm Front' towards new or replacement central heating systems where there is no central heating, or where the current system has major faults. *Sometimes the installation cost of a new heating system is more than the £2,700 available from 'Warm Front' and a Council grant of up to £500 will be available to cover the excess payment which individual households may face if they require a new heating system under 'Warm Front'.*

2) Households in priority group and not on income-based benefit:

Measure	Cost to Householder	% grant (S. Power)	% grant (Council)
Cavity Wall	£0	100	-
Loft (virgin)	£0	100	-
Loft (top-up)	£0	37	63

These grants are mainly funded by Scottish Power. Loft top-ups are not funded to the same level as virgin loft measures, because Scottish Power cannot claim as many "carbon credits" back from the Government for loft top-up measures. *It is proposed that a Council grant is used to enable an offer of free loft top-up insulation. Loft top-ups are projected to make up 68% of the loft insulation jobs required, as most lofts already have some insulation.*

3) Households in the "Able to Pay" group

All other households will fall into the "Able to Pay" category and will be offered Cavity Wall Insulation for £99, Virgin Loft Insulation for £99 and Loft top-up Insulation for £99. These prices are heavily subsidised by Scottish Power.

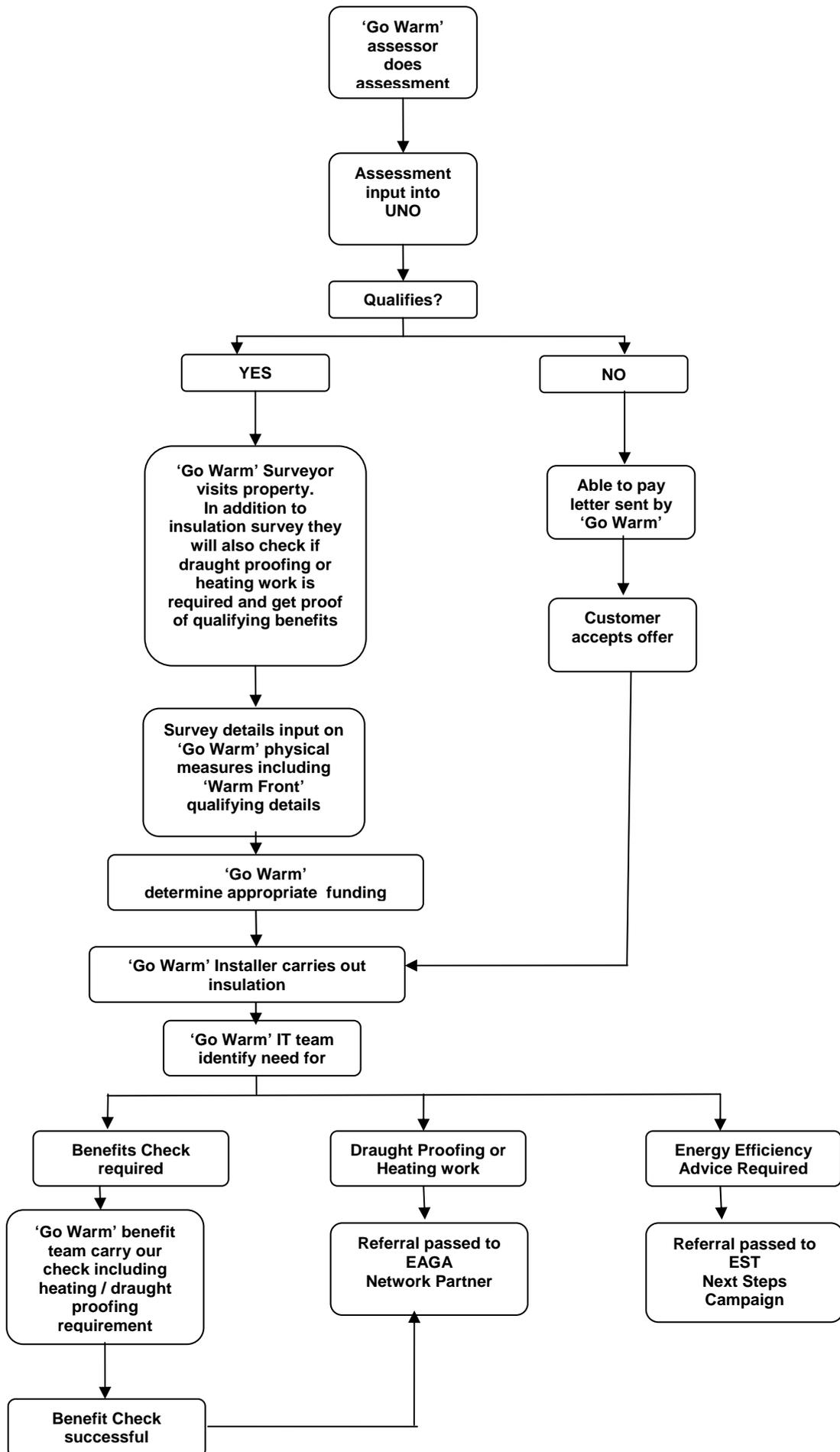
APPENDIX 2

Derwentside projected figures for 2007/08 - 2010/11

value of work

Total number of properties	39000	
presume 70% assessment rate	27300	
presume 85% will qualify	23205	
95% of all qualifiers will be surveyed	22045	
65% of all surveys will result in measures	14329	
14,329 homes will average 1.3 measure each home	18628	
Cavities = 40%	7451	£2,570,638.30
Lofts = 60%	11177	£1,955,920.44
32% Virgin lofts	3577	
68% Loft top ups	7600	
Assume 50% Qualify for Warm Front	3800	
Year 1	1520	
Year 2	1520	
Year 3	760	
Average loft price 3 bed semi £175		
contribution needed per property = £110		
Year 1	£167,200	
Year 2	£167,200	
Year 3	£83,600	
Total	£418,000	
Derwentside loft top-up contribution	£418,000	
	(9 Percent)	
Include provision for Warm Front Heating Excess Costs	£82,000	
Total for 3 years	£500,000	

Flow Chart to demonstrate integration with EEC, Eaga and EST



TITLE:	Extension of Green Waste Collection Service
TO/ON:	Executive
BY:	Director of Environmental Services
PORTFOLIO:	Environment
STATUS:	Report

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report, and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1. SUBJECT MATTER

- 1.1 To consider the expansion of the Green Waste Collection Service and its contribution to national and regional initiatives.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2004 the Council agreed to the introduction of a pilot Green Waste service, collecting from approximately 2,000 properties in the District. This was a voluntary pilot programme which commenced collections in April 2005. The Revenue cost for operating the service is approximately £11,000. Provision was made in the budget for 2007 / 08 to expand the service to a total of 8,000 properties, with a Revenue cost to the Council of £44,000. However the service was not rolled out as programmed, initially because of a difficulty in procuring the bins, but also Corporate Management Team became aware that broadening the scheme would have a detrimental effect on the recycling and composting Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI).
- 2.2 The service expansion was included in the Revenue budget established for 2007 / 08. However, linked to the service introduction was the Capital cost of acquiring the bins. Purchase of the relevant bins, estimated at £108,000 was included in the prioritised, unresourced Capital programme. Sufficient funds were not considered to be available to meet this project when measured against other corporate priorities.

- 2.3 The opportunity now presents itself to revisit the decision on the future of the service and either commit to its roll out and release the necessary Capital, or remove the Revenue budget provision.

3. RELEVANT MATERIAL CONSIDERATION/OPTIONS

- 3.1 The success of the service has been demonstrated by the growing tonnages which have been collected and the contribution to the composting element of the BVPI. Customer feedback is also positive. However, we are now collecting waste which previously was not part of our collection service. The tonnages collected have therefore reduced our BVPI performance. A calculation has been done which shows the impact of the current Green Waste collection service in the current year. As we collect over 30,000 tonnes of general waste per annum, the additional 1,600 tonnes of Green Waste is likely to have about a 0.6% negative impact on our recycling rate.
- 3.2 Considering the service within the national 'greening' and recycling strategy, it can be seen that the diversion of biodegradable waste away from landfill is a major objective.
- 3.3 Methane emissions from (biodegradable waste in) landfill account for 40% of all UK methane emissions and 3% of all UK greenhouse gas emissions. (Methane is 23 times as damaging a greenhouse gas as carbon dioxide).
- 3.4 All degradable wastes have a significant greenhouse gas potential when put into landfill. For rapidly degrading wastes, such as food / kitchen wastes, anaerobic digestion offers climate change and energy benefits over landfilling or land spreading, while composting has the potential to sequester carbon in soils and to improve soil fertility, which may confer additional climate change benefits.
- 3.5 The Government has been given a directive from the European Union with regard to the amount of biodegradable waste it is permitted to place in landfill. This is to reduce the impact that this activity contributes to methane production. The Government has converted these targets to individual allowances for each Waste Disposal Authority (which is Durham County Council). There is a significant, and increasing, penalty for exceeding the allowance of £150 per tonne. Services which reduce the amount of bio degradable waste (in this case garden waste) going to landfill ultimately help our residents to avoid this significant financial cost.
- 3.6 In the new local government framework, there will be a strengthened role for the Local Area Agreements (LAAs). Local authorities are already under a duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy which sets the strategic vision for an area. The Government will require County and

Unitary local authorities, in consultation with local partners, to prepare a delivery plan for the Waste Strategy.

- 3.7 The new LAA will include a single set of targets for improvement, tailored to local needs and agreed between Central Government and local partners, such as third sector organisations. In this way Central Government will focus on the things that really matter to people everywhere, guaranteeing national minimum standards, but leaving room for local innovation and local priorities.
- 3.8 The Government will introduce a duty for local authorities and other local partners to work together to agree the priorities in the LAA. Delivery of local priorities will be the responsibility of partners in key local partnerships. Once agreed with Government, local partners will be required to have regard to these priorities for improvement.
- 3.9 The LAA of March 2006 contains the following targets under the Safer and Stronger Communities Section. The contribution of the Green Waste collection service to the targets for increased percentage of household arisings recycled or composted is evident.

SSC 2 - A strong sense of community exists in a cleaner, greener, more attractive environment.

Indicators	Baseline	Targets		
		2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
BVPI 199 Local Street & Environmental Cleanliness - a) Litter & detritus b) Graffiti c) Fly posting d) Fly tipping	16% County average (2004/05)			Reduce average to 11.2% (relates to litter and detritus only)
Increase satisfaction with street cleanliness	58% (2003/04)		67%	69%
Increase the percentage of household arising recycled or composted targets (BV 82a and 82b)	18.48% County average (2004/05)		30%	40.5%

- 3.10 The Derwentside Partnership Community Strategy contains the Objectives and Actions below in relation to the Environment:

Objective:

To decrease the amount of waste being tipped or transported and increase the amount of waste recycled, composted or reused.

Action

- Continue initiatives and incentives to promote recycling and waste minimisation.
- Set further targets for reductions in waste production.
- Support national and regional waste minimisation and recycling campaigns.
- Promote the use of reusable or recycled products and reduce the consumption of unnecessary packaging.
- Develop and implement a green composting scheme.
- To maintain a clean and attractive environment by promoting the use of appropriate methods of litter disposal.

3.11 The linkage with the Green Waste collection service is clear in the action to develop and implement a green composting scheme.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Green Waste collection service has a waiting list of residents who wish to participate in the service. It is well received, the Revenue funding to extend the service is in place, however the Capital needed to purchase suitable containers has not been identified.

4.2 The Service contributes to European, National, Regional and Local targets. However it does have a slight negative impact on performance indicators. No doubt Members will be aware of the impact on our performance which will occur as a result of lost accessibility to the Thornley Digesters reported to Executive in December 2007. In comparison this reduction in performance is quite minor.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Green Waste collection service continues to be on the Council's priority list for service enhancement. The service will be expanded once the Capital needed to purchase the containers is identified in the Capital Programme. Release of the resources would be controlled by the Asset Management Group in the usual way.

5.2 This will enable the Council to contribute further to the targets previously identified.

For further information on the contents of this report please contact: J Shepherd, Head of General Services.

TITLE:	TOWN AND VILLAGE CENTRE REGENERATION – DEALING WITH DERELICT AND LONG TERM VACANT PROPERTIES
TO:	EXECUTIVE
PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
BY:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
STATUS:	REPORT

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report, and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1. SUBJECT MATTER AND PURPOSE

1.1 This report seeks approval to agree a framework for tackling long-term derelict and vacant properties across the District to assist the regeneration of town and village centres. It also seeks support for a Capital bid for resources totalling £200,000, identified from the £1.5 million Capital Programme to assist in the regeneration of town and village centres, or 'Placemakers Scheme'.

2. CURRENT POSITION - THE COUNCIL'S EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY

2.1 The Empty Property Strategy was adopted by the Council in 2003. It meets all the selection criteria for funding detailed in the town and village centre regeneration initiative report.

2.2 The Empty Property Strategy aims to deal with the problems associated with privately owned properties within the Derwentside area, which have remained vacant for significant periods of time. The Strategy deals with both domestic and commercial properties.

2.3 The Strategy has a significant role to play in the regeneration and development of Derwentside. Bringing empty properties back into use is a sustainable way to meet future affordable housing demand and is included in Government's Green Paper calculation for the net affordable housing requirement of 240,000 units per year.

2.4 Empty Properties are a wasted asset, a financial burden and a missed opportunity to provide decent homes. They can blight areas of the

District, attract vandals, and tie up valuable resources of the local authority and the emergency services.

- 2.5 A concentration of empty properties can commence a cycle of decline in an area, leading eventually to the area becoming one of low demand.
- 2.6 Virtually all areas of the District contain such properties. Residents living within the vicinity can suffer the effects of low property values, nuisances, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour. The recent Area Development Framework report for Stanley highlighted these issues as a key concern for local residents.
- 2.7 The benefits of an Empty Properties Strategy are numerous and include:
- Reducing the impact of empty properties, removing the eyesore which has a detrimental to the community
 - Removing the focus for anti-social behaviour and vandalism
 - Re-using empty properties can aid the regeneration of an area and provide additional affordable housing
 - An increase in revenue through additional Council Tax
 - A reduction in enforcement activity by the Council
 - Halting the inevitable decline of an area and
 - Protecting the value of properties in surrounding areas.
- 2.8 Since the Council adopted its Empty Property Strategy in 2003, 50 long-term vacant properties have been brought back into use or demolished across the District. The majority of these properties have been brought back through negotiations with their owners; encouraging them to market the property and linking them to willing purchasers. The Council has also used its enforcement powers, however these do not directly lead to a property been brought back into use. Enforcement is generally limited to ensuring the property does not become a health or safety hazard. Where enforcement has been taken against empty properties and has resulted in default action a local charge is placed against the property. This can either be recovered on the sale of the property or court action.
- 2.9 In addition the Council made available a budget of £45,000 to complement Durham County Council's Conservation Area Grants. This funding was used to target 5 properties in the Catchgate and Annfield Plain areas.
- 2.10 Whilst the current approach of negotiation and the use of existing enforcement powers has been successful in dealing with those owners who are willing to cooperate, it has not been successful in tackling those owners who are not willing to discuss improving their properties. Where ownership details are not available or complicated or where owners cannot be traced the existing approach it is highly unlikely to resolve the problem.

3. THE USE OF ADDITIONAL ENFORCEMENT POWERS

- 3.1 Since the Council adopted the current Empty Property Strategy there have been a number of changes to enforcement powers available to the Council. These include:

Compulsory Purchase Powers

- 3.2 Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) can be an extremely effective tool in tackling long-term empty properties. Providing suitable evidence is available that the authority has tried other approaches, CPO's can be used to acquire individual properties. CPO's may be subject to an appeal and / or a public inquiry, in such cases the Secretary of State has the final decision. Once a CPO has been agreed and the property acquired by the Authority, properties should be resold on the open market to purchasers who are willing to carry out remedial work or conversion to return it into use. Often the threat of compulsory purchase action is enough to encourage owners to sell their properties on the open market or request the Council purchase the property from them by agreement.
- 3.3 The cost of acquiring a property by CPO or by agreement depends on the market value at the time of acquisition. Where CPO's are used against property owners they may also be entitled to additional payments.
- 3.4 The Government released new guidance in 2004 on the use of Compulsory purchase powers. The guidance was aimed at simplifying and speeding up the process.

Empty Dwelling Management Orders

- 3.5 The Housing Act 2004 introduced Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's). The relevant section was enacted on 6th April 2006 and gives local authorities new statutory power to take management control of an empty dwelling to secure its occupation.
- 3.6 There are two types of EDMO's, an Interim Order and a Final Order. The Authority must consider that making an interim EDMO is the most appropriate course of action taking into account the rights of the owner and the wider community in which the dwelling is located. An Interim EDMO can last for 12 months and must be followed by a final EDMO where the owner is still not co-operating. Final EDMO's can last for up to 7 years. In both EDMO's the Residential Property Tribunal must confirm the Order before it becomes operative.
- 3.7 Once an Authority has been successful in obtaining an EDMO it must ensure that the property is made habitable and secure its future occupation. The cost of any repairs would be borne by the Council and can be recovered from rental income over the period the EDMO is in

place. These costs will vary from property to property; some will require limited work whilst other will need a complete renovation.

- 3.8 The use of EDMO's would require the Council to work with a suitable Strategic Partner who would be able to repair and manage the property on behalf of the Council during the lifetime of the EDMO. As part of the LSVT Partnership Agreement, Derwentside Homes are the Council's preferred Strategic Partner.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The existing Empty Property Strategy is currently been reviewed and will be the subject of future report. The Capital bid would provide the resource to the Empty Property Strategy allowing the use of both powers outlined above.
- 4.2 The Council's Empty Property and Landlord Liaison Officer has already identified those properties, out of the 700+ empty properties across the District, which have the most significant and adverse affects on their surroundings and the local community.
- 4.3 Work has already been undertaken to identify the owner(s) and in most cases discussions have taken place with the aim to return the properties back into use.
- 4.4 The proposal is to assess those properties, which have already been identified and where previous action has failed, for their suitability for enforcement action using compulsory purchase powers or an empty dwelling management orders
- 4.5 Factors to be taken into account when identifying properties for action include:
- The impact the property is currently having on the surrounding environment
 - Alignment with other regeneration activities within the District
 - Whether the property is domestic or commercial
 - The cost renovation work required
 - The likelihood that the property will be attractive for rental purposes
 - The likely gain of an affordable unit of accommodation
 - The likelihood of securing all or a majority of initial investment by way of seized rent
 - The ownership details of the property.
- 4.6 The benefits of taking action have already been described above and in addition the use of EDMO's would provide additional affordable units of accommodation within the District managed by a responsible Strategic Partner.

The Financial Assistance Policy

- 4.7 In exceptional circumstances it may be desirable to offer grant assistance to owner-occupiers or those seeking to become owner-occupiers. Grant assistance can be a very cost effective way of achieving a significant benefit to the community.
- 4.8 The Council already has a Financial Assistance Policy that allows financial help towards the cost of returning long-term vacant properties back into use. Grant assistance should be given to applicants who can provide a 5 year owner occupation certificate.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Executive agrees to the Capital bid for £200,000 to provide a resource to support the Council's Empty Property Strategy, to enable the use EDMO's and compulsory purchase orders. Any future compulsory purchase will be the subject of further reports.
- 5.2 The Capital Bid for the funding has been made and will be assessed against the Council's Corporate priorities. The scheme would then be able to go forward when resources exist within the Capital Programme. Release of the resources would be controlled by the Asset Management Group in the usual way.
- 5.3 Executive agree that discussions can take place with Derwentside Homes as our preferred Strategic Partner to manage properties on behalf of the Council that have been subject to an EDMO.

For further information on this report contact Malcolm Mather on ext. 8906

These settlements have been identified using the current Indices of Multiple Deprivation and their scope for environmental improvements.

- Craghead
- The Grove
- Annfield Plain/Catchgate
- Leadgate
- Tantobie/White-le-Head
- Delves Lane
- Burnhope
- Dipton/Flint Hill
- South Moor
- Langley Park/Esh
- Blackhill
- Burnopfield

TITLE:	DERWENTSIDE PLACEMAKERS SCHEME
TO/ON:	EXECUTIVE
BY:	DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
PORTFOLIO:	ENVIRONMENT
STATUS:	REPORT

STRATEGIC FACTOR CHECKLIST

The Council's Corporate Management Team has confirmed that the Strategic Factor Checklist has been applied to the development of this report and there are no key issues, over and above those set out in the body of the report, that need to be brought to Members' attention.

1. SUBJECT MATTER AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to agree a framework for utilising the £1.5 million allocation within the Capital Programme for Town and Village Centre improvements, proposed to be called 'Derwentside Placemakers'. The project would work alongside the Capital Initiative Fund (CIF) that was outlined to Members at the Council meeting on the 11th December 2007. Like the CIF, the 'Placemakers' project would be aimed towards enhancing the physical fabric of localities within the District; unlike the CIF it would be aimed at trying to achieve 'structural improvements', and would not be allocated on a Ward basis. The 'Placemakers' scheme would allow us to respond to areas of long standing concern to the Council.
- 1.2 The £1.5m allocation has been contained within the Capital Programme since 2005, as a prioritised but unresourced bid. Sufficient funds have not been available to meet this initiative, when measured against the Council's other corporate priorities. As a consequence of this initiative being formed more than two years ago, a number of projects have already been proposed by Members and worked up, in order that the Council were prepared for an early start once the resources had been identified.
- 1.3 One of the key elements within this project is to earmark £200,000 of that resource to tackle long-term derelict and vacant properties across the District, which will assist the regeneration of town and village centres. A separate report is on this Agenda dealing with the Empty Property issue.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2004 / 05 a sum of £300,000 was identified within the Capital Programme for Town and Village Centre regeneration initiatives. This funding was allocated to a range of projects across the District including developments to Stanley Bus Station, property conversions and improvements in Catchgate and Annfield Plain, and street work improvement in South Moor, New Kyo and Catchgate. Some of the projects benefited from complementary funding from other agencies and individuals, and in particular Durham County Council with its Urban Renaissance programme; Stanley

Green Corridor Neighbourhood Partnership and individual property owners. The majority of those initiatives have now been completed.

2.2 Allocation of Resources for 2008 onwards: A report for the allocation of a further £1.5 million from the Capital Programme to assist the regeneration of town and village centres across the District was agreed by Executive in November 2005 and was given a 'high priority' classification within the Council's 3 year Capital Programme.

2.3 The report recognised that the £1.5m allocation would only have a limited impact on the District and it would be necessary to effectively target this resource. It was agreed that the two principal town centres of Consett and Stanley should figure highly in the allocation process. However, recognition was also given to the smaller village centres, which in many cases, can often benefit from the injection of relatively modest amounts of public money.

2.4 The following selection criteria were agreed, as factors which should be taken into account when decisions are taken to allocate resources:

- The location of the project;
- The environmental and visual impact of the completed project;
- The economic impact of the completed project;
- The removal of derelict and void properties;
- Providing sustainable communities; and
- The availability of any additional and complementary funding.

2.4.1 The Location of the Project

As it was the intention to use these resources to aid the regeneration of town and village centres, the report specified that resources should be targeted to the following areas:

- Consett town centre
- Stanley town centre
- District wide – additional priority settlements were identified, and are set out in Appendix 1.

2.4.2 The Environmental and Visual Impact of the Completed Project

The report specified that initiatives should aim to improve the appearance and vitality of town and village centres, encouraging people to use the facilities that are available locally and to promote civic pride.

2.4.3 The Economic Impact of the Completed Project

Initiatives should have economic benefits for both the immediate locality and the District as a whole. Although it may be difficult to quantify the economic impact of individual projects, appropriate outcomes should be possible to measure such as community satisfaction, property prices, rental levels and net increase in affordable homes.

2.4.4 Dereliction and Voids

The Council's Empty Property Strategy aims to promote the re-use of empty properties to aid regeneration of an area and remove individual 'eyesore' properties that can have a significant impact on their immediate surroundings, making places more attractive to live.

2.4.5 Sustainable Communities

The report suggested that initiatives should have regard to the principles of sustainable development in terms of its impact on the environment, local heritage, lifelong learning, health, crime and disorder and other relevant factors.

2.4.6 Complementary Funding

The report outlined how the Council has already worked successfully in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver a range of improvements in town and village centres. Additional funding sources should continue to be identified to maximise benefits to local communities.

3. RELEVANT MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the assessment criteria to determine how the funding will be allocated should be developed in order to identify those 'Placemaker' initiatives that may receive capital funding. Set out below, in draft, is a suggestion for the range of criteria that could be applied. However, also set out below are a range of projects that have been drawn up and developed over the last two years that would allow the Council to demonstrate early commitment to the project. We would therefore be able to 'hit the ground running' with these initial projects and start work shortly after the resources were released. The overall guiding principle should remain, that the funding should be focused on achieving significant structural change.

3.2 With the limited resources available from the Council it will be necessary in the future to adopt a partnership and enabling approach to the task, with the authority not acting as the sole instigator and funder of projects.

3.3 Recognition has also been given in these initial projects to the contrasting challenges facing our town and village centres. The larger towns of Consett and Stanley fulfil a broader economic and community role within the District and hold the potential for much larger and varied regeneration programmes. Projects that may come forward under this initiative may require long lead-in periods and involve a number of funding partners. It is therefore necessary to adopt a range of approaches to achieving the desired results in both our larger towns and smaller village centres.

3.4 In developing the selection criteria regard has been made to the following:

- Corporate Priorities
- Community Strategy
- Local Area Agreement
- Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Existing and emerging partnership arrangements

3.5 Suggested selection criteria may include;

3.5.1 The Location of the Project: as the intention is to use the resources to primarily aid the regeneration of town and village centres it is suggested that we target the following areas:

- Consett town centre
- Stanley town centre
- Other priority settlements (See Appendix 1)

3.5.2 The Environmental and Visual Impact of the Completed Project: the overall aim of the 'Placemaker' initiative is to improve the appearance and vitality of our town and

village centres, encouraging people to use the facilities that are available locally and to promote civic pride.

3.5.3 The Economic Impact of the Completed Project: initiatives can have economic benefits for both the immediate locality and the District as a whole, and these will be taken into account.

3.5.4 Dereliction and Voids: the Council's Empty Property Strategy aims to promote through a range of actions the re-use of empty properties to aid regeneration of an area, making it more of an attractive place to live. Giving priority to this type of project can have many benefits:

- Re-occupation of previously void, living accommodation.
- Conversion of no longer required commercial accommodation into new dwelling accommodation.
- Meet local housing needs and reduce homelessness.
- Removal of eyesores.
- Reduction in antisocial behaviour and 'envirocrime' associated with such properties.
- Economic benefits to individuals and the Council (increase in Council Tax).
- Provide redevelopment opportunities in some instances.

3.5.5 Sustainable Communities: schemes will be expected to have regard to the principles of sustainable development in terms of its impact on the environment, local heritage, lifelong learning, health, crime and disorder and other relevant factors.

3.5.6 Complementary Funding: the Council has successfully worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver a range of improvements in town and village centres. By giving priority to those schemes, which attract additional funding from other sources, the Council can maximise benefits to local communities.

4. PROPOSED INITIAL PROJECTS

4.1 As already indicated, a number of projects have previously been suggested and officers have done additional work on them.

4.2 CAR PARKING: summary collection of refurbishment budget breakdowns;

	Total Spaces	BUDGET
Stanley – Central	154	£120,300
Stanley – Scott Street	282	£122,500
Stanley – Louisa Terrace	38	£ 38,700
Consett – Albert Road I	195	£ 90,700
Consett – Albert Road II	207	£ 89,800
Consett – Albert Road opp. Coal St Church	20	£ 20,000
Consett – Oak Street I	40	£ 50,000
Consett – Oak Street II	44	£ 56,000
Consett – Front Street	75	£ 85,000
Consett – John Street	52	£ 40,000
		—————
Total		£713,000

NB: Budget estimates take NO account of street lighting, GPO, drainage or services. Alterations or amendments may be necessary to complete the given layouts. It would therefore be prudent to allocate £800,000.

4.3	Other Initiatives:	
	Empty Property Strategy	£200,000
	South Moor Streetscape	£50,000
	Leadgate	£150,000
	Dipton	£50,000
	Bobby Robson Park	£90,000
	Park Lodge, Blackhill	£100,000

This list is not exhaustive and suitable projects from other similar groups will be considered. The remaining £60,000 would be used for contingencies.

- 4.4 Leadgate and Dipton are both identified in the County Council's Urban and Rural Renaissance Initiative for next financial year. Works at South Moor are being concluded, and the £50,000 from Derwentside would allow the project to be completed to a high standard. Around £90,000 would be required as the Council's contribution to the new Park at Langley Park. It is proposed to convert Park Lodge at Blackhill into a Heritage Centre. Therefore something in the order of £60,000 would be left unallocated out of the first tranche of money, for contingencies. Discussions are taking place with the County Council and other bodies in order to try and maximise the amount of investment.
- 4.5 The funding awards would be managed in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONS

- 5.1 Members endorse the allocation of £1.5 million from within the Capital Programme in line with that indicated in paragraph 4.2 and 4.3 of the report.
- 5.2 That Members note the criteria and approach to be applied in the appraisal of individual projects considered eligible for funding through the Capital programme.
- 5.3 The Capital Bid for the funding has been made and will be assessed against the Council's Corporate priorities. The schemes would then be able to go forward when resources exist within the Capital Programme. Release of the resources would be controlled by the Asset Management Group in the usual way.

For further information on the details of this report, please contact:
Peter Reynolds, Director of Environmental Services (ext 8281)

These settlements have been identified using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and their scope for environmental improvements.

Craghead
The Grove
Annfield Plain / Catchgate
Leadgate
Tantobie / White-le-Head
Delves Lane
Burnhope
Dipton / Flint Hill
South Moor
Langley Park / Esh
Blackhill
Burnopfield