



**HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH
STRONG COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Tuesday,
25 November 2008
10.00 a.m.

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

AGENDA
and
REPORTS



**This document is also available in other languages,
large print and audio format upon request**

العربية (Arabic)

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

বাংলা (Bengali)

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

(中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese)

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

हिन्दी (Hindi)

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

polski (Polish)

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

Español (Spanish)

Póngase en contacto con nosotros si desea recibir información en otro idioma o formato.

اردو (Urdu)

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To notify the Chairman of any items that appear later in the agenda in which you may have an interest.

3. MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2008. (Pages 1 - 4)

4. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

To consider the attached document. (Pages 5 - 14)

**5. "STATE OF THE BOROUGH" - HEALTHY BOROUGH REVIEW GROUP
REPORT**

To consider the attached document. (Pages 15 - 42)

**6. "STATE OF THE BOROUGH" - STRONG COMMUNITIES REVIEW GROUP
REPORT**

To consider the attached document. (Pages 43 - 86)

7. WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the attached report of the Chairman of the Committee. (Pages 87 - 90)

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Members are respectfully requested to give the Chief Executive notice of items they would wish to raise under the heading not later than 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting, in order that consultation may take place with the Chairman who will determine whether the item will be accepted.

**B. Allen
Chief Executive**

**Council Offices
SPENNYMOOR**

Councillor J.E. Higgin (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs. P. Crathorne (Vice Chairman)

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, J. Burton, Mrs. S. Haigh,
Mrs. H.J. Hutchinson, Ms. I. Jackson, K. Thompson, A. Warburton, T. Ward and
Mrs E. M. Wood.

Tenant Representative

Mary Thompson

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH STRONG COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council Chamber, Council
Offices, Spennymoor

Tuesday, 21 October
2008

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor J.E. Higgin (Chairman) and

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. P. Crathorne, Ms. I. Jackson,
T. Ward and Mrs E. M. Wood

In

Attendance: Councillors V. Chapman, G.C. Gray, J.G. Huntington and B. Lamb

**Observer
with**

Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong and W. Waters

**Chairman's
Consent**

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. D. Bowman, J. Burton, Mrs. S. Haigh,
Mrs. H.J. Hutchinson, K. Thompson and A. Warburton

Mrs. M.Thomson (Tenant Representative)

H&S.13/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

H&S.14/08 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September, 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**H&S.15/08 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP- LEISURE CENTRES
CONCESSIONARY PRICING SCHEME - PROGRESS ON ACTION
PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report detailing progress to date on Cabinet's response and Action Plan following consideration of its recommendations arising from the Leisure Centre Concessionary Pricing Scheme Review. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that the Leisure Services Marketing Manager, was present at the meeting to outline progress and respond to any queries.

Members were reminded of the background to the review and recommendations provided by the Review Group, the Action Plan which had been drawn up and suggested timescale.

Details on progress of each action were outlined. It was explained that the Action Plan had been in place for approximately two years. Some areas were completed whilst others were still ongoing.

Specific reference was made to the recommendation relating to concessionary prices remaining at their current level. It was explained that due to substantial rises in unit energy costs modest price increases had been implemented for 2008/9.

The Committee noted that with regard to partnership working and in particular the web-based implementation plan, this had been delayed. Three surgeries in Spennymoor were scheduled to go live in September, 2008. However, the website was still being developed. The Primary Care Trust would be providing information on progress at the next meeting of the Healthy Borough Strategic Working Group.

It was explained that recommendation 6 of the action plan related to the establishment of a focus group to provide a forum for consultation regarding the Leisure Centre Concessionary Pricing Scheme. The Committee was informed that the focus group had not been established. Base campaigns had increased the number of concessionary users registered within the Torex system from 1,557 in 2006 to 8,460 in October, 2008.

The recommendation relating to the promotion of information and advertisement including case study examples on the Concessionary Pricing Scheme was ongoing. Examples were given of promotions including free swim promotions for selected super output areas, zest for life campaign additional activities for over 50's, care home residents and disabled residents.

With regard to the recommendation relating to all members being transferred onto the B:Active Scheme, it was explained that the process was 75% complete as of October, 2007. Capital, however, was not available in 2008 to purchase additional data capture equipment, resulting in the manual compilation of some performance indicator data.

The Committee was informed that with regard to the recommendation on Leisure Services taking account of findings from the reports evaluating initiatives in Wales and Scotland and identifying any further improvements which could be made, expressions of interest had been submitted to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, on behalf of the new authority, to take advantage of free swimming for those people aged 60 years and over and 16 years and under. Confirmation to proceed with the scheme would be made by Durham County Council Cabinet.

During discussion of this item reference was made to the launch of the play rangers programme the following weekend and sessions which would be organised on a weekly basis after school at play areas principally in the eastern area and the need for the programme to be rolled out to other areas within the Borough.

AGREED : *That the Committee is satisfied that the actions following the Overview and Scrutiny Review on Leisure Centres Concessionary Pricing Scheme had been*

implemented or are ongoing and that no further reports are required.

H&S.16/08 PROGRESS ON HOUSING PARTNERING ARRANGEMENTS

It was explained that the Director of Housing together with the Head of Housing Property Services, were present at the meeting to outline progress and, to answer any queries. (For copy of presentation see file of minutes.

Members were reminded that at its meeting on 24th June 2008 the Committee had identified progress on housing partnering arrangements to be included within the work programme.

The Committee was informed that the partnering project contract had commenced in February 2008 and included :-

Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service
Housing Capital Programme
Private Properties Group Repair Scheme
New Build Homes
Improvements to Spennymoor Leisure Centre – Arts Resource Centre.

A detailed breakdown of jobs which had been undertaken by the Repairs and Maintenance Service since 2004 and number of jobs issued were identified. The performance of the service since April 2008 in relation to each category of repairs and maintenance was also identified. It was noted that within the service grounds maintenance to the inside curtilage of council properties was included. This was a discretionary service.

Details were given of the void turnaround time and emergency call-out statistics. It was noted that with regard to the voids turnaround time this had decreased since April 2008 from 41.66 days to 10.13 days in September 2008. In respect of emergency call-outs statistics it was noted that repairs transferred from during the day had reduced from 698 in 2007/8 to 186 between April 2008 and September 2008.

The Committee was also informed of the customer satisfaction questionnaire cumulative results from April 2007 to September 2007 compared with the same period in 2008.

Progress in relation to promises made under partnering arrangements was also outlined. Particular reference was made to efficiency savings, energy efficiency, apprenticeships, tenants handbooks and demonstration of continuous improvement. It was explained that the proposal to extend the service beyond 6.00 p.m. was being looked at. There had been a reduction of time in relation to void turnaround, a charter was to be established with Sedgefield Borough Homes and a customer resource centre was being considered.

It was noted that the Audit Commission had commented in relation to the partnership that early indications were that the Partnership was working well with high tenant satisfaction, significantly reduced design tender and

mobilisation periods and a commitment to freeze prices throughout the three years contract.

During discussion of this item a query was raised regarding financing of the repairs and maintenance service and customer satisfaction. It was explained that the majority of people were satisfied with the service. The repairs element of the contract was financed through Council rents and that element of the service would be transferred to Sedgefield Borough Homes. The remainder of the contract including the leisure element which was financed through Council Tax would be transferred to Durham County Council.

A query was also raised regarding sub-contracting and ensuring that standards of work were maintained. It was explained that a specification had been developed and sub-contractors were aware of the standards to be achieved.

Cabinet Members then left the meeting to allow the Committee to deliberate.

AGREED : That the Committee is satisfied on the progress being made on partnering arrangements.

Councillor Blenkinsopp requested that it be placed on record that he was not in support of the above decision.

H&S.17/08 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meetings held on 14th July, 2008 and 11th September, 2008. (For copies see file of Minutes).

Members were informed that NHS County Durham (formerly County Durham PCT) were undertaking a public consultation exercise "Seizing the Future" which identified proposals for changes to services at Bishop Auckland General Hospital, Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital North Durham. A number of public meetings were to be held across the County in relation to the consultation. Dates of meetings would be circulated to members.

AGREED : That the Minutes be received.

H&S.18/08 WORK PROGRAMME
Consideration was given to the Work Programme for the Healthy Borough with Strong Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (For copy see file of Minutes). An update was given on the progress on the Committee's two Review Groups Healthy Borough Review Group and Strong Communities Review Group.

AGREED : That the Work Programme be agreed.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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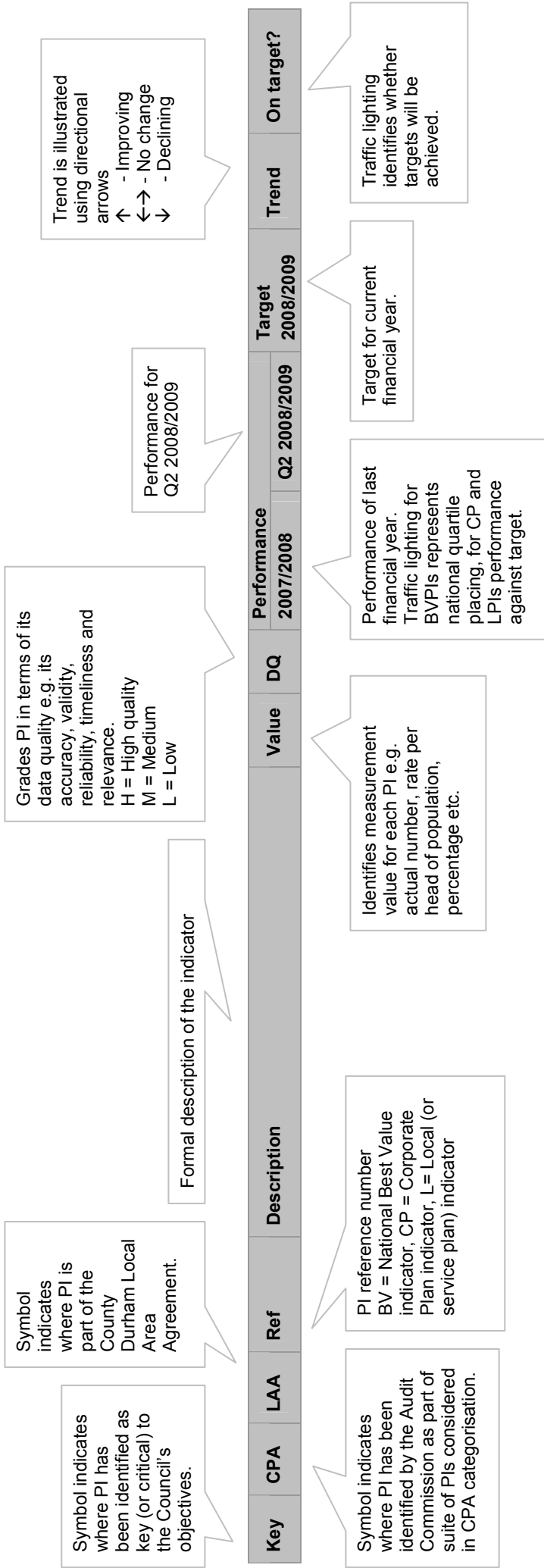


**HEALTHY BOROUGH AND STRONG COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT
2008/2009 OUTTURNS (START APRIL 2008- END SEPTEMBER 2008)**

Strategy and Regeneration
Chief Executive's Department
Sedgefield Borough Council
(01388) 816166
www.sedgefield.gov.uk
Contact: pstephens@sedgefield.gov.uk



COLUMNS OF THIS REPORT EXPLAINED



SUMMARY

Purpose of this report

This is the biannual 2008/2009 performance report, covering the period from the 01 April 2008 to 30 September 2008.

The report provides data on 35 performance indicators. 4 performance indicators are rated key to the Council's aims and objectives.

Whilst providing a full summary of performance, this is essentially an exception report, drawing attention to where performance is off (or significantly above) target to promote discussion and action. A summary of the key points is set out below.

Healthy Borough

Representative facility use performance indicators are performing well with 31.52% of under 16s and 18.81% of people from the most disadvantaged socio-economic groups using the facilities. Community alarms performance indicators are all on target. Environmental Health indicators are on target with the exception of pest control responded to within 3 days which is 1% below target.

Strong Communities

The average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days) has seen performance slip to 51 days, this is due to the impact of switching to the new arrangements of void management has resulted increased void turnaround. However, these issues have now been remedied and the turnaround has improved from previous quarter. Households presenting themselves as homeless who housing advice has resolved their situation has performed above target. 98.75% of urgent repairs were completed within Government time limits which is well above the 2008/09 target of 88%. Satisfaction with new let properties remains on target at 80%. Homeless applications remain low at 9 made since April 2008 due to the focus on prevention.

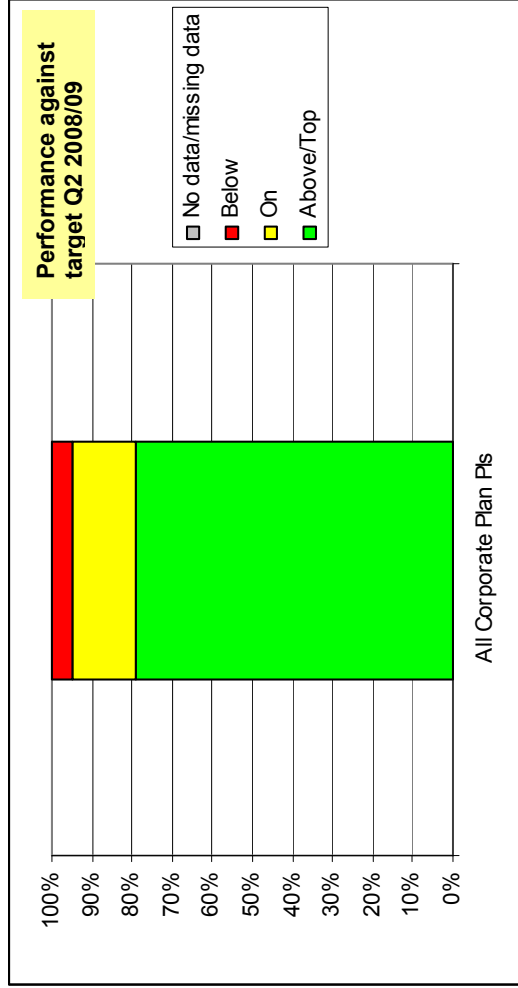
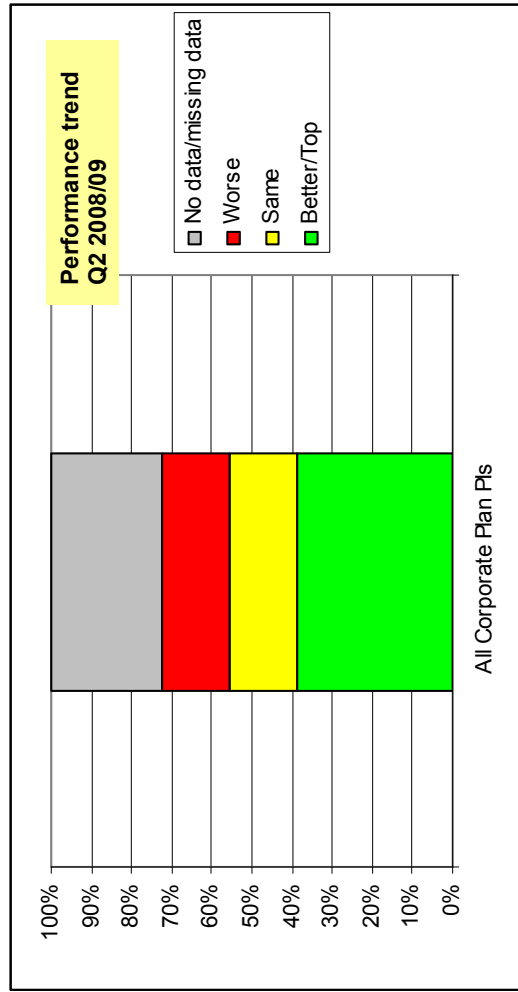
HEALTHY BOROUGH

2008/09 Performance

Of 18 indicators, 7 have demonstrated improved performance against 2007/2008 actual outturns, 3 have performed at the same level and 3 have performed at a worse level. 15 indicators have progressed well against the 2008/2009 targets and 1 was off target. Narrative for the 'exception indicators' is included in the table overleaf.

Indicator type	Total No.	QUARTILE			TREND				TARGET			
		Top	Average		Better/Top	Same	Worse	No data/missing data	Above/Top	On	Below	No data/missing data
			Below	Bottom								
All Corporate Plan PIs	18	Not applicable			7	3	3	5	15	3	1	0

* Using 2006/07 quartile data, 2007/08 quartile data not yet released



HEALTHY BOROUGH PI TABLE

Key	CPA	LAA	Ref	Description	Value	DQ	Performance		Target 2008/2009	Trend	On target?
							2007/2008	Q2 2008/2009			
Objective: Improved public health											
			CPH01	Pest Control - Percentage of pest control complaints responded to within 3 days	%	H	95%	92%	92%	↓	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			CPH02	General PH- Percentage of general public health complaints responded to within 3 days	%	H	97%	97%	93%	↔	Yes
			CPH03	Air Pollution- the number of authorised premises inspected within the year	%	H	100%	100%	100%	↑	Yes
			CPH06	Representative facility use by young people under 16	%	M	29.51%	31.52%	27%	↑	Yes
			CPH07	Representative facility use by young women 11-19	%	M	4.10%	2.37%	1.9%	↓	Yes
			CPH08	Representative facility use by young women aged 17-25	%	M	2.36%	2.78%	2.40%	↑	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			CPH09	Representative facility use by people from the most disadvantaged socio-economic groups	%	M	16.37%	18.81%	17%	↑	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			CPH10	Representative facility use by people aged over 50	%	M	9.78%	10.87%	10%	↑	Yes
			CPH11	Representative facility use by people from black and ethnic minorities	%	M	1.30%	1.31%	1.30%	↑	Yes
			CPH12	Proportion of facility use by disabled people	%	M	2.59%	2.18%	2.60%	↓	No
				Comment: - Performing 0.42% under target. The quarter 2 figure has dipped due to some clubs (e.g. indoor bowling) suspending activities during summer break.							
			CPH13	Percentage of population that are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk – rural areas – by car) of a range of three different facility types, of which one has achieved a quality assured standard	%	L	27.70%	+40%	40%	↑	Yes
				Comment: - Performing on target. Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre gaining Quest accreditation in June 2008 (figure has been calculated by SBC GIS team).							
			CPH14	Percentage of population that are within 15 minutes walking time from a NPFA accredited playground	%	L	79%	79%	79%	↔	Yes
			CPH15	Subsidy per visit	£	H	£3.00	£3.00	£3.25	↔	Yes
				Comment: - Performing 25p under the subsidy target. This figure is likely to rise from quarter 3 onwards due to increased unit energy costs.							

HEALTHY BOROUGH PI TABLE

Key	CPA	LAA	Ref	Description	Value	DQ	Performance		Target 2008/2009	Trend	On target?
							2007/2008	Q2 2008/2009			
Objective: Increased independent living											
			CPH17	Community alarms - Emergency incidents responded to within 30 minutes	%	H	N/A	96.5%*	98.00%	N/A	Yes
			CPH18	Community alarms - Non emergency incidents responded to within 60 minutes	%	H	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	Yes
			CPH19	Community alarms - Non-life critical calls to be answered within 60 seconds	%	H	N/A	97.00%*	98.50%	N/A	Yes
			CPH20	Community alarms - Telephone calls answered within 2 minutes	%	H	N/A	98.00%*	100%	N/A	Yes
			CPH21	Community alarms - Service users receiving at least one quarterly visit	%	H	N/A	94.50%*	95%	N/A	Yes

* Tolerances have been set for this indicator at +/- 2%

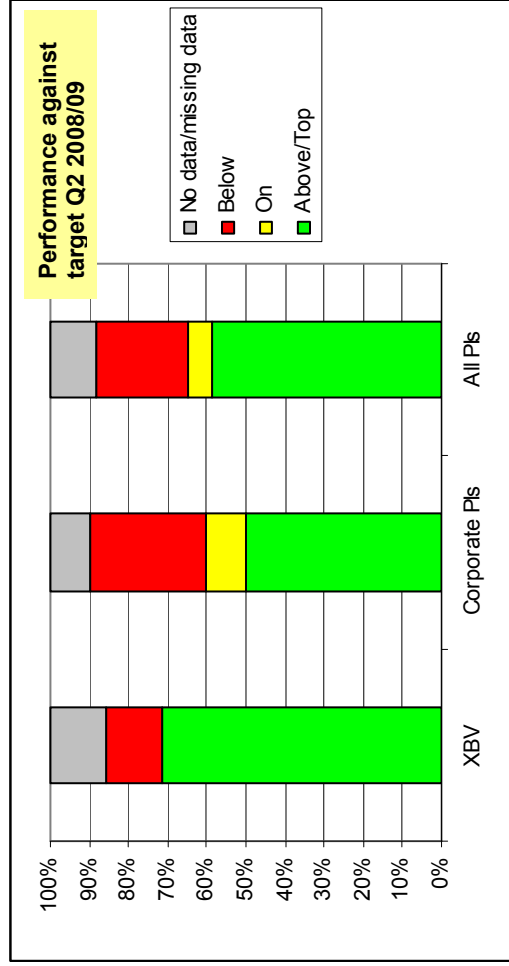
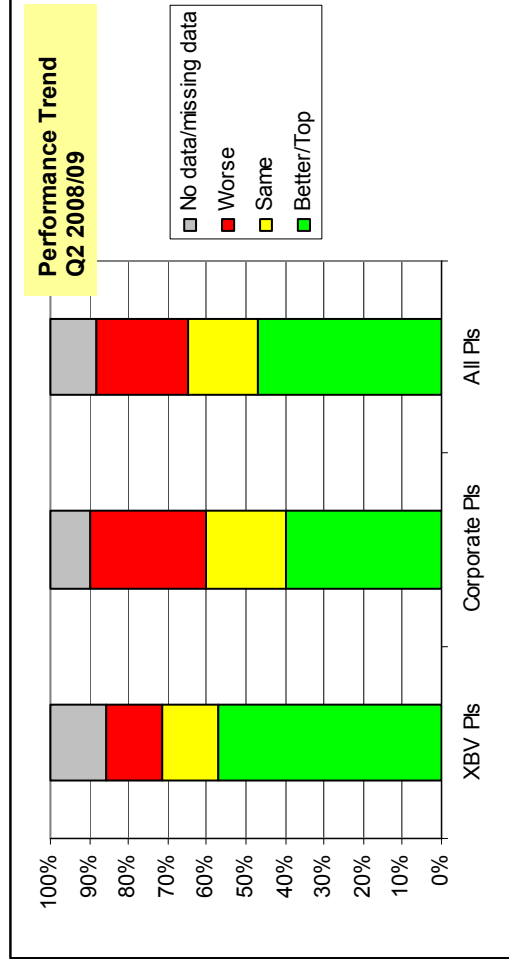
STRONG COMMUNITIES

2008/09 Performance

Of 17 indicators, 8 have demonstrated improved performance against 2007/2008 actual outturns, 3 are performing at the same level and 4 are performing at a worse level. 10 indicators are performing above 2008/2009 targets and 4 are under target. Narrative for the 'exception indicators' is included in the performance indicator table overleaf.

Indicator type	Total No.	QUARTILE*				TREND				TARGET				
		Top	Average		Bottom	No data/missing data	Better/Top	Same	Worse	No data/missing data	Above/Top	On	Below	No data/missing data
			Above	Below										
Ex Best Value PIs	7	5	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	0	1	1
Corporate Plan PIs	10	Not applicable				4	2	3	1	5	1	3	1	1
All	17	5	0	0	1	1	3	4	2	10	1	4	2	

* Using 2006/07 quartile data, 2007/08 quartile data not yet released



STRONG COMMUNITIES PI TABLE

Key	LAA	Ref	Description	Value	DQ	Performance		Target	Trend	On target?
						2007/2008	Q2 2008/2009			
			Objective: Quality, affordable and sustainable housing							
		XBV066 (a)	Proportion of rent collected	%	H	99.09%	94.85%	98.80%	N/A	N/A
			Comment: - This performance indicator is an annual calculation which cannot be accurately calculated quarterly due to rent being collected at different intervals throughout the year.							
		XBV066 (b)	Number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants	%	H	3.32%	3.01%	3.75%	↑	Yes
		XBV066 (c)	Percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	%	H	20.13%	13.74%	20.00%	↑	Yes
		XBV066 (d)	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	%	H	0.15%	0.15%	0.20%	↔	Yes
		XBV183 (b)	Average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	Weeks	H	0	0	0	↑	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		XBV212	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	Days	H	41	51	29	↓	No
			Comment: - Performing 22 days under target. The impact of switching to new arrangements of void management has resulted in increased void turnaround. These issues have now been remedied and the turnaround has improved from previous quarter (69 days).							
		XBV213	Number of households who considered themselves as homeless, for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation	No.	H	8	10	5	↑	Yes
		CPS02	% Urgent repairs completed within Government time limits	%	H	89%	98.75%	88%	↑	Yes
		CPS03	Satisfaction with condition of new let properties	%	M	78%	80%	80%	↑	Yes
		CPS04	Proportion of private sector vacant dwellings (which have been empty over six months as at 1st April) that are returned to use during the financial year with Council involvement	%	H	0%	0%	15%	↔	No
			Comment: - Performing 15% below target. The Empty Homes Strategy was approved by Cabinet (9.10.08) which will assist with bringing empty private sector homes that fall within the appropriate criteria back into use.							
		CPS06	Number of homeless applications	No.	H	26	9	160	↑	Yes
			Comment: - Performing 151 applications above target. Homeless applications have continued to reduce due to the increased preventative measures.							

STRONG COMMUNITIES PI TABLE

Key	LAA	Ref	Description	Value	DQ	Performance		Target	Trend	On target?
						2007/2008	Q2 2008/2009			
Objective: Quality, affordable and sustainable housing										
		CPS07	Number of homeless applications from 16-17 year olds	No.	H	2	2	35	↔	Yes
		CPS09	Average time taken to complete non-urgent repairs	Days	H	29	21.23	22	↑	Yes
		CPS11	Percentage of rent lost through dwellings becoming vacant	%	H	1.00%	1.45%	0.90%	↓	No
			Comment: - Performing 0.55% under target. The impact of switching to new arrangements of void management has resulted increased void rent loss. These issues have now been remedied.							
		CPS12	Rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the authority's rent roll	%	H	1.56%	1.63%	1.75%	↓	Yes
		CPS14	Percentage of homelessness applications decided and notified within 33 working days	%	H	90%	89%	93%	↓	No
			Comment: - Performing 4% under target. The success of prevention measures in the statutory homeless applications submitted are often more complex cases and require further investigatory work, therefore often lengthening the timescale before a final decision can be reached on qualification.							
Objective: Safer neighbourhoods										
		CPS08	Number of reported Domestic Abuse repeat victimisations	No.	M	563	*	350	N/A	N/A
		N/A – Not applicable								

* Figure was not available at the time this report was produced, awaiting figure to be confirmed by Police.

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SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW

STATE OF THE BOROUGH
(HEALTHY BOROUGH)

Report of the Review Group

Members of the Review Group

Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp (Chairman)

Councillor B. Haigh

Councillor J.E. Higgin

Councillor T. Ward

Councillor Mrs. E.M. Wood

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SUMMARY

Background

Following an extensive community appraisal and consultation a Community Strategy for Sedgefield Borough was published by the Local Strategic Partnership in 2004. The Strategy identifies the key economic, social and environmental issues facing the Borough and sets out a vision for the Borough in 2014 as a 'Healthy, Prosperous and Attractive Borough with Strong Communities'.

It is structured around these four aims, setting out a number of supporting priorities and targets to be addressed under which specific service improvements will be developed.

Four years after the first publication of the Community Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committees decided to undertake a review to look at quality of life issues within the Community Strategy. This is particularly useful in the final year of the Authority as these issues can be benchmarked for future reference. The review also provided Members with the opportunity to make recommendations, where appropriate, to the new Authority.

The review was broken down into sections covering the four key ambitions. Overview and Scrutiny Committees established review groups to look at key ambitions relevant to their responsibilities.

The reviews looked at achievements, gaps/deficiencies in provision and areas in need of improvement.

Each review group produced a report setting out its finding and recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.

The reports will be combined to form a 'State of the Borough' report which will be a useful source of reference for the new Council and will provide a benchmark for future assessment.

Membership of the Review

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp (Chairman) and
Councillors B. Haigh, J.E. Higgin, T. Ward and Mrs. E.M. Wood

Objectives

- To look at both Council and 'other agency' services.
- To highlight areas working well and areas for improvement.
- To make recommendations via Cabinet to the new Council.

Contribution to Council's Ambitions and Community Outcomes

'A Borough where people can lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities.'

Process/Methodology

The Review Group gathered evidence and information as follows:-

- Presentations from officers
- Questioning officers
- Statistical data from the Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy Overarching Framework 2007/2010
- Feedback from Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) event

WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY BOROUGH?

This section of the report sets out the progress made by the Council and its partners towards achieving the ambition of a **Healthy Borough**.

The definition of a Healthy Borough is 'a borough where people can lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities'.

The Corporate Plan 2007-2010 and the Transition Plan June 2008 – April 2009 set out the following key objectives in relation to the above ambition:

- Safeguarding public health
- Promoting independent living
- Creating leisure opportunities
- Promoting cultural activities

The Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership has also identified the following as its key priorities:

- Improving the health and wellbeing of local communities
- Improving health and social care services

The following quality of life topics which influence the Health of the Borough's residents are examined in detail:

- Public Health
- Community Care
- Leisure and Culture

PUBLIC HEALTH

Key Statistics

- Life expectancy in Sedgefield Borough is around 1 year less than the national average for men and 2 years less for women
- Men in the Sedgefield Borough live 75.8 years compared to the national average of 76.9 years
- Women in Sedgefield Borough live 79.0 years compared to the national average of 81.1 years
- Only 16.8% of adults in Sedgefield Borough take part in physical activity 3x30 minutes a week compared to the national average of 21%
- 14.7% of 10-11 years olds in Sedgefield Borough are over weight and 22.12% are obese
- Approximately 24.6% of residents in Sedgefield Borough binge drink compared to the national average of 18.2%

What we know about Sedgefield Borough

Health deprivation in Sedgefield Borough is high with 24.84% of the local community identifying themselves as experiencing limitations due to health problems in the 2001 census. This makes improving health and reducing health inequalities key priorities for the Council.

Life expectancy in Sedgefield Borough is around one year less than the national average for men and two years less than the national average for women.

Men in the Borough live 75.8 years compared to the national average of 76.9 years. Male life expectancy differs greatly between wards in the Borough. The gap between the best (Tudhoe – 81.2 years) and the worst wards (Bishop Middleham and Cornforth – 68 years) is 13.2 years.

The wards experiencing the lowest male life expectancy in the Borough are Bishop Middleham and West Cornforth (68 years), Ferryhill (71.4 years) and Byerley (72.8 years).

Females live 79.0 years compared to the national average of 81.1 years. The gap between the best (Low Spennymoor and Tudhoe Grange – 83.6 years) and worst wards (Greenfield Middridge – 74.7 years) is 8.9 years.

The wards experiencing the lowest female life expectancy in the Borough are Greenfield Middridge (74.7 years), Ferryhill (74.8 years) and Sunnydale (76.7

years). Greenfield Middridge has the lowest female life expectancy in County Durham.

The death rate from smoking and early deaths from heart disease, strokes and cancer all contribute to the reduced life expectancy.

The high smoking rate in Sedgefield Borough is closely linked to lung cancer, which is the most prevalent type of cancer in Borough. It is interesting to note that although the smoking rate amongst men in the Borough has reduced, it has increased amongst females.

Levels of physical activity in the Borough are low with only 16% of adults participating in physical activity 3x30 minutes a week compared to 31% nationally.

Childhood obesity is also an issue that needs addressing at both a local and national level. The data, which is captured at both reception and year 6, indicates that 14.7% of 10-11 year olds are over weight and 22.12% are obese.

Alcohol consumption in the Borough is higher than the national average. Approximately 24.6% of residents binge drink compared to the national average of 18.2%.

Although the teenage conception rate has remained static from 1998-2005 Sedgefield Borough still remains one of the highest across County Durham.

The Borough's teenage conception rate was 56.3 per 1,000 15-17 year old females in the 2003-05 period. This was very high in comparison to the national average of 41.6 over the same period.

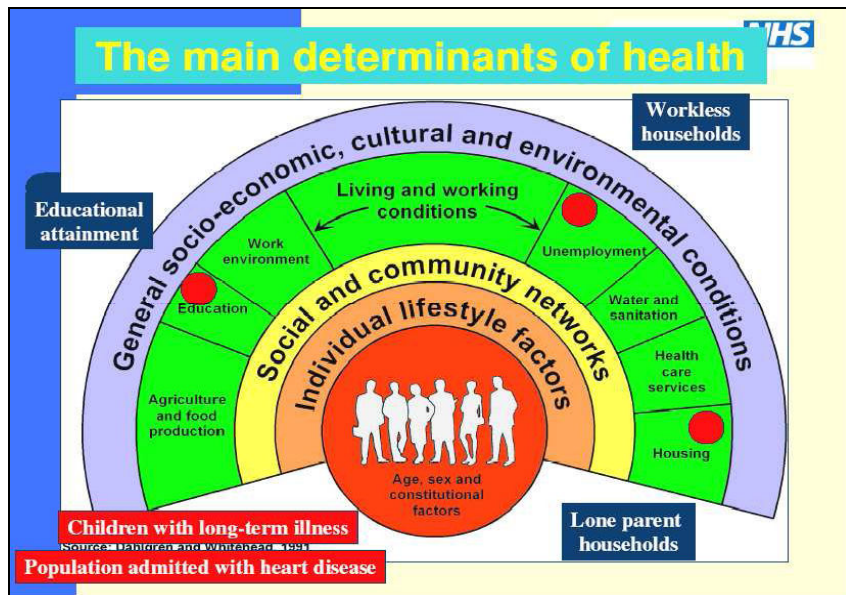
The prevalence of mental health issues across the Borough is significant compared to the national average. In 2004-06 the rate for the Borough was 7.07 per 100,000 compared to the regional average of 6.21 and the national average of 5.81 per 100,000.

Addressing health inequalities is a complex issue. The health of an individual is often determined by their circumstances. Inequalities in opportunities lifestyle choices and access to services all have an impact.

The main determinants of health include:-

- General socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions
- Social and community networks
- Individual lifestyle factors

In many cases individuals don't have an influence over their health. For example men and women suffer different types of diseases at different ages and inheritance plays a part in determining lifestyle, healthiness and the likelihood of developing certain illnesses.



(County Durham and Darlington Primary Care Trust)

Current and Planned activities

The Sedgefield Health Improvement Action Plan 2008/09

In order to address the issues surrounding health deprivation in Sedgefield Borough the PCT, in partnership with other agencies through the local Area agreement including all local authorities in County Durham, County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospital Trust, Tees Esk and Wear Valley Health Trust, the North East Ambulance Service and the voluntary and community sector, have established the Sedgefield Health Improvement Action Plan 2008/09. The action plan seeks to address the following:-

Cardio Vascular Disease (CVD) Primary Prevention

A countywide initiative has been set up to assess people aged 40-74 years at high risk of developing CVD over the next 10 year period. Although it is expected that this initiative will be rolled out to other age ranges this age group was chosen based on National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance.

The initiative is being led by the PCT and signposts into appropriate lifestyle and/or pharmaceutical interventions. This includes working with GP's and practise based commissioning.

The lifestyle interventions include encouraging people to exercise, weight management, reduce alcohol and stop smoking. It is recognised that the right interventions need to be in place to prevent people getting ill.

In order to reach the most marginalised and difficult to engage people social marketing research needs to take place.

Cancer Prevention and Support Information

Within Easington District there is a Cancer Information Centre which can be accessed by members of the public. The Centre provides information and support to patients and families of those suffering from this illness.

There is no acute hospital situated within Sedgefield Borough and many people, especially in the rural east of the Borough, have difficulties with transport. In order to ensure that both patients and families have appropriate support during these difficult times a similar cancer support model is being developed in the Pioneering Care Centre at Newton Aycliffe. The location of the cancer support centre is critical as it must be easily accessible to all members of the public.

The aim of the information centre is to raise awareness, peer education on self examination, increase awareness of signs and symptoms, and how to access screening and further support.

Stop Smoking and Tobacco Control

As mentioned earlier in the report, Sedgefield Borough has high rates of smoking. In order to address this County Durham Primary Care Trust has developed the Sedgefield Tobacco Control Alliance. Stop smoking services have also been established in priority areas such as Shildon and priority groups such as routine and manual workers.

The amount of officers trained as intermediate stop smoking advisors has been increased and no smoking days and other media campaigns are being coordinated.

As well as increasing awareness about second hand smoke and tobacco control, education is taking place within schools. This was piloted in Sedgefield Borough which has been well received.

Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health

Although the Boroughs teenage conception rate has remained static since 1998 (56.3 per 1,000 15-17 year old females), the rate is still high compared to the national average (41.6 per 1,000 15-17 year old females) and is the worst in County Durham.

A lot of good work has however been carried out within schools and colleges in the Borough and this must be maintained and further developed. This includes the Personal, Social, Health Education Programmes in schools and delivering sexual health services in colleges and sixth forms. These services are provided by the Primary Care Public Health Team.

In order to address levels of teenage pregnancies £100,000 was allocated from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) to create a holistic and co-ordinated response to reduce teenage pregnancies and support teenage parents.

Although there were problems, particularly around the employment of a Boys and Young Men's worker which was delayed, other initiatives were introduced to

engage young men including contraceptive awareness week and a confidential and anonymous text helpline for young men to get advice, support and information about sexual health.

Family planning clinics have also changed their name to CASH (Contraception and Sexual Health) to move away from the traditional and female focus.

The funding was also used to increase the sexual health advice capacity in schools and make GP services more young people friendly.

In addition NVQ level 3 training and UNICEF training is being developed for professionals working with young people, together with a multi agency model of support from antenatal to postnatal care. This includes obstetricians, midwives, health visitors, PCT and Sure Start.

Sedgefield Sporting Hub

The PCT is currently working towards increasing the amount of girls and young women aged 16-25 years taking part in sporting activities. The Council is a key player in this process and has developed, in partnership with the PCT and Sport England, the Young Women's Sport and Active Recreation Programme.

This programme, which is part funded by the Borough Council, was developed after it was recognised that there was a shortfall in sporting activities for this age range. It is hoped that by finding out what sporting activities young women would like to participate in and making these activities easily accessible, the amount of young women participating in sporting activities will increase.

A 'go green' cycling and walking initiative is also being developed which is integrated with the exercise referral programmes.

The Sedgefield sporting hub also aims to increase participation of the over 50's population through the living well scheme. This scheme is in the early stages and consultation is currently ongoing between the key partners including the PCT, Sedgefield Borough Council, Age Concern, Pioneering Care Partnership and Carelink. Tai chi taster sessions have been held and taster sessions are currently being arranged in Council Leisure Centres.

Obesity

Obesity is both a national and international problem. Improving the diet and nutrition of pregnant women and early years is essential, especially as obesity can be an issue even before birth.

The North East regional weaning programme is being rolled out which encourages home cooking. All agencies are required to adhere to the newly updated healthy eating guidelines to ensure a consistent message is given to parents and guardians.

Not only is the PCT supporting schools and colleges with healthy eating policies inline with national healthy school standards, work is also ongoing to promote and improve healthy eating within work places.

The PCT firmly believes that a holistic approach is required to deal with obesity effectively from prevention to treatment. The functions of different organisations need to work together and share their priorities through the LSP.

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing relates to anything non clinical e.g. the GP referral fit for life scheme which give people opportunities that will help guide them to lead a healthier lifestyle.

The basic model of social prescribing is referring patients to non-medical facilities and services in the Community that can help improve their health and wellbeing. This also involves targeting specific groups of people who may not normally take up medical advice or care that they require, finding out why they don't access services and what would make them access services.

Sedgefield Borough is piloting the centralising of social prescribing opportunities to engage GP's, Clinicians and support staff to consider prescribing social and leisure activities.

As part of this pilot scheme a web based menu of activities is being made available to GP practices during 2008. This will identify the range of options that is available to the primary care provider and identify concessionary access for those who qualify.

The web based menu of activities will be made available to three GP practices in Spennymoor before being rolled out across the rest of the Borough.

Communities for Health

Communities for Health funding is provided by the Government and aims to coordinate public health approaches to reducing health inequalities and improving the health of local communities.

Although local authorities receive the funding its use must be based on partnership working. It is used to build partnerships between organisations and communities and engages communities in their own health in order to develop a capacity to support individual behaviour for healthier lifestyles.

The current communities for health funding is being used to facilitate health courses to improve peoples skills and knowledge.

Mental Health

Countywide activities, involving Sedgefield Borough, the PCT and other local authorities, are currently ongoing to address the issues of mental health. These activities are as follows:-

Mental Health Improvement Strategic Priorities

The following priorities have been adopted to assist in the development of mental health improvement across County Durham and Darlington:-

- Development and use of information and intelligence
- Development of effective partnerships with commissioning
- Increasing capacity of services to respond to the mental health needs of the population

The priorities do not set out specific activity as this is designed locally against priorities in partnership with local partners. The local actions are embedded within local action plans and are monitored through the County wide mental health improvement group. The PCT work in partnership with key partners from a variety of organisations including the community and voluntary sector through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Mental Health and Wellbeing Profiling

A high level profile of mental health and wellbeing, including information on a range of vulnerability factors for mental health such as teenage pregnancies, alcohol and worklessness, has been drafted for County Durham.

As part of the next stage more detailed community level data will be developed in order to support local service development and commissioning. Across the whole of County Durham, Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) groups will be asked to consider the type of community data that would be useful in their practice.

Social Prescribing

Funding has been secured through the PCT's annual operating plan for social prescribing. It is intended that patients with low level mental health problems will be prescribed arts based services.

Mental Health First Aid

As part of the regional Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund, a consortium of Mind organisations has been commissioned to deliver mental health first aid training. This involves providing individuals with skills to provide help support and advices to individuals in mental distress.

Key target groups include front line health and social care staff, leisure services, employers, the criminal justice system, the voluntary sector and community leaders.

115 training sessions will be delivered free of charge to priority organisations up to March 2011.

Mental Health Training and Development Programme

This programme, which aims to better equip non specialist front line health staff with skills in mental health improvement, will be ongoing between September 2008 and May 2009.

The course will combine formal learning in stress management and mental health promotion with voluntary sector placements and elective additional training.

Partnership Working

It is evident when reviewing the topic of public health that partnership working is required to improve public health.

All stakeholders are currently brought together through the Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) where the main health priority is to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities. The LSP believes that local people should be engaged in all aspects of their health care which is done through the Local Involvement Networks.

The Health thematic group of the LSP has amalgamated with the Sedgefield Borough Practice Based Commissioning Group to ensure that commissioning is carried out in line with the LSP's priorities.

Conclusions

Taking into account all the information provided the Review Group concluded that:-

- The overall health of the population of the Borough is poor compared to the national average.
- The reasons for health differences can be summarised as inequalities in opportunity, inequalities in lifestyle choice and inequalities in access to services.
- The lifestyle choices of local people in particular have a negative impact on premature mortality and life expectancy.
- Teenage pregnancies remain an issue for the Borough.
- Although statistically the Borough of Sedgefield appears to be an unhealthy place to live, through working in partnership, action is being taken to halt the poor indices of health across the entire Borough.

Recommendation

That the PCT continue working in partnership with relevant residents and organisations to further reduce the inequalities in opportunities, lifestyle choices and access to services, which all have an impact on public health in Sedgefield Borough.

COMMUNITY CARE

Key Statistics

- In 2006/07 within Sedgefield Borough, 7.9 per 1000 adult population (aged 18-64 years) had physical disabilities
- In 2006/07 within Sedgefield Borough, 116.5 per 1000 population of older people (aged 65+) were helped to live at home
- The 2001 Census indicated that the percentage of residents providing more than 1 hour of unpaid care per week was 11.83%
- The 2001 Census indicated that the percentage of residents providing more than 20 hours of unpaid care per week was 4.68%

What we know about Sedgefield Borough

Community care can be defined as assisting people to maintain their independence. There are numerous organisations providing community care including Sedgefield Borough Council through the Carelink Monitoring and Response service and housing support services, the County Durham Primary Care Trust by providing health care to residents and Social Care and Health by providing support to vulnerable residents.

Sedgefield Borough has an increasingly ageing population and a significant number of people who suffer from disability and long term limiting illness.

Within Sedgefield Borough in 2006/2007 there were:-

- 7.9 per 1,000 adult population (aged 18-64 years old) with physical disabilities compared to the County Durham average of 8.9 and the national average of 121.3.
- 116.5 per 1,000 population of older people (aged 65+) were helped to live at home compared to the County Durham average of 12.5 and the national average of 80.

At the 2001 Census it was indicated that:-

- the percentage of residents providing more than 1 hour of unpaid care per week was 11.83%. This was 5% higher than the national average of 6.8%.
- The percentage of residents providing more than 20 hours of unpaid care per week was 4.68%, 1.57% higher than the national average.

This information indicated that the standard of community care in Sedgefield Borough enabled people to live at home longer.

Current and Planned Activities

When examining community care in Sedgefield Borough the review group focused on the Sedgefield Adult Community Care Partnership (Integrated Teams) and the Carelink Monitoring and Response Service.

The Sedgefield Adult Community Care Partnership – Integrated Teams

The Sedgefield integrated teams were established in 2004 after it was recognised that a number of organisations provided services that would be better provided if they were linked together. The partnership was established to provide seamless health, social care and housing services to the adults and older people of Sedgefield Borough.

A number of documents were considered, including the NHS Plan, National Service Framework – Older Persons, Planning and Performance Framework, Local delivery Plans and Supporting People Agenda, and it was apparent that although they were from different organisations they all focused on the wellbeing of individuals and gave the same message. The commonalities indicated that working in partnership was essential in order to secure the health and well-being of its communities and there was certainly a case for improved integrated working in local communities.

The partnership now means that social workers, District Nurses, and housing support staff now work in integrated teams across the Borough. This incorporates a single assessment process for service users that reduces duplication and speeds up responses for people who often have multiple service needs. The integrated teams support the Council's ambition of Healthy Borough by improving Health and Social Care services.

The integrated teams are used by adults over the age of 18 years who are vulnerable due to:-

- Physical ill health including those with continuing health care needs.
- Physical frailty/disability including sensory impairment.
- Older people with mental health problems.

It is important to note that the integrated teams are not Care Trusts but a voluntary agreement to work in an integrated way managed by a partnership board.

There are five integrated teams based across Sedgefield Borough, each providing services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The integrated teams continue to meet community needs from prevention to direct service provision. They act as a one stop service team, capable of delivering both efficient preventative actions within their local community.

In order to work in an integrated way there needed to be sharing of data. The merger of the health care system and housing system was the first of its case.

The integrated teams have been very successful. This is reflected in *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, DoH. 30th January 2006*, where the Sedgefield integration model was identified as a case study.

The teams provide residents with a flexible, open referral route into the system where users and carers receive holistic support and can actually see improved performance.

Since the establishment of the Integrated Teams, each organisation involved in the partnership has reported improved performance through their performance indicators. This indicates that partnership working is required in order to provide the best service.

The Sedgefield model of integration has informed a roll out of Service Integration which is currently being implemented across the whole of County Durham.

Sedgefield Borough Carelink Monitoring and Response (M &R) Service

As a result of the increasing ageing population in Sedgefield Borough, a key challenge to social care and health services in the Borough is to promote independence and provide personalised services for elderly and vulnerable residents which enables them to live in their own homes for as long as possible. The Sedgefield Borough Carelink Monitoring and Response Service contributes to this.

Carelink M&R provides a high quality community alarm service to older and vulnerable people in Wear Valley, Sedgefield, Derwentside and Teesdale areas.

Until 2003 the Carelink Monitoring and Response service was funded by Sedgefield Borough Council's Housing Revenue Account. However in 2003 it became Supporting People funded. Additional income is also generated from private clients.

In addition Sedgefield Borough Council provides the Carelink Supported Housing Service which provides non supporting people funded services principally in sheltered housing schemes and is exclusively funded by the Council's Housing Revenue Account.

The objectives of the Carelink Monitoring and Response service are as follows:-

- Promote and support independent living
- Provide the means to allow people to remain at home
- Provide support and emergency response 7 days a week 365 days a year.
- Reduce the burden on carers/hospitals, GP's and Social care and Health.
- Contribute to maintaining quality of life
- Promote integrated working

Recently a number of changes have been made to the Carelink standards. The original standards have been replaced by core/medium/high to reflect the level of monitoring required according to a needs based assessment.

These changes have resulted in supporting people no longer funding the on site warden element of Carelink services resulting in a change in emphasis which has seen a reduction in planned home visits and the frequency of reassurance calls. The amount of planned home visits and reassurance calls are now based on the need of the client.

An independent living assessment takes place for all Carelink Clients. This includes a face to face interview and a needs based assessment. The assessment takes into account other services e.g. home care and family support. The client is also reassessed every 3 months or on change in need.

Although there has been a change in service due to the new supporting people contract there is a regular review of need and service level. The level of service can be enhanced above the supporting people standard to take into account temporary changes in support e.g. family holidays etc.

Over the years the equipment used by Carelink has been developed as technological advances have been made. Originally clients were simply provided with a pull cord to alert wardens if there was a problem. Although pull cords are still used improvements in technology now mean that homes can be fitted with equipment such as fall detectors, smoke alarms, flood detectors, temperature extreme sensors, natural gas detectors, bogus caller buttons, motion detectors, sounder beacons and carbon monoxide detectors. All these changes mean that the elderly and vulnerable can live at home longer.

Over the first period of the Supporting people contract Carelink attended approximately 3000 emergency incidents. 95% were attended to within 20 minutes and 100% were attended to within the contract response time of 60 minutes. 100% of independent living assessments have been carried out and 2500 equipment checks have taken place. 98.5% of calls were answered within 60 seconds.

At the end of the first period of the Supporting people contract 2000 customer satisfaction surveys were issued. There was a 10% response rate which indicated that 95-98% of users were satisfied with the service.

The current Supporting People contract is set for 2007/2010 with a 2 year extended option. There will also be a review of the community alarm and other related services in 2009.

The Supported Housing Service within Housing Department provides non – supporting people funded services principally in sheltered housing schemes and is exclusively funded from the Housing Revenue Account.

Conclusion

Taking into account all the information provided the Review Group concluded:-

- That both the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership and the Carelink Monitoring and Response Service provide independence for the elderly and vulnerable residents enabling them to live in their own home for longer.
- That the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership provides seamless health, social care and housing services to the elderly and vulnerable residents of the Borough.
- That partnership working through the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership, has improved the quality of service for residents of the Borough.

Recommendation

That the value of joint working arrangements, such as

- Sedgefield adult and community care partnership
- Service integration models
- Supporting people service functions – Carelink M&R

which allow some of the most vulnerable in our communities to be supported at home be recognised.

LEISURE AND CULTURE

Key Statistics

- 16.8% of Sedgefield Borough residents participate in moderate exercise three times a week or more
- 69% of Sedgefield Borough residents are satisfied with the Council's Leisure facilities
- In 2006/07 there were 10,895 people participating in a cultural activity in the Borough
- 21.3% of respondents had used museums and galleries in the last 12 months, 14.1% of respondents had previously used a museum or gallery and 39.7% had never used these facilities.

What we know about Sedgefield Borough

It is recognised that leisure and culture activities make a significant contribution to both the personal health and development of an area.

Despite a having a strong portfolio of leisure facilities within Sedgefield Borough there are low levels of physical activity. The results of the 2006 Active people survey undertaken by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England found that only 16.8% of the population participate in moderate exercise three times a week or more. This is the lowest in the region and 4.2% below the national average.

The principal barriers to exercise are identified as health problems, lack of motivation and work commitments. Incentives to exercise are lower cost facilities and/or improved transport to existing facilities.

Sedgefield Borough has four Council owned leisure centres situated in Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Ferryhill and Shildon. In addition a Town Council leisure centre is situated in Newton Aycliffe. A best value survey in 2006 identified that resident satisfaction with the Councils leisure facilities is 69%. 89.22% of residents thought that sport and leisure had stayed the same or improved over recent years.

With regard to culture in Sedgefield Borough, the general survey indicated that only 21.3% of respondents had used museums and galleries in the last 12 months, 14.1% of respondents had previously used a museum or gallery and 39.7% had never used these facilities.

Despite levels of physical activity in Sedgefield Borough being low in 2007/08 approximately 1,003,873 visits were made to the Councils Leisure Centre. Although the Leisure Centres are accountable for a high amount of the Council's resources they do attract high visitor numbers.

A new fitness suite has recently been installed at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre. This was done in partnership with Competition Line. An 800 seating sports facility is also available at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre. This is the largest sports hall in County Durham and has attracted both national and international sporting events including an England v Scotland Basketball game in June 2008.

A number of sports development events have taken place at the Council Leisure Centres. A number of Snooker events, including an exhibition match between Alex Higgins and Jimmy White, have taken place at Spennymoor, Ferryhill Leisure centre is the European Headquarter for Taekwondo and Spennymoor Leisure Centre is home to the South Durham Gymnastics Centre, which it is anticipated will be used as a pre games training camp for the 2012 Olympics.

There are also a number of Community facilities within the Borough which provide leisure and culture activities which contribute to making Sedgefield Borough a healthy borough. These include:-

- Greenfield Community College
- Sedgefield Community College
- Trimdon Community College
- Oakleaf Sports Complex

Current and Planned Activities

Sports Development

Access to Services 2007-08

Within Sedgefield Borough a gym buddy and a club buddy scheme is being developed in order to improve access to a range of sporting activities for people with disabilities.

The schemes are for gym and club users to accompany disabled gym users on a regular basis and provide them with support and motivation.

The project provides pathways for people with disabilities to participate in mainstream clubs with the support of their buddy.

Gym and club buddies don't require any specific skills or qualifications. Full training will be provided along with ongoing support from qualified instructors. Although a CRB check is required this is carried out free of charge.

The Gym Buddy scheme started in December 2005 in Spennymoor Leisure Centre and has more recently been set up in Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre. There are currently five Gym Buddies.

The club buddy scheme will be rolled out in September 2008 and will be piloted in the following 5 clubs together with disability activity sessions before being assessed and rolled out across the Borough:-

- Sedgefield 75 swim club
- South Durham Gymnastics
- Jayenell Gymnastics
- Chungdokwan Taekwondo
- Ferryhill Town youth Football Club

Club buddy volunteers are currently undertaking appropriate training and it is anticipated that there will be 10 volunteers from clubs and 10 volunteers from the Borough.

Funding

Koolkash

Koolkash is an initiative aimed at groups of young people aged 5-19 years that operate within Sedgefield Borough.

The funds purpose is to encourage children and young people to develop projects that they have identified e.g. Newton Aycliffe Junior Neighbourhood Watch, Girls on a Mission and DISC Young Carers.

Koolkash also funded the Mens Attitudes Towards Sex and Health (MASH) group in order to hold a mens event which supports the work of the PCT in reducing teenage pregnancy and improving sexual health.

When an application is made for Koolkash funding it is debated and decided upon by a committee of children, young people and adults. This system involves young people and children in decision making and local democracy.

Youth participation is essential as it provides an opportunity for youths to be involved in decisions that affect their lives and communities. The fact that Koolkash gives young people a budget makes the opportunity for them to engage in local democracy more appealing.

In 2007/08 Koolkash funded £49,000 to 44 children and young people organisations. This has benefited 7800 people. Koolkash has attracted a further £82,348 in matched funding.

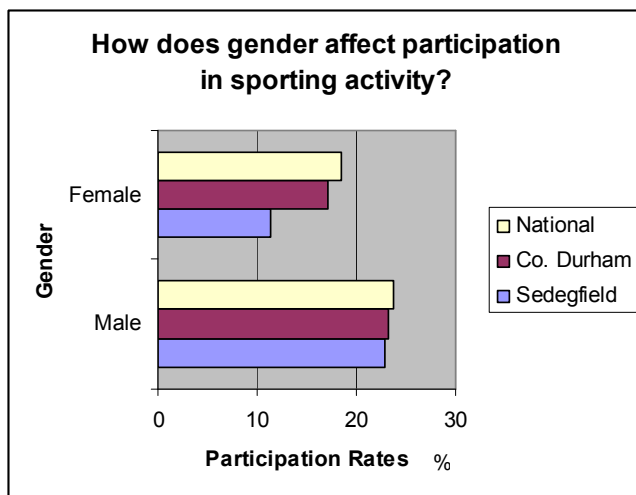
Sports Development Community Investment Fund 2007/08

The Sports Development Community Investment Funding is national lottery funding available through and managed by Sport England. Sedgefield Borough Council applied for funding and was subsequently awarded through an open application process.

Sedgefield Borough Council has been successful in applying for funds to support the following ongoing projects:-

- Young women’s sport and active recreation programme targeting 16-25 years
- Get Active Get Cycling programme (all age ranges)
- Living Well Programme (targeting over 50’s)

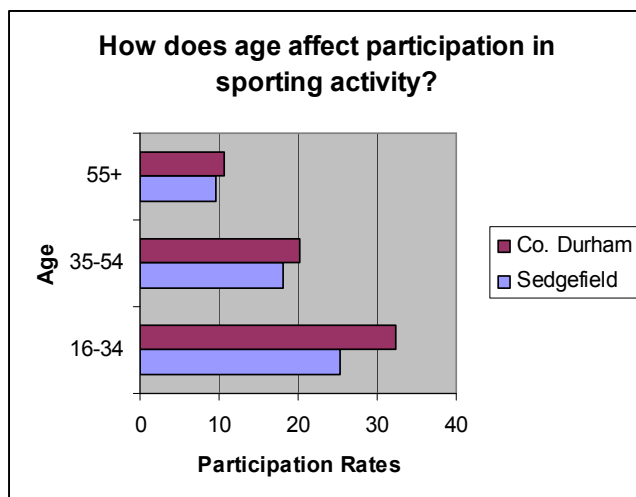
There is evidence to suggest that participation in sport is lower than expected in specific groups. Older people and women are likely to have low level of participation and involvement in sporting activities.



This graph highlights how gender affects participation in sporting activity.

22.8% of males in Sedgefield Borough participate in sporting activity compared to the national average of 23.7%

Only 11.3% of females in Sedgefield Borough participate in sporting activity compared to the national average of 18.5%.



This graph highlights the percentage of people participating in sporting activity dramatically reduces with age.

9.5% of the population aged 55+ years in Sedgefield Borough participated in sporting activity compared to 25.3% of the population aged 16-34 years.

The Council is also developing programmes targeting young women and adults over the age of 50 years as well as developing the Get Active Get Cycling Programme. The Sports Development Community Investment Fund is being used to develop these programmes.

Tourism

The annual value of tourism in Sedgefield Borough in 2006 was £72.93 million. The value of tourism is measured through the STEAM model. As figures are calculated a year in arrears the value of tourism in 2007 is still awaited. The total value of tourism in County Durham in 2006 was £600 million.

Annual visitor numbers to Sedgefield Borough was 2.5 million of which 7.6% were overnight stays compared to the County average of 8%.

The visitor attractions in Sedgefield Borough include a number of Country parks, the national hunt racecourse at Sedgefield village and the National Railway Museum at Shildon.

Locomotion

Locomotion, which opened in September 2004, is an £11 million project and is a joint venture between Sedgefield Borough Council and the National Railway Museum.

The Locomotion museum makes a significant contribution to the economic regeneration of Shildon and builds upon the work started by the Shildon SRB partnership.

Locomotion contributes to tourism across the region and has assisted in diversifying the local economy and in creating jobs. Approximately 45-72 regional jobs have been created/supported.

Locomotion is the first national museum to be built in the north east, It was developed at Shildon in recognition of the railway history of the Town.

In 2007/08 Locomotion attracted 146,856 visitors. However in order to build upon its success by increasing visitor numbers to 200,000 visits per annum, increase the economic impact to the region to £5 million and supporting a further 15-25 jobs, a second phase of the development is required.

As part of phase 2 of Locomotion the following work is required:-

- Improving/stabilising physical assets of historical importance
- Re-siting of the Gaunless Bridge from York
- Creation of new learning and skills environment designed to be a unique feature within the region

However it is anticipated that this work will not commence until after 1st April 2009.

Through investment of £600,000 a new events car park is currently being developed which will enable bigger events to be held at the museum. Environmental improvements are also being made which includes improving derelict land and parcel sheds and other landscaping and fencing works.



(The Green Arrow arriving at Locomotion)

Arts Development

The positive benefits of arts projects are well recognised. The Arts Council England's view is that the arts can have a lasting and transforming effect on many aspects of people's lives.

The Council has an important role in the local arts development and community arts given its community leadership role under the Local Government Act 2000.

A number of arts projects have/are being carried out by the council.

Spennymoor Letters and Spennymoor Signs

These are two pieces of public art supported by a variety of organisations including Sedgefield Borough Council.

The Spennymoor letters are based on poems written by local people. The piece of artwork contains 10 letter shaped poems that are used to spell out the word S-P-E-N-N-Y-M-O-O-R onto the side of various town centre buildings. This was the first piece of permanent artwork in Spennymoor.

Alongside the Spennymoor letters are the Spennymoor signs. The Spennymoor signs use the surnames of 2500 spennymoor residents on three illuminated stainless steel signs. These signs are positioned at the boundary points of the Town.

Sedgefield Borough Council co-ordinated the project in association with Commissions North.

In Our Image

This public art project has been devised by Sedgefield Borough Council, Durham County Council and Sedgefield Engineering Forum.

The artwork which has been described as the North East's next striking piece of public art will be located at Newton Aycliffe Business Park.

The towering head and shoulders will be 16m tall and is designed to look unfinished with 5 life size figures working on its construction.



'In Our image' is a symbol of the regions progressive regeneration and artist Joseph Hillier says 'the art is in value of the often undervalued work of those who build and make the materials we use everyday'.

In our image has been allocated a budget of £226,000 from the Governments Single Programme, Sedgefield Borough Councils regeneration budget and Durham County Council's Urban and Rural Renaissance initiative.

Arts Resource – Spennymoor Leisure Centre

As part of these improvements an Area Resource, to which Sedgefield Borough Council has allocated funding of £700,000 is to be developed at the Leisure Centre.

The Council aspires to use the Arts Resource as a cultural hub for the town However this relies on the bringing together of cultural sector partners within the Leisure Centre and re-engineering the delivery of public cultural services.

As part of the Spennymoor masterplan the library will be located from its position on the high street to form part of this cultural hub. Although the relocation has been agreed the timings have not yet been formalised.

The arts resource will be developed in several phases.

Phase 1 of the development will see an arts resource with a multifunctional performance and rehearsal facility seating up to 200 for drama, dance, music, film performance, a specialist dance and rehearsal space for residents and visiting performance art companies, an exhibition foyer, a bar/café facility and an artist

study.

The art resource will complement the Boroughs strategy of assembling appropriate partners who together are able to deliver effective and efficient services.

Conclusions

Taking into account all the information provided the Review Group concluded:-

- Culture and leisure activities are critical to the wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Although levels of physical activity in Sedgefield Borough are low, initiatives and projects are ongoing to increase participation in sporting activities.
- Locomotion is a major new tourist attraction of national importance which has assisted in diversifying the local economy and in creating jobs.
- In order to build on the success of Locomotion a second phase of development is required.
- The arts can have a lasting and transforming effect on many aspects of people's lives.

Recommendations

- Culture and leisure activities should be viewed as critical to the wellbeing of individuals and communities and promoted/programmed accordingly.
- That initiatives and projects encouraging participation in sporting activities, in particular those targeting difficult to engage groups such as Koolkash and the Sports Community Investment Fund, continue to be supported.
- That the development of Locomotion be continued to ensure that the cultural and economic benefits of the museum are maximised.
- That the positive benefits of the arts continue to be recognised.

Conclusions

Public Health

- The overall health of the population of the Borough is poor compared to the national average.
- The reasons for health differences can be summarised as inequalities in opportunity, inequalities in lifestyle choice and inequalities in access to services.
- The lifestyle choices of local people in particular have a negative impact on premature mortality and life expectancy.
- Teenage pregnancies remain an issue for the Borough.
- Although statistically the Borough of Sedgefield appears to be an unhealthy place to live, through working in partnership, work is ongoing to halt the poor indices of health across the entire Borough.

Community Care

- That both the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership and the Carelink Monitoring and Response Service provide independence for the elderly and vulnerable residents enabling them to live in their own home for longer.
- That the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership provides seamless health, social care and housing services to the elderly and vulnerable residents of the Borough.
- That partnership working through the Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership, has improved the quality of service for residents of the Borough.
- Which allow some of the most vulnerable in our communities to be supported at home be recognised.

Leisure and Culture

- Culture and leisure activities are critical to the wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Although levels of physical activity in Sedgefield Borough are low, initiatives and projects are ongoing to increase participation in sporting activities.
- Locomotion is a major new tourist attraction of national importance which has assisted in diversifying the local economy and in creating jobs.
- In order to build on the success of Locomotion a second phase of development is required.
- The arts can have a lasting and transforming effect on many aspects of people's lives.

Recommendations to Cabinet

Public Health

- That the PCT continue working in partnership with relevant residents and organisations to further reduce the inequalities in opportunities, lifestyle choices and access to services, which all have an impact on public health in Sedgefield Borough.

Community Care

- That the value of joint working arrangements such as:-
 1. Sedgefield Adult and Community Care Partnership
 2. Service Integration models
 3. Supporting people service functions – Carelink M&R

Which allow some of the most vulnerable in our communities to be supported at home be recognised.

Leisure and Culture

- Culture and leisure activities should be viewed as critical to the well being of individuals and communities and promoted/programmed accordingly.
- That initiatives and projects encouraging participation in sporting activities, in particular those targeting difficult to engage groups such as Koolkash and the Sports Community Investment Fund, continue to be supported.
- That the development of Locomotion be continued to ensure that the benefits of the museum are maximised.
- That the positive benefits of the arts continue to be recognised.

**HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH
STRONG COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

STATE OF THE BOROUGH
STRONG COMMUNITIES
REVIEW GROUP REPORT
NOVEMBER 2008

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Introduction

The Borough's Community Strategy identifies four key ambitions, Healthy, Strong, Prosperous and Attractive, which forms a statement of '*Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive borough with strong communities.*'

Contribution to these ambitions requires the Council and its Partners to work in partnership and deliver services, projects, initiatives to improve the Quality of Life within the Borough.

The aim of this report is to highlight achievements made by the Council and its partners towards delivering of Quality of Life topics that contribute to achieving the ambition of a Borough with Strong Communities

A definition of a Borough with Strong Communities is where 'people can access the housing they want in attractive and safe neighbourhoods.

The following quality of Life topics which contribute to a Borough with Strong Communities have been examined within this report:-

- Crime & Disorder
- Community Cohesion
- Housing

Each topic is reported by the following sections, key statistics, what we know with regard to each topic within the Borough, current and planned activity and conclusions and recommendations.

Executive Summary

Review Group Membership

Councillors Mrs P. Crathorne, Mrs J. Gray, T. Hogan, Mrs E.M. Paylor, K. Thompson and Mrs M. Thomson (Tenant Representative)

Rationale

Following an extensive community appraisal and consultation a Community Strategy for Sedgefield Borough was published by the Local Strategic Partnership in 2004. The Strategy identifies the key economic, social and environmental issues facing the Borough and sets out a vision for the Borough in 2014 as a 'Healthy, Prosperous and Attractive Borough with Strong Communities'.

It is structured around these four aims, setting out a number of supporting priorities and targets to be addressed under which specific service improvements will be developed.

Four years after the first publication of the Community Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committees decided to undertake a review to look at quality of life issues within the Community Strategy. This is particularly useful in the final year of the Authority as this will enable these issues to be benchmarked for future reference. It is also an opportunity for Members to make recommendations, where appropriate, to the new Authority.

Four Review Groups have been established look at quality of life topics relevant to their ambition. The reviews will look at achievements, gaps/deficiencies in provision and areas in need of improvement.

Each review group will produce a report setting out its finding and recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.

Following conclusion of the four reviews the reports will be combined to form a 'State of the Borough' report.

The final report from each review will be combined with the final reports from the other review groups to form a single State of the Borough report. This report will be a useful source of reference for the new Council and will provide a benchmark for future assessment.

Objectives of the Review

The Objectives of the Review are:

- To look at services provided by the Council and other agencies
- To highlight the areas that are working well and areas for improvement.
- To make recommendations via Cabinet to the new Council

Contribution to the Council's Ambitions and Community Outcomes

Outcomes of the Review will contribute to development of the ambition of a Strong Community and the Community outcomes of Securing quality sustainable Housing and Promoting Safer Neighbourhoods.

Process Methodology

The Review Group gathered information and evidence as follows:

- a) Through Review Group meetings held between June – October 2008
- b) Through evidence gathering and topic based presentations on:-

Crime & Disorder

Dennis Scarr, Head of Community Safety
Allan Blakemore, Community Safety Manager
Helen Dent, Anti- Social Behaviour Manager
Michael Dunn, District Manager, County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service

Community Cohesion & Local Democracy

Graham Wood, Corporate Policy and Regeneration Manager
David Anderson, Democratic Services Manager
John Stubbs, Electoral Services Manager
Sylvia Dodsworth, Tenant Participation Officer

Housing

Dianne Hedley, Housing Strategy Manager
Keith Reeve, Design and Management Manager

- c) Through research and statistics from the Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy Local Area Framework

- d) Feedback from the LSP Annual Stakeholder meeting in June 2008

Conclusions & Recommendations

CRIME & DISORDER

Conclusions

There is strong evidence of a Multi Agency Community Safety Partnership within the Borough that has delivered numerous wide-ranging initiatives and contributed to reducing Crime within the Borough.

The Borough is an area of low crime but attention is required to address priorities that have been identified by the Community Safety Partnership.

Recommendation

- 1) That the level of Community Safety activity within the Borough is maintained and priorities identified by Sedgefield Community Safety Partnership are acknowledged and considered within the development of a countywide Community Safety Partnership Strategy.

COMMUNITY COHESION

Conclusion

Community cohesion can add many benefits to the quality of life of residents and contribute to achieving strong and vibrant communities.

Within Sedgefield Borough the following methods have been utilised to strengthen community cohesion. Their continuance within the proposed Area Action Partnership structure is vital to ensure that community cohesion continues to grow.

Community Engagement

Residents have been encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the Council's services and wider quality of life issues. Tenants Groups, Residents Groups and Youth Forums have been established and are receiving ongoing support to ensure that they are successful and sustainable. Support has been given to the creation and development of community and voluntary service organisations within the Borough. An independently run Citizens Panel has been established in order to consult local residents on a wide range of issues affecting the Borough.

Participation in the democratic processes has been sought by encouraging electoral registration and voting at elections. In addition residents have been

encouraged to participate in the democratic decision making processes, particularly Area Forums and Overview & Scrutiny investigations.

Community Participation

Community Appraisals have been conducted in order to inform the future development of local communities in a way that reflects their needs and aspirations which will influence the decisions of service providers in the Borough.

The Local Improvement Programme had enabled communities to be involved and help prioritise regeneration and enhance community facilities in their localities.

Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership has been effective in developing relationships with partners and stakeholders. Their focus has been to improve the quality of life for all residents living within the Borough. Public, private and voluntary organisations agencies have been brought together to maximise their collective effectiveness in order to respond to the needs of communities.

Community Development

Capacity building within communities is a long term commitment which extends further than individual 2 or 3 year funding plans.

Appropriate and effective communication is fundamental to relay information, provide knowledge and improve confidence within communities.

Recommendations

2. That Sedgefield Borough Homes continue to involve tenants in the planning, development and monitoring of its housing services.
3. That the new unitary council continue the process of community engagement by:-
 - i. Continuing to support Community and Voluntary Service organisations financially linked to Service Level Agreements and maintain links so that they continue to receive support and advice from appropriate officers.
 - ii. Continuing to assist in the development of Youth Forums.
 - iii. Utilising the community appraisals completed in November 2008 to understand the needs and aspirations articulated by communities, relating to the gaps in service provision so that appropriate influence can be applied to service providers and attract external resources.

- iv. Continuing to engage with residents and support residents groups as part of its strategic housing function.
- v. Continuing to build upon existing relationships and partnership working that has been developed through the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership as part of the ongoing development of Area Action Partnerships.
- vi. Analysing and responding to community surveys (e.g. 2008 Place Survey) at County Division level in order to reflect and address diversities in community needs.
- vii. Continuing the progress of democratic renewal including seeking to increase voter turnout at elections and engagement with communities in democratic processes.
- viii. Continuing to communicate appropriately and effectively with local communities.

HOUSING

Conclusions

The Council and its partners have made a significant impact on reducing the number of statutory homeless applications within the Borough by focusing its Homeless Strategy on prevention and working in partnership.

There is a clear commitment to develop the provision of affordable housing within the Borough and findings from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment will provide robust evidence to developers regarding the need for affordable housing.

Decent homes standard will be achieved by 2010 for the Borough's housing stock. Following the transfer of the Borough's Housing Stock in 2009 further investment is committed for improving aids and adaptations to tenants homes.

The percentage of non-decent homes within the private sector is an area of concern and further action is required to achieve decency targets for vulnerable households within the private sector.

The sustainability of the Housing market renewal programme will reduce the number of terraced properties, remodel tenure types, created the provision of housing for sale, refurbish properties of lower value, introduce regulations of the private rented sector and has assisted residents who were to be displaced with a relocation equity loan scheme and a range of alternative options.

Recommendations

- 4 That best practice interventions to reduce statutory homelessness applications within the Borough be considered within the development of a Countywide Homelessness Strategy.
- 5 That findings from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment are acknowledged and utilised as a driver future housing strategy.
- 6 Consideration be given to commissioning a Countywide stock condition survey to assess the decency standard of Private Sector Homes.
- 7 That renewal of housing within the priority areas of Chilton West, Dean Bank, and Ferryhill Station continue within the overall Coalfield Regeneration Strategy for the new Unitary Authority.

Crime & Disorder

Key Statistics

- Overall the rate of Total Crime is 26% lower than the national average
- The Borough has below national average rates for Burglary, Vehicle Crime and Violent Crime
- During 2006/07 there was 14,905 recorded incidents of Anti Social Behaviour
- 92% of responses to the Quality of Life Survey in 2007, reported that they feel safe when in their home (day & night) and when walking during the day within their neighbourhood and local town centre.
- 56.9% respondents reported feeling safe in their neighbourhood after dark and 38.3 % safe when walking in the town centre after dark

What we know about Crime and Disorder in Sedgefield Borough

Total crime within the Borough has been reducing since the 1990's however public perception is high with regard to fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. Information detailed below outlines statistical information and public perceptions of Crime & Disorder within the Borough and is categorised by the following key headings:

- Total Crime
- Burglary
- Vehicle Crime
- Violent Crime
- Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage
- Perceptions of Crime

Total Crime

The Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership's audit of crime in the Borough covering 2001-2004 reported that overall crime rates are very low, 26% lower than the national average over the three-year period. Almost a third of total crime in this period was criminal damage, with theft comprising one fifth and violent crime the next greatest area by volume. Criminal damage, which is also used as

a proxy for Anti Social Behaviour, remains greater than the national average and has a detrimental effect on residents' perception of the areas in which they live.

In addition, findings from 2006/07 recorded British Crime Survey (BCS) reported 4,818 incidents in the Borough, a 3% drop from the previous year. This equates to 54.9 recorded incidents per 1,000 population and is lower than the national average of 60 recorded incidents per 1,000 population.

Crime hotspots within the Borough are concentrated around the town centres in the main towns of Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Ferryhill and Shildon. There are smaller clusters however located in areas such as Trimdon, Fishburn and Cornforth. The wards containing the highest incidence of crime in the Borough are Shafto St Marys, Ferryhill and Spennymoor.

Burglary

The Borough's dwelling burglary rate per 1,000 population in 2006/2007 was 3.1 and is lower than the national average of 5.51. Wards with the highest incidence of dwelling burglary were Ferryhill (10.11), Chilton (7.52) and Broom (4.74). The robbery rate per 1,000 population was 0.84 and is significantly lower than the national figure of 3.77 per 1,000 population.

Vehicle crime

The rate per 1,000 population for theft of a motor vehicle within the Borough was 2.43 during 2006/07 and is lower than the national average rate of 3.65. Wards with the highest incidence of vehicle theft were Byerley (7.58), Broom (3.71) and The Trimdons and Fishburn (combined wards – 3.12).

The rate of theft from a motor vehicle was 4.45, significantly lower than the national average of 9.48. Wards with the highest incidence of thefts from a vehicle include Byerley (12.14), Sunnydale (9.86) and Spennymoor (8.3). The rate of interfering with a motor vehicle was 0.72, lower than the national average of 1.29.

Violent crime

The recorded rate of Violence against a person within the Borough was 17.45 per 1,000 population to which is higher than the County Durham average of 16.72 but lower than the national average of 19.28. Wards with the highest incidence of wounding were Spennymoor, Ferryhill and Shafto St Marys. Wards with the highest incidence of common assault were Middlestone, Bishop Middleham and Cornforth, and New Trimdon and Trimdon Grange. The majority of victims of violent crime were young men aged 16-24 and victims of domestic violence.

Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage

The number of anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by Sedgefield Borough Council's neighbourhood wardens in 2006/2007 was 14,905, this equates to 170 incidents per 1,000 population and is significantly higher than the incidence of recorded crime. The most commonly reported Anti Social Behaviour types were rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour and vehicle nuisance. The Boroughs wards with the highest prevalence of reported Anti Social Behaviour were Ferryhill, Shafto St Marys and West.

Perceptions of Crime

The 2007 Quality of life Survey reported that 92% of all respondents reported feeling safe when in their own home (day & night) and when walking during the day in their local neighbourhood and local town centre.

However, 56.9% respondents reported feeling safe in their neighbourhood after dark and 38.3 % safe when walking in the town centre after dark. In addition, 68% of respondents felt that their quality of life was affected to some extent by crime or anti-social behaviour. The 2006 Best Value User Satisfaction General Survey also reported that over 40% of local residents still consider crime levels in need of reduction.

Current and Planned Activity

Sedgefield Community Safety Partnership

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a legal duty on all local authorities to consider crime and disorder implications whilst exercising their duties to do all they reasonable can to prevent Crime & Disorder in their area.

The Police & Justice Act 2006 emphasised the work of partnerships with particular reference to Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships as it was acknowledged that the responsibility to deliver crime and disorder responsibilities required more than one agency.

Within the Borough, the following responsible authorities joined forces to form the core membership of Sedgefield Community Partnership:

- Sedgefield Borough Council
- Durham County Council
- Durham Constabulary
- County Durham & Darlington Fire Rescue Authority
- Durham Police Authority
- County Durham Primary Care Trust

The Community Safety Partnership established four key aims:

- 1) *To reduce crime across the Borough, increase public confidence and help make people feel safe on the street and in their homes.*
- 2) *To reveal the extent of domestic abuse in the Borough by increasing public confidence to report incidents and by raising awareness of domestic abuse issues with the ultimate result of reducing incidents of domestic abuse.*
- 3) *To increase public reassurance, creating sustainable communities where the public feel safe, by addressing anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues.*
- 4) *To reduce the adverse impact that drugs and alcohol have on individuals and Sedgefield Borough communities.*

The Community Safety Partnership produced its Crime & Disorder Strategy covering the period 2005 – 2008. The four key aims of the Partnership were incorporated into the strategy and included targets to reduce the following types of crime: Household Burglary, Other Burglary, Theft of Pedal Cycle, Robbery, Vehicle Interference, Theft of Motor Vehicle, Theft from Motor Vehicle, Criminal Damage, Theft from a Person, Wounding and Common Assault.

Through planned multi-agency activity and partnership working, during the Strategy period the Community Safety Partnership achieved the following reductions to address Crime, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour issues that contribute to making the Borough a safer place:

Crime Type Figures

Criminal Damage	Down 11%
Assault without injury	Down 59%
Theft from a vehicle	Down 33%
Domestic Burglary	Down 12%
Theft of a motor vehicle	Down 27%
Theft from a person	Down 43%

Multi-agency activity has included undertaking Streetsafe Operations, introducing Anti Social Behaviour procedures, interventions to reduce Domestic and Substance Misuse and improving service delivery of CCTV and Neighbourhood Wardens.

Streetsafe Operations

Streetsafe Operations concentrate on a high visibility campaign to tackling issues of Anti-Social Behaviour, Criminality and environmental issues within hotspot areas of the Borough. Operations are intelligence led and involve partnership working between the Police, Borough Council’s Neighbourhood Wardens, Street Cleansing and Licensing teams and relevant partner agencies including the Fire Service and Residents Associations.

Operations have successfully reduced criminal activity, deliberate fires and provided cleaner streets but have also proactively built relations between the services involved and the local community.

Procedures to Manage Anti-Social Behaviour

Recorded incidents of Anti Social Behaviour to Borough Council’s Neighbourhood wardens are high and a key concern with residents of the Borough. Incident reports have identified that it is a minority of people who commit the majority of Anti Social Behaviour activity within the Borough and in most cases the Community Safety Partnership’s responsible authorities already know these people.

To control those responsible for Anti-Social Behaviour activity the Community Safety Partnership introduced the following procedures that aim to reduce anti-social behaviour within communities:-

- ***Warning Letters*** are sent to offenders following two recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour to advise them that failure to stop may result in legal action.

- **Joint visits** are undertaken by the Borough Council, Police Officers and other partnership agencies to advise offenders of the legal actions that are being considered and that evidence is being gathered.
- **Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC)** is a written agreement between an offender who has been involved in Anti-Social Behaviour and partnership agencies. The contract specifies a list of acts that the individual has been involved in and which they agree not to continue, failure to comply may lead to legal action been taken.
- **Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)** can be issued against persistent offenders and places restrictions on their behaviour. It is a criminal offence to breach and ASBO and a breach can lead to imprisonment.

This approach taken by the Community Safety Partnership aims to prevent offenders from being issued an ASBO and tackles issues at an earlier stage. Statistics have shown that this procedure is proactively managing offenders of Anti Social Behaviour. Between January 2008 – May 2008 there has been:

- 122 Warning letters have issued
- 14 Joint Visits have been undertaken
- 20 signed up Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- 8 Anti Social Behaviour Orders issued

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse occurs across society regardless of age, gender, wealth, race, sexuality and geography and can cause lasting effects for the victim. Throughout the Strategy period a multi-agency action plan was designed to reduce the incidence across the Borough and to develop an integrated approach across South West Durham. Interventions have included:

- *the appointment of a Domestic Violence Coordinator, accommodation officer, two outreach workers and female neighbourhood wardens*
- *joint training programmes across all agencies and community awareness-raising initiatives*
- *developed target-hardened safe houses with links to hostels in surrounding areas and the development of a women's centre with CVS organisations i.e. SODA and No.31*
- *the introduction of the Freedom programme to provide support for victims still within abusive relationships and child counselling.*



Poster to raise awareness of Domestic Violence

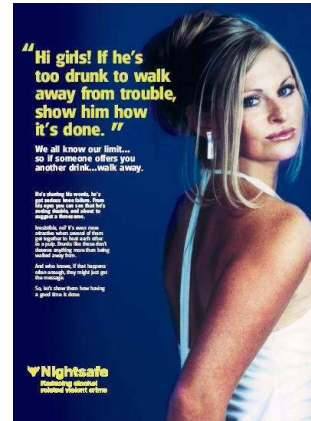
Substance Misuse

The Community Safety Partnership's Substance Misuse sub-group has delivered a multi-agency action plan designed to reduce substance misuse across the Borough. Key interventions have included the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, Drugs into Treatment, Nightsafe and Walk Away campaigns.

The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy aims to

- Reduce the harm caused by alcohol to individuals and their families.
- Reduce the alcohol related crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour.
- Reduce the cost to society associated with alcohol misuse.

The Nightsafe and Walkaway campaigns included displaying posters in the South of County Durham and aimed at reducing alcohol related violent crime and encouraging people to know their limits and walk away.



Nightsafe poster

The Drug & Alcohol Action team work in partnership to reduce the supply of illegal drugs, improve treatment services for both alcohol and drug addiction and provide education to all residents of the Borough. Local initiatives within the Borough have included the High Street Project in Spennymoor and the dedicated young people service, XS, which both involve specialist nurses and social workers to address a variety of drugs and alcohol issues.

In addition, teachers and pupils have undertaken training in drug awareness and development work with the acute sector on providing immediate support to those receiving treatment for alcohol and drug related injuries.

Neighbourhood Wardens

There are twenty Neighbourhood Wardens who provide a service that contributes to providing safer communities. The main purpose of the Neighbourhood Warden role is to improve quality of life and to promote neighbourhood renewal through a highly visible, community based service in designated areas of the Borough. The Service has a dual emphasis on community engagement and public reassurance with the authorisation of fixed penalty enforcement powers.

Neighbourhood Wardens have had an impact in terms of increasing resident satisfaction, reducing the fear of crime, particularly for older people, decline in



Neighbourhood Wardens on Patrol

overall rates of crime, perceived improvements in environmental problems and contributing to tackling anti social behaviour.

The Borough's Neighbourhood Wardens have also played a key role in supporting Community Safety Partnership initiatives and have been commended by the then Office for the Deputy Prime Minister for their efforts to reduce youth disorder and anti social behaviour by engaging local young people in a number of innovative initiatives.

CCTV

The Borough Council's Community Safety Team operates CCTV within the Borough.

CCTV activity contributes to reducing crime within the Borough. There are 109 CCTV cameras deployed throughout the Borough and together have identified 1862 incidents, of which is an increase of 202 on the previous year and during 2007-08 CCTV detection rate also increased by 12%.

CCTV detection rates across the Borough continue to improve with significant successes, Spennymoor and Newton Aycliffe are the most active areas with 23% and 22% of all incidents captured.

During 2007/08, there has been an increase in CCTV capturing incidents of Criminal Damage, Anti Social Behaviour and Violent Crime and a fall in detection rates of Burglary, Substance Misuse and Theft. Falls in CCTV incident detection rates indicate success as a measure of reducing Total Crime. These findings reflect partnership working and positive outcomes from investment made in CCTV.

Where CCTV has been used as evidence, the police have reported 184 arrests within the past 12 months as a result of CCTV involvement and monitored 285 Stop & Searches that were conducted by the police. In addition, the Fire Service was alerted and responded to 9 incidents and the control centre created 27 ambulance requests for assistance.

In 2007/08 a number of improvements were undertaken to improve CCTV within the Borough. A refurbishment programme was carried out to improve the CCTV Control Centre which included an upgrade to digital video recording equipment and the construction of a new LCD monitoring wall. In addition, relocation and new installations of CCTV units took place in Chilton, Trimdon and Shildon and within three of the Council's Leisure Centres which has contributed to increasing the surveillance footprint within the Borough.

Communication

A fundamental element to reducing crime and publicising Community Safety initiatives has been the Partnership’s approach to communication. High visibility campaigns have been widely promoted to publicise initiatives and include displaying posters in nightclubs and bars within the Borough and utilising the side of the Council’s refuse wagons.

The partnership has also produced newsletters that include information regarding initiatives that have or are going to be undertaken, current performance and contact details for partnership authorities.

In 2007, the Community Safety Partnership launched its Stay Safe website that provides advice on Crime Prevention, Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse, Fire Safety and Drug and Alcohol misuse. The website enables users to download information sheets and to signpost users to services and organisations.

A unique feature of the website is that it enables users to view at ward level local crime rates, contact details for their Neighbourhood Policing Teams and view Neighbourhood profiles.

The website also includes performance information, copies of strategies and posters and the latest Community Safety Partnership news.

Community Safety Partnership - Partnership Plan Priorities 2008-2011

Following a review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the 3-Year Audit and Strategy has been replaced by a yearly Partnership Plan. This supports the longer term vision and priorities set out in the Local Strategic Partnership Community Strategy and supports strands of County Durham’s Local Area Agreement.

The Sedgefield Community Safety Partnership priorities in the Partnership Plan 2008/2011 are:

<p>The community of Sedgefield has told us that the areas of importance to it are: Anti Social Behaviour Drug use Crime Domestic Violence Bullying Clean streets Facilities and Activities for young people</p> <p>The community of Sedgefield wants to see: More crime prevention Anti Social Behaviour being a priority Parental control</p>	<p>The Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment shows areas of importance are: Reduction in the number of offenders who re-offend Number of young people entering the criminal justice system Protection of those suffering Domestic Abuse Rowdy and Nuisance behaviour Criminal Damage to dwellings and motor vehicles Alcohol related bad behaviour Early intervention in drug and alcohol misuse problems Violence against young people and other</p>
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Talks in schools about alcohol/smoking Prevention of under age drinking Litter problems dealt with on private land	vulnerable adults Organisational Partners want to see improvements in: Data collection Public reassurance Community involvement Skills and processes
--	--

From the information contained within the above table the Partnerships agreed priorities for 2008/11 are:

- Domestic Abuse
- Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Anti Social Behaviour including Criminal Damage
- Offending/Re-offending

Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions

- There is strong evidence of a Multi Agency Community Safety Partnership within the Borough that has delivered numerous wide-ranging initiatives and contributed to reducing Crime within the Borough.
- The Borough is an area of low crime but attention is required to address priorities that have been identified by the Community Safety Partnership.

Recommendation

- 1) That the level of Community Safety activity within the Borough is maintained and priorities identified by Sedgefield Community Safety Partnership are acknowledged and considered within the development of a countywide Community Safety Partnership Strategy.

Community Cohesion

Key Statistics

- **69% of respondents were satisfied with the Borough as a place to live**
- **59.1% of respondents to the General Survey stated that they ‘know a lot of people in their neighbourhood’ and thought that ‘many people in their neighbourhood can be trusted’.**
- **71.49% of residents felt a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood**
- **The Council has achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government**
- **Average turnout at the last Borough election was 38%**

What we know about Community Cohesion within Sedgefield Borough

What is Community Cohesion?

The Department for Communities and Local Government, the Improvement and Development Agency and the Local Government Association have published the following as a definition for Community Cohesion:-

“Community Cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.”

A cohesive community can add many benefits to the Quality of Life of residents within an area and contribute to achieving a strong community. The four key characteristics to cohesive communities include:

- A common vision and sense of belonging
- The valuing of diversity,
- Similar life opportunities for all
- Stronger positive relationships between people of different backgrounds.

Community Cohesion within Sedgefield Borough

The Vulnerable Localities Index (VLI) was introduced by the Jill Dando Institute to identify areas that have experienced community tensions or where trend information indicates continual, recurring or increasing community problems. The VLI identifies vulnerable localities through analysing information from crime and social exclusion indicators. Findings from the index identify the Borough's most vulnerable localities include the West Ward in Newton Aycliffe, Sunnydale in Shildon, Chilton and Ferryhill.

The 2007 Quality of Life Survey and 2006 Best Value General Survey included a number of questions relating to community cohesion.

The Quality of Life Survey reported that when asked about identification with place, residents felt a 'strong sense of belonging' to:-

- England (83.6%)
- Britain (80.6%)
- County Durham (73.6%)
- Their 'neighbourhood' (71.49)
- Sedgefield Borough (51.2%)

Sense of belonging tended to increase with age for example from age groups '19-29 years' (61.6%) and '75+ years' (83.4%) and also how long they had lived in the area (21 years and more 83.7%).

The General Survey identified that 69% of respondents were satisfied with the Borough as a place to live and 59.1% of respondents stated that they 'know a lot of people in their neighbourhood' and thought that 'many people in their neighbourhood can be trusted'.

When asked if their neighbourhood was a place where neighbours looked out for each other, 53.9% responded that they 'agreed' with the statement. However, only 24% of residents felt that in their neighbourhood 'residents work together to resolve problems'.

The proportion of respondents to the General Survey who agreed that the Borough is a place where people of different backgrounds get on well was 41%, worst quartile nationally. 28.8% agreed that their neighbourhood is a place where residents respect ethnic differences between people, however the majority of respondents gave 'don't know' (33.3%) responses or felt there were 'too few people in the local area' to comment (12.6%) or that 'people were of the same backgrounds' (12.3%).

The Survey also asked about problems in their areas, the top three issues were:-

- ‘parents not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children’
- ‘teenagers hanging around the streets’
- ‘people not treating other people with respect and consideration’.

Parents not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children’ was rated the biggest problem overall by residents of three of the five housing areas, the exceptions being ‘Rural East’ areas, where it was edged into second place behind ‘teenagers hanging around the streets’, and Newton Aycliffe, where ‘high unemployment’ was regarded as the main problem.

With regard to ‘what is in most need of improvement’ within their area, the top three responses were

- Activities for teenagers
- shopping facilities,
- level of crime
- job prospects
- clean streets

There was some variation by area as the majority view of those who lived in the Rural East was that ‘activities for teenagers’ was by far the aspect in greatest need of improvement. Those living in Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, and Spennymoor felt that ‘shopping facilities’ were of greater or equal priority. Those from Ferryhill rated ‘level of crime’ most in need of improving.

The Quality of Life survey reported that 58.5% of respondents agreed that ‘by working together people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood’ whilst 21.9% ‘disagreed’. Older age groups were more inclined to agree (‘45-59 year olds’ – 62.7%; ‘60-74 year olds’ – 63.5%). On an area basis, respondents living in the Rural East (68.3%) were a little more likely to agree than others.

The General Survey identified that just over half (50.5%) of all respondents ‘disagreed’ that they ‘can influence decisions affecting the local area’ and only a quarter (25%) ‘agreed’ (worst quartile nationally). Only just over a quarter (26.1%) of all respondents expressed satisfaction with ‘opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the Council’ (third quartile nationally), and slightly fewer (15.7%) expressed ‘dissatisfaction’. The majority of respondents gave ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ (37.4%) or ‘don’t know’ (20.7%) responses.

Satisfaction amongst those living in homes ‘rented from the Council’ was higher than amongst the sample overall (35.6% ‘satisfied’ and only 11.2% ‘dissatisfied’), reflecting the investment in tenant participation. However, the Quality of Life Survey established that half of all respondents did not know if they had a Local

Residents Association' (LRA) and this was a general finding across all five housing areas.

The Survey also reported that 21.3% of respondents were aware of the Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership and only 14.8% of respondents were aware of their local Area Forum.

Less than a quarter (21.9%) of all respondents stated they 'would like to be involved in decisions the Council makes affecting their 'local area' (worst quartile), 53.7% may want to be involved 'depending in the issue'; only 16.9% stated that they 'do not want to be involved.'

Current and Planned Activity

The Borough Council and its partners have played an active role in contributing to improving cohesive communities through:-

- Community engagement,
- Community participation and
- Community development and support.

Community Engagement

The Borough Council has encouraged residents to be involved in all aspects of the Council's services and wider quality of life issues.

This has included the establishment and ongoing support for tenants' groups, residents' groups and youth forums, supporting and working in partnership with community and voluntary organisations and the establishment of an independently run Citizens Panel.

In addition to the involvement of communities via the above means the Council has also encouraged participation in the democratic process by encouraging electoral registration and voting at various elections, participating in decision making process through its meeting structure, particularly its Area Forums and Overview & Scrutiny investigations.

Democratic Process

The 'Returning Officer' is responsible for the co-ordination and management of the electoral process within the Borough for the election of Councillors (County, Borough, Town and Parish), Members of Parliament and Members of European Parliament and also the conduct of referendums.

The total electorate within the Borough at September 2008 is 68,868 and is reviewed through an annual census and monthly rolling registration to maintain the accuracy of the Borough's Electoral register. As at September 2008, 23.6% of the electorate have nominated to vote by post.



Election count in progress

To enable the electorate to have access to voting on an election day there are 78 Polling Stations in operation within the Borough. Voter turnout from recent elections is as follows:

Parliamentary Election 2005 – 62.41%

Parliamentary Bi-election 2007 – 41.6%

Borough and Town Parish election 2007 – 38.23%

County Council election 2008 - 38.55%

Council Meetings

The conduct of Council meetings is governed by the various Acts of Parliament and other statutory regulations. Members of the public can attend any formal meeting of the Council, unless confidential or 'exempt' information is being considered. Details of meetings are posted at the Council's main offices as required by regulation.

In addition to this meetings are also advertised in the Council's community newspaper INFORM. A calendar of meetings is also available on the Council's website which has links to agendas, reports and minutes. Details of Borough Councillors, MP's, MEP's and Town and Parish Councils are also available on the website to enable members of the public to contact them for support and advice.

The Borough Council established 5 Area Forums and 3 Overview & Scrutiny Committees in June 2000 following the introduction of new decision making arrangements under the Local Government Act 2000.

Area Forums were viewed as an important part of the Council's democratic process, recognising the importance of community engagement and the need to keep local communities informed and involved. They would provide an opportunity for communities to interact with the Council on issues of local importance.

Five Area Forums were established based on the following geographical areas as follows:-

Area 1	Spennymoor and surrounding area
Area 2	West Cornforth, Bishop Middleham, Chilton and Ferryhill
Area 3	Sedgefield, Fishburn, the Trimdons, Bradbury and Mordon
Area 4	Sildon and Eldon
Area 5	Newton Aycliffe, Aycliffe Village, Middridge and Woodham

The five meetings occur on an eight weekly cycle and are held in the evening at locations within each of the areas, with meetings rotating between venues as agreed by each Forum. Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Forums are Borough Councillors. Administrative support is provided by officers from Democratic Services. Members of the public and a wide range of Council partners are invited to attend forum meetings.

Recently the Area Forums have played an important role in the process for considering applications for funding from the Local Improvement Programme.

The Government required Councils to establish Overview & Scrutiny Committees to monitor decisions taken by Cabinet, review and develop policies of the Council, monitor performance of the Council and external partners.

The LG Act 2000 allowed the co-option of lay members on to Overview & Scrutiny Committees. The Council acknowledges the voice and expertise of

its tenants and co-opted a representative from the Tenants Federation to be a Member of its Healthy Borough with strong communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The main emphasis of the work of Overview & Scrutiny Committees is through establishing Review Groups to undertake Service and Topic Based reviews on Council Services and functions. Review Groups have actively consulted with residents and users of services through questionnaires, surveys and focus group meetings to help shape and contribute to their recommendations. Topics reviewed have included Area forums, Recycling, Leisure Centre Concessionary Pricing Scheme, the Provision of Affordable Housing and the Council's community Newspaper Inform.

Community and Voluntary Service Organisations (CVS)

CVS bodies play an important role in the development of community organisations through social capital interventions that can build capacity within communities. They are also useful in signposting and providing information and advice to individuals, communities, and organisations within the Borough. Sedgfield currently has 224 CVS organisations within its boundaries ranging from art clubs and partnerships to CAVOS and CAB with a wide range of specialist ability and expertise in the organisations.

CAVOS, as the local community infrastructure organisation, is a resource to be used by the CVS organisations in developing their social capital (three types of social capital exist; bonding, bridging, and linking) and, as an indirect benefit, improving community cohesion. The Borough currently has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CAVOS to ensure capacity of community and other CVS organisations is improved. This SLA is reviewed annually and attracts a £21,000 annual contribution the organisation. If resources are no longer available for the various CVSs post LGR a significant number will face financial difficulties and fold within 3 years.

Youth Forums

The Borough Council has engaged in a number of children and young people participation programmes. This has been overseen and supported by the Local Strategic Partnership's Children and Young Peoples Participation officer who has worked with the Borough Council and other partners to improve this process and try to make it part of their culture of delivery.

Recent work with local Town and Parish Councils has seen the development, or proposed development of Youth Councils throughout the Borough. Sedgfield Town Council, recently held elections within their three schools to elect a Youth Town Council which is now up and running. Great Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Ferryhill Town Councils are also moving in this direction.

Shildon Town Council have worked closely with a local network of children's service providers (statutory, voluntary and community based) to develop an

informal Shildon Youth Forum which has been set up via young representatives from all the services in Shildon.

All of the above are building upon existing organisational young people's networks and forums that exist within the Borough including the connexions, youth service and youth engagement groups as well as the school council network, which sees every primary and secondary school in the County developing their own democratically elected school council.

The Children's agenda which is being delivered, developed and commissioned at a Borough and District level through the Local Children's Board. Future activity will be to engage with children, young people and their families through existing methods as well as setting up new models alongside input from the young people themselves.

Citizens Panel Surveys

The Borough's Citizens Panel has over 1,000 members and has been utilised as a key consultation tool on a number of issues, including the establishment of the Local Development Framework and the future approach to waste recycling. In addition, focus groups have been drawn from the Panel to assist in setting the Council Tax and developing the Council's approach to customer focus, including access issues.

Periodically the Council will survey the wider community to gather essential information on community views of quality of life in the area and satisfaction with local services. Since 2000 all Councils have been required to undertake Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys every three years. The last of these surveys (the third) was conducted in 2006, and they were subsequently replaced with the statutory Place Survey from 2008. The Council also commissioned a more detailed Quality of Life Survey through the Borough's LSP in 2007, which focused primarily on public health.

In commissioning these surveys the Council has ensured that responses can be disaggregated to local areas, so that variations in perceptions and satisfaction rates can be identified and addressed. The Council has used these surveys to improve the services it facilitates and provides, and to commission others, with partners, through the Local Strategic Partnership.

Tenant and Resident Involvement with Sedgefield Borough Council

Sedgefield Borough Council encourages and supports resident involvement. The Council's Tenant Participation Team works with tenants and residents in the Borough to provide assistance and support to ensure effective involvement.

Support is provided to the following groups:

Tenant and Resident Associations

The following are current Tenant & Resident Associations that are constituted groups affiliated to the Council.

Albert Street, Shildon	Ferryhill Station RA	St. Paul's RA, Spennymoor
Broom RA, Ferryhill	Greenways RA, Spennymoor	Sunnydale RA, Shildon
Castles RA, Ferryhill	Lakes/Ladder Centre, Ferryhill	Tudhoe RA, Spennymoor
Chilton West RA, Chilton	Linden Place RA, Newton Aycliffe	Williamfield RA, Newton Aycliffe
Dean Bank RA, Ferryhill	New Shildon RA	Woodham Way, Newton Aycliffe
Eden RA, Spennymoor	Sedgefield RA	

Sedgefield Residents Federation

The Federation is an umbrella group made up of two representatives from each residents association and other community groups in the Borough. The Federation work to improve services that impact on the quality of life of all residents of the Borough. It works with the local authority, police and other agencies to improve local services. It provides support and shares good practice between members and other Federations. Sedgefield Residents Federation was instrumental in setting up County Durham Residents Association bringing residents together prior to the creation of the new unitary authority for County Durham.

Tenants Housing Services Group

Established in 2002 this group meets monthly and are involved in monitoring the Council's Housing Service, with regard to customer satisfaction with repairs and maintenance, call out, capital improvements and housing management.

Supported Housing Consultative Forum

The forum meets quarterly to review service delivery and is made up of tenants living in Council bungalows and sheltered schemes.

The Tenant Participation Service has been awarded Charter Mark



Charter Mark Accreditation

accreditation twice for customer service excellence. It was the first Tenant Participation Service in the country to achieve this award.

From April 2009, the Tenant Participation Service will be included within the transfer of the Council's Housing Services to Sedgefield Borough Homes and will provide support to tenants and residents of Sedgefield Borough Homes. At present an

annual funding contribution of £35K from the Council's General Fund is provided support to non-tenant groups. To ensure continued engagement funding is required to be support non-tenant groups following transfer of Housing Services and Local Government Reorganisation.

Equality Standard for Local Government

The Council believes that it has a key strategic role to play with respect to equality and diversity and is committed to promoting equality of access to, and appropriate use of its services and facilities regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious or philosophical belief.

The Equality Standard for Local Government measures the level local authorities have mainstreamed equality into service delivery and employment as an issue for all aspects of a local authority's work. There are five levels within the Equality Standard and in June 2008, Sedgefield Borough Council successfully achieved Level 3 of the Standard which demonstrates that the Council's functions and services have mainstreamed equality and diversity. The Council was the first district council within County Durham to achieve Level 3 accreditation and aims to achieve level 4 of the standard by March 2009.



Community Participation

Community Appraisals

The Borough Council have appointed RPS consultants to complete community appraisals for all of the 19 wards in the Borough of Sedgefield and aggregated up to County Divisional level to inform the future development of our local communities in a way that reflects the wishes of local communities. A report detailing findings from these appraisals is expected to be completed by Christmas 2008.

The community appraisal is designed to provide a clear understanding of the key factors affecting a community and the gaps in provision to that community. For example, services and transport, current and background economic position, community capacity, and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to that community. As a result of this type of evaluation a prioritised list of what the community needs to improve its circumstances is usually provided from the consultation with residents. This set of appraisals will go much further.

The methodology ensures that not only an appropriate community appraisal in each of the Borough's wards but will provide a firm community base with the capacity to move forward and provide future sustainability. In those areas where little or no community activity is present the successful consultancy will ensure interested individuals will be brought together and empowered to work within their communities. In those areas where there is significant community engagement the consultancy will ensure that current capacity is improved and volunteers work closely with the professionals to produce their appraisals.

The completed appraisals will allow each community to access charitable and other funding sources to improve the conditions within their neighbourhood using a ranked list of local priorities. The appraisals will also supply a further check mechanism for the operation of internally resourced grant programmes like the Local Improvement Programme, but is also useful for future programmes through Durham County Council.

The Community Appraisal will leave a legacy of improved community capacity that will ensure continuous engagement with a community that understands the issues and can engage and influence the decisions of service providers in the Borough. Residents will also have a clear picture of how information has been gathered, used and analysed and therefore have full ownership of the document once produced.

Local Improvement Programme (LIP)

The Council's LIP programme has provided an opportunity to improve community assets and support community engagement in the regeneration of local areas. Community Groups, Charitable Organisations and Town and Parish Councils have proposed projects within their Local Communities to improve sites and improve the usability of community facilities and buildings across the Borough.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Sedgefield Borough's LSP was formed in January 2002 and is made up of an Executive Board of Members from a cross section of interests in the Borough, with a number of stakeholder groups and smaller working groups to focus on key issues. Partnership arrangements are also in place at a more local level to harness the work of community partnerships, town and parish councils.

The aim of the LSP is to improve the quality of life for all residents in the Borough with the fastest improvements being made where need is greatest, to ensure that no one in Sedgefield Borough is seriously disadvantaged by the fact of where they live.

The LSP is a means of organising the way that public, private and voluntary agencies can work together to maximise their collective effectiveness in order to respond to the needs of the communities that make up Sedgefield Borough.

Community Development & Support

Community development and support is taken seriously by the Council to ensure engagement with residents is genuine and collaborative, rather than superficial and authoritative. National Government is keen to ensure local government engages meaningfully with residents including those that are hard to reach and hear.

This is not a process that can be rushed or limited to 2 or 3 year funding plans. Engagement, if the organisation is committed to it, should be a process that is undertaken for the long-term, working in partnership with communities and their representatives as well, of course, as their elected representatives.

This means that good quality future development and support is required for those communities to be able to make a contribution. Development of individuals within communities is required and in the long term because there is a turnover of representatives, as people move on into jobs, or new homes or drop out of activity. This development will be in the form of capacity building of individuals that in turn builds social capital and indirectly improves social cohesion, and would require resources both human and financial.

Local Government Reorganisation can be looked on as an opportunity to reinforce the message that the Council wants to work with its communities to create better places to live, work and play.

Communication

Communication is fundamentally important to relay information and providing knowledge can breed confidence within Communities. To relay key messages to communities the Council has published documents including:

Inform – is the Council's monthly Community Newspaper which aims to highlight Council issues, success stories and inform residents of what is happening within the Borough. Inform is an excellent tool to communicate with residents and enable them to feel involved with the Council. This message is

enforced by the strap line heading 'Your community newspaper from Sedgefield Borough Council' printed under the Mast head.

DL17 – aims to keep residents and members of the community informed about progress and any new initiatives or proposals regarding the Housing Market Renewal Programme within the three regeneration areas of Dean Bank, Ferryhill, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West. The first three issues included “spotlight on” and “did you know” features that focused on one of the three renewal communities and include information on the history of the area and any famous former inhabitants

Sedgefield Community Safety Partnership Newsletter – contains details of current performance, information on the types of crime that is affecting the Borough and key contact details of Members of the Partnership.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusion

Community cohesion can add many benefits to the quality of life of residents and contribute to achieving strong and vibrant communities.

Within Sedgefield Borough the following methods have been utilised to strengthen community cohesion. Their continuance within the proposed Area Action Partnership structure is vital to ensure that community cohesion continues to grow.

Community Engagement

Residents have been encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the Council's services and wider quality of life issues. Tenants Groups, Residents Groups and Youth Forums have been established and are receiving ongoing support to ensure that they are successful and sustainable. Support has been given to the creation and development of community and voluntary service organisations within the Borough. An independently run Citizens Panel has been established in order to consult local residents on a wide range of issues affecting the Borough.

Participation in the democratic processes has been sought by encouraging electoral registration and voting at elections. In addition residents have been encouraged to participate in the democratic decision making processes, particularly Area Forums and Overview & Scrutiny investigations.

Community Participation

Community Appraisals have been conducted in order to inform the future development of local communities in a way that reflects their needs and aspirations which will influence the decisions of service providers in the Borough.

The Local Improvement Programme had enabled communities to be involved and help prioritise regeneration and enhance community facilities in their localities.

Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership has been effective in developing relationships with partners and stakeholders. Their focus has been to improve the quality of life for all residents living within the Borough. Public, private and voluntary organisations agencies have been brought together to maximise their collective effectiveness in order to respond to the needs of communities.

Community Development

Capacity building within communities is a long term commitment which extends further than individual 2 or 3 year funding plans.

Appropriate and effective communication is fundamental to relay information, provide knowledge and improve confidence within communities.

Recommendations

2. That Sedgefield Borough Homes continue to involve tenants in the planning, development and monitoring of its housing services.
3. That the new unitary council continue the process of community engagement by:-
 - i. Continuing to support Community and Voluntary Service organisations financially linked to Service Level Agreements and maintain links so that they continue to receive support and advice from appropriate officers.
 - ii. Continuing to assist in the development of Youth Forums.
 - iii. Utilising the community appraisals completed in November 2008 to understand the needs and aspirations articulated by communities, relating to the gaps in service provision so that appropriate influence can be applied to service providers and attract external resources.
 - iv. Continuing to engage with residents and support residents groups as part of its strategic housing function.
 - v. Continuing to build upon existing relationships and partnership working that has been developed through the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership as part of the ongoing development of Area Action Partnerships.
 - vi. Analysing and responding to community surveys (e.g. 2008 Place Survey) at County Division level in order to reflect and address diversities in community needs.
 - vii. Continuing the progress of democratic renewal including seeking to increase voter turnout at elections and engagement with communities in democratic processes.
 - viii. Continuing to communicate appropriately and effectively with local communities.

HOUSING

Key Statistics

- ***The Borough has over 40,000 households***
- ***In 2006, the Average House Price within the Borough was £104,813***
- ***62% of the Council's Housing stock currently meets the Decent Homes Standard***
- ***The number of Statutory Homelessness applications has reduced by 89% between 2004/05 to 2007/08***
- ***The Council has given planning permission to build over 150 Affordable Housing Units within the Borough***
- ***Three former coalfield housing areas are undergoing a Housing Renewal Programme***

What we Know about housing in Sedgefield Borough?

Housing Mix

The 2001 Census assessed the type of housing within the Borough and found that terraced housing accounted for 43.54% of the total housing stock within the Borough. Semi-detached housing accounted for 34.38%, detached 16.92% and flat, maisonette or apartment type accommodation accounted for 5.1% of households. Housing tenure in 2007 was predominantly private housing (30,772) with social housing (8,647 local authority and 1,592 Registered Social Landlord) accounting for 25% of the total.

Housing Development

The Borough has averaged 238 properties being built per annum since 1991, a total of 3812 units. In 2006/07, 38.1% of new homes were built on previously developed land. This is significantly lower than the national average of 84.7% and reflects the fact the Borough has a lower stock of previously development land.

House Prices

The latest reliable data for the Borough's average house price is from 2006 and identified the average house price for the Borough as £104,813, with terraced housing £73,427 on average, semi-detached £113,864 and detached £197,017. Over the four-year period from 2002-2006 the average house price for the Borough increased by £45,520 (a 77% increase). Unquantifiable data indicates that between 2006 and 2008 house prices continued to rise but with the current downturn in the housing market it is anticipated that the average house price within the Borough may decrease.

Decent Homes Standard

The percentage of Council dwellings classified as decent in the Borough was 62% at the start of the financial year for 2008/09 11% below the national average of 73%. Data from Registered Social landlords shows that 94.5% of the 1,450 Housing Association properties in the Borough currently meet the Housing Decency Standard.

Homelessness

Sedgefield Borough's Housing Advice and Homelessness Service has made significant developments since 2005, in line with Central Government policy which has identified the need for a Homelessness Prevention and Housing Options focussed service.

The service has been reviewed and refocused and has adopted a pro active approach in order to prevent homelessness wherever possible with the introduction of various initiatives. A robust action plan has been implemented which has resulted in the number of statutory homeless applications being reduced from 822 in 2004/05 to 87 in 2007/08. This represents an 89% reduction, with statutory homeless acceptances falling from 441 in 04/05 to 47 in 07/08.

307 cases of homelessness were prevented in 2007/08 by enabling clients to remain in their existing homes or by assisting them to find alternative accommodation.

In addition, 734 clients were given housing advice over the same period, 2007/08.

Sedgefield Borough has continued to build upon this success and the figures recorded for the first two quarters of 2008/09 demonstrate a continuous improvement.

Current and Planned Activity

Current and planned activity relating to Housing within the Borough is identified through the following key areas:

- Homelessness
- Affordable Housing
- Decent Homes
- Housing Market Assessment

Homelessness

The Council's Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2007 – 2010 identifies the key aims and priorities for the service with the emphasis being on the prevention of homelessness. An action plan is included which will continue to sustain the current level of performance with a view to further improving the service.

The service is delivered through the Housing Advice and Homelessness Manager and a team of five Housing Support Officers who are based within Integrated Teams for Vulnerable Adults. The officers work alongside social workers and district nurses which enables a holistic approach to the needs of the client and therefore, providing the most appropriate course of action catered towards the individual's circumstances.

In addition, the service employs a Domestic Violence Accommodation and Support Officer who provides practical support to vulnerable people who have suffered domestic violence and wish to leave an abusive relationship. The officer is also responsible for the management of three temporary domestic violence accommodation units where those clients who require more intensive support can be housed for a transitional period until they are ready to move on to permanent accommodation. The Domestic Violence Accommodation and Support Officer will also work towards developing and formalising a sanctuary scheme to enable clients to remain safely in their own homes.

As previously stated the Council has significantly reduced the number of statutory homeless applications since 2005 and will continue to do so over the life of the strategy.

This will be done by implementing the action plan which includes:

- The establishment of protocols with Housing Management and Registered Social Landlords to reduce the number of evictions due to rent arrears or anti social behaviour and also to work together with supported accommodation providers to increase access into this sector.
- The development of a rent deposit guarantee scheme to allow greater access to the privately rented sector and also working with the holistic floating support service to enable increased tenancy sustainment.
- The production of a comprehensive housing advice and information pack including a service directory. This will be supplemented by a

homelessness prevention education pack specifically aimed at younger clients aged between 14 and 16. Educational sessions within schools are currently underway.

- The assessment of temporary accommodation against minimum standards and the reduction of the use of temporary accommodation overall by 50% by 2010.
- The establishment of a homelessness forum to ensure that the service is informed by the needs of the client.
- This work is ongoing and will continue to develop and improve the service over the next two years.

Affordable Housing

The Local Plan Policy H19 adopted by the authority in 1996 identified that the Council would encourage developers to provide an appropriate variety of house types and sizes including the provision of affordable housing where a need was demonstrated. The Council identified at this time that they would normally expect a number of affordable houses or low cost home ownership schemes to be included on sites over 75 dwellings where the local need was demonstrated.

In 2006 Planning Policy Statement 3 identified a new threshold of sites of 15 dwellings or more with a 20% affordable provision where the need was demonstrated.

Affordable Housing was the topic of an Overview and Scrutiny Review in 2006/07 and identified a number of recommendations that included providing a definition of affordable housing to give a clear steer on the development of policy on the provision and access of affordable housing within the Borough and the development of an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

The council has produced an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning



Development of Affordable Housing at Hawkeshead Place, Newton Aycliffe

Document as part of the Borough's Local Development Framework that aims to capitalise on the opportunities to provide affordable units within the Borough.

At the end of September 2008, the Council has given commitment through planning approval for over 160 affordable housing units across the Borough. To date there has been units completed at Neville Drive, Sedgefield and progress is

being made in developing units at Hawkeshead Place, Newton Aycliffe and Chapel Row, Ferryhill. However,

it must be noted that due to a downturn in the housing market, shared ownership had become difficult to market and progress on some developments has been delayed.

The future direction of Affordable Housing is to be guided by findings from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment that has been commissioned collectively by each authority across County Durham under the Durham Housing Neighbourhood Partnership Board. These findings will set out new requirements taking into account a range of data from house prices, type, tenure and waiting list information. The outcome of this information will create a new percentage for affordable provision and provide robust evidence to developers regarding the need for affordable housing. A report is expected to be published before the end of 2008.

Housing Decency - Social Housing

In July 2008, the Borough Council balloted tenants in respect of a transfer of the Council's housing stock to Sedgefield Borough Homes. Following a 'Yes' vote of 74.2% the Council has endorsed a recommendation to proceed with the transfer to Sedgefield Borough Homes with a projected date to complete the transfer by 31st March 2009. Up until the transfer, the Council has developed a Housing Capital and Improvement programme. The aim of the programme is to ensure that decent homes standards are delivered within Value for Money budgets to which the Council has appointed a private sector partner to undertake repairs, maintenance and construction of the Council's housing stock.

Transfer of housing stock to Sedgefield Borough Homes will release an additional £65 million to improve homes to higher standard within the Borough. There will also be an increase in investment in the provision of support, aids and adaptations to tenants' homes. Within the first 5 years of Sedgefield Borough Homes, £2.75 million will be available. This funding will ensure that decent homes standard for public sector housing will be achieved by 2010.

Housing Decency- Private Sector

Building Research Establishment (BRE) undertook a commissioned stock modelling exercise covering County Durham in 2007 using intelligence from English House Condition Survey 2001 together with Census data. Findings from the exercise reported estimated that 30% of private sector homes within the Borough are non-decent and vulnerable adults occupy 10% of private sector homes.

Findings also reported that there was disparity across the County with higher predominance of non-decent homes in former coalfield areas. Within Sedgefield Borough this related to three regeneration areas of Dean Bank, Ferryhill, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West.

Housing Market Renewal

In common with other areas of County Durham, the Borough has a number of areas of older terraced private sector housing showing signs of housing market failure. These areas face the issues of low demand and obsolete housing, unbalanced tenure pattern with high levels of privately rented

properties, poor quality housing and environment often compounded by high levels of anti social behaviour.

The Borough Council has over the past three years worked with neighbouring authorities along with national and regional bodies such as the Regional Housing Board and English Partnerships, to identify, understand and address housing market fragility in the Borough with a focus in the former coalfield areas of Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West areas in particular.



Former Coalfield Housing in Ferryhill Station

A Master Plan has been created to enable a programme of Housing Market Renewal within the three priority communities of Dean Bank, Ferryhill, Chilton West and Ferryhill Station that are located between the Borough's major townships of Spennymoor and Newton Aycliffe on the A167 corridor.

The master plan identified selective demolition, refurbishment via Group Repair Schemes, selective licensing, community engagement/neighbourhood management and the provision of new build as preferred options for all priority communities.

The programme of delivery for the Master Plan is expected to continue for over ten years and table 1 below identifies the key stages of programme delivery.

Opportunities and Proposed Intervention	Dean Bank	Chilton West	Ferryhill Station
Years 1-3 April 2007 – March 2010	Develop Praxis Site. Demolition, redevelopment and environmental improvement to Faraday and Stephenson Street. Environmental Improvements to the unnamed road along A167.	Demolition, redevelopment and environmental improvement in the Dale Street/Oswald Terrace/Victoria/Hunter Terrace area.	Demolition of the remaining Rows excluding the South side of Haig Street. Redevelop and environmentally improve the area.
Years 3-8 April 2010 – March 2015	Demolition, redevelopment and environmental improvement to the Newton/Davy/Bessemer/Rennie Street area.	Demolition redevelopment and environmental improvement in the Dene/Raby and Ford Terrace area.	Assess Church/Charlton Street for possible future interventions.
Longer Term	Review the potential for future development land.	Review the potential for future development land.	Review the potential for future development land.

Table 1

Group Repair Schemes

Group repair schemes have been successfully completed within Eden



Terrace, Chilton and Haig Street, Ferryhill Station. The outcome of this scheme has enhanced the appearance of properties within the street through an external fabric overhaul that included repairs to roofs and chimneys, walls, doors, windows, rainwater goods and yard walls to secure the structure stability of the property.

Group Repair Scheme at Ferryhill

Selective Licensing

Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 enables Local Authorities to apply to the Secretary of State to introduce a Selective Licensing Scheme for private landlords who let property within designated areas which are proven to suffer from low housing demand and anti social behaviour.

The Scheme will aim to improve living conditions for residents and the surrounding community by working alongside existing policies on homelessness, regeneration and anti social behaviour.

In February 2008, the Borough Council was the first district authority to receive a designation for a selective licensing scheme for selected streets in Dean Bank and West Chilton.

Community Engagement & Neighbourhood Management

Extensive community engagement has been undertaken throughout each stage of the Renewal Programme and has included consultation on the master plan, Neighbourhood renewal assessment and selective licensing. Community Engagement has also been undertaken through Public Meetings, Drop in sessions and publication of the DL17 newsletter that has kept Resident's and partners up to date with progress of the Renewal programme.

Neighbourhood management aims to narrow the gaps between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the Borough. This requires the delivery of joined up services that are specific to the needs of a Community. In October 2008, a Neighbourhood Management Centre opened in Dean Bank, Ferryhill and will focus on producing a valuable link for Communities within the priority areas and the services they require.

New Build and Housing Options

The master plan programme has enabled a joint venture agreement with Three Rivers Housing Group to build 30 units on the former Chapel Row Site at Ferryhill Station and units are to be released for Market Sale, Shared Ownership and Registered Social Landlord Social rented accommodation. The Borough Council placed priority for re-housing of residents who were being displaced through regeneration of Dean Bank and Ferryhill and provided support for a range of options to assist people to be relocated.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions

- The Council and its partners have made a significant impact on reducing the number of statutory homeless applications within the Borough by focusing its Homeless Strategy on prevention and working in partnership.
- There is a clear commitment to develop the provision of affordable housing within the Borough and findings from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment will provide robust evidence to developers regarding the need for affordable housing.
- Decent homes standard will be achieved by 2010 for the Borough's housing stock. Following the transfer of the Borough's Housing Stock in 2009 further investment is committed for improving aids and adaptations to tenants homes.
- The percentage of non-decent homes within the private sector is an area of concern and further action is required to achieve decency targets for vulnerable households within the private sector.
- The sustainability of the Housing market renewal programme will reduce the number of terraced properties, remodel tenure types, create the provision of housing for sale, refurbish properties of lower value, introduce regulations of the private rented sector and has assisted residents who were to be displaced with a relocation equity loan scheme and a range of alternative options.

Recommendations

- 4) That best practice interventions to reduce statutory homelessness applications within the Borough be considered within the development of a Countywide Homelessness Strategy.
- 5) That findings from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment are acknowledged and utilised as a driver future housing strategy.
- 6) Consideration be given to commissioning a Countywide stock condition survey to assess the decency standard of Private Sector Homes.
- 7) That renewal of housing within the priority areas of Chilton West, Dean Bank, and Ferryhill Station continue within the overall Coalfield Regeneration Strategy for the new Unitary Authority.

Item 7

HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH STRONG COMMUNITITES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25TH NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

This report sets out the Committee's current Work Programme for consideration and review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee's Work Programme be reviewed.

DETAIL

1. In accordance with Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8 of the Council's Constitution, Overview & Scrutiny Committees are responsible for setting their own work programme.
2. Each Overview & Scrutiny Committee should agree a realistic, achievable and considered work programme on the understanding that, from time to time, more urgent or immediate issues may require scrutiny. Issues may, for example, be raised by Cabinet reports, Members' constituency business or be referred to Scrutiny by Cabinet in advance of a Cabinet decision.
3. The current Work Programme for this Committee is appended to the report which details:-
 - Scrutiny Reviews currently being undertaken.
 - Scrutiny review topics held in reserve for future investigation.
 - A schedule of items to be considered by the Committee for the period to 31st March 2009.
4. **Scrutiny Review**
The Committee should aim to undertake a small number of high quality reviews that will make a real difference to the work of the Authority, rather than high numbers of reviews on more minor issues. Overview & Scrutiny Committees should normally aim to undertake two reviews concurrently. Any additional review topics that have been agreed by Members will be placed on a reserve list and as one review is completed the Committee will decide on which review should be undertaken next.

A workshop was held for Overview and Scrutiny Members on 20th February 2008 to discuss the role of the Committees within the period leading to the

establishment of a new Unitary Council in April 2009. An outcome from the workshop was that the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees consider undertaking a State of the Borough Review that would look at achievements within each of the Council's Ambitions. This Review would provide a benchmark for future assessment, highlight areas for improvement and, where relevant, could make appropriate recommendations to the new council.

The Council's three Overview and Scrutiny Committees have agreed to undertake a State of the Borough Review and that the following Review Groups be established to examine each of the Council's ambitions:

Committee	Review Groups
Healthy Borough with Strong Communities O&S Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthy Borough Review Group• Strong Communities Review Group
Prosperous and Attractive Borough O&S Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prosperous Borough Review Group• Attractive Borough Review Group

The final reports from each of these reviews would be combined to form a single State of the Borough report.

5. Business for Future Meetings

The Committees Work Programme for the period leading to the establishment of a new Unitary Council in April 2009 is attached for consideration.

Members are requested to review the Committee's Work Programme and identify, where necessary, issues that they feel should be investigated by the Committee. The Work Programme will need to be carefully managed to ensure that the most important issues are considered in the limited time available.

It will not always be possible to anticipate all reports which will need to be considered by an Overview & Scrutiny Committee and therefore a flexible approach will need to be taken to work programming.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report.

5. CONSULTATION

Contact Officers: Lynsey Walker
Telephone No: (01388) 816166 ext 4362
Email Address: lwalker@sedgefield.gov.uk
Ward(s): Not ward specific
Background Papers None

**HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH STRONG COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

WORK PROGRAMME

Ongoing Reviews

State of the Borough Review

Future Reviews

The following review topics have been identified by the Committee for future review. As one review is completed Members will decide which review should be undertaken next.

ANTICIPATED ITEMS

2008/09 Municipal Year

13 January 2009

- **Overview and Scrutiny Review Group Report – The Provision of Affordable Housing – Progress on Action Plan**

24 February 2009

- **No items identified**

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