

Public Document Pack

21 July 2008

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Wednesday, 30th July, 2008 at 6.00 pm**

Yours sincerely



R TEMPLEMAN

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Meeting Held 18 June 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Public Speaking

Policy Development

5. No Items

Call-In

6. No Items

Cont'd....

Improvement Management

7. Corporate Performance Report Summary - April 2007 to March 2008 (Pages 7 - 74)
Report Of Director of Corporate Services
8. Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme (Pages 75 - 86)
9. Homelessness Performance Indicators (Pages 87 - 90)

Scrutiny Reviews

10. Review into the Future of the Unparished Area of Chester-le-Street – Scoping Report (Pages 91 - 102)
Report Of Director of Corporate Services
11. Review into Town Centre Market Places - Scoping Report (Pages 103 - 110)
Report Of Director of Corporate Services
12. Possible Task and Finish Group - Sports Marketing Discussion Item
13. Items for Next Agenda

Meeting Schedule

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Report of the meeting of People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the The Gloucester Suite, Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham, DH3 3UT on Wednesday, 18 June 2008 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Geoffrey Armstrong, Councillor Stephen Barr, Councillor James William Barrett, Councillor George Keith Davidson, Councillor Martin James Gollan, Councillor Ralph Harrison, Councillor William Laverick, Councillor Maureen Diana May, Councillor Peter Howard May, Councillor Maureen Potts, Councillor John Shiell and Councillor Audrey Willis

Officers: I Forster (Director of Corporate Services), N Cummings (Scrutiny Officer), Tzamaras (Assistant Director of Development Services) and S Marshall (Democratic Services Assistant)

Also in attendance: L Ebbatson (Leader of the Council) and one member of the public.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Scrutiny Officer invited nominations for the appointment of Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor P May proposed and Councillor J W Barrett seconded that Councillor G Armstrong be elected Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED: "That Councillor G Armstrong be elected as Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year."

Councillor Armstrong took the Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman invited nominations for the appointment of Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor R Harrison proposed and Councillor J W Barrett seconded that Councillor D M Holding be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED: "That Councillor D M Holding be elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year."

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L E W Brown, L Armstrong, D Holding, D L Robson, A Turner, A K Holden, F Wilkinson, A Humes, J M Proud, R Court, K Potts and T J Smith.

Councillor P May advised the Chairman that he would need to leave during the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING HELD 6 MAY 2008

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be agreed.

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 6 May 2008 be agreed as a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

5. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING HELD 9 APRIL 2008

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Neighbourhood Overview and Scrutiny Panel be agreed.

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Neighbourhood Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 9 April 2008 be agreed as a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

6. MINUTES OF PARTNERSHIP AND EFFICIENCY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING HELD 11 MARCH 2008

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting of the Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel be agreed.

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the meeting of the Partnership and Efficiency Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 11 March 2008 be agreed as a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

7. MINUTES OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING HELD 17 APRIL 2008

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel be agreed.

RESOLVED: "That the minutes of the meeting of the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 17 April 2008 be agreed as a correct record."

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

9. PUBLIC SPEAKING

One member of the public was present at the meeting. The Chairman advised he would invite him to speak at the appropriate times during the meeting.

10. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME

The content of the Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme was considered by the Committee enabling Members to identify any issues that may require to be reviewed prior to a decision being made.

Councillor Barrett made reference to the Communities Facilities Working Group Report and queried if this report referred to communal rooms.

The Leader advised that the review looked at all community facilities including communal rooms and libraries.

Discussion ensued in relation to the number of communal rooms which had been transferred to Cestria Community Housing and the Leader advised she would need to clarify how many communal rooms were still owned by the Council and report back to the Committee.

RESOLVED: "That the contents of the Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme were considered by the Committee and the Leader would report back to the next meeting in relation to the ownership of the communal rooms."

11. REVIEW INTO LOCAL WATERCOURSES

The Committee considered the report of the Scrutiny Officer which, presented the draft report of the Leisure and Neighbourhood Overview and Scrutiny Panel following the review into Local Watercourses.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the draft report was set out in Appendix 1 to the report and requested that Members consider the draft report and recommendations contained therein.

He advised that the Development and Building Control Manager and Regeneration and Planning Strategy Manager had been consulted and the recommendations amended to reflect their comments.

Discussion ensued in relation to a number of points in the report including:

- Water safety
- Pollution from minewater
- Incorrect plumbing leading into waste water and feeding into watercourses

RESOLVED: "That the recommendations in the draft report be agreed and the report be presented to the Executive."

12. REVIEW INTO LOCAL TRANSPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the County Durham Overview and Scrutiny Member Network following a review into local transport issues as set out in appendix 1 to the report.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the report was to allow members the opportunity to discuss and consider the report and recommendations contained therein.

Discussion ensued in relation to the rail network not being part of the review, the closure of post offices and the discussions held with Go Ahead North East, Arriva and also the Primary Care Trust.

The Leader stated that some of the recommendations in the report would need to be taken up by the new unitary authority.

RESOLVED: "That Members note to content of the report, agree to the recommendations contained within the report and agree that the report be presented to the Executive."

13. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2008-09

Consideration was given to the report of the Scrutiny Officer providing the Committee with a draft Work Programme for 2008/09.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the report provided Members with an opportunity to amend or request new activities to be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

He advised that the work programme reflected the Council's single priority "People and Place" and recommended Task and Finish groups be formed around two reviews, Potential for a Town Council and Town Centre Market Places.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the work programme included performance and monitoring business as well as the two reviews identified at the Scrutiny Workshop. He stated that this would be the Scrutiny Officer's last meeting before leaving the authority and as a result there would be a need for more officer involvement in the reviews.

The Chairman advised that Members of the Scrutiny committee would be able to express their interest in either review and it was suggested that a letter be forwarded to Members requesting them to complete a form and return it to the Democratic Services Assistant advising of their preferred review.

Councillors P H May and S Barr left the meeting at 6.45pm.

The Director of Corporate Services suggested that a scoping report for each review be brought to the July meeting of the Committee and it be decided at that meeting which Members would form each of the Task and Finish Groups.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that there would also be a budget available for Task and Finish Groups.

RESOLVED: "That the draft Work Programme be approved and Members advise the Democratic Services Assistant of their preferred Task and Finish Group."

14. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

There were no further suggestions for the next agenda.

15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the work programme was based around the Committee meeting on a 6-weekly cycle with Task and Finish groups meeting between.

Members agreed to the Committee meeting every 6 weeks.

RESOLVED: "That the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny committee meet on a 6 weekly cycle."

16. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: " that the next meeting of the Committee be held on Wednesday 30 July at 6.00pm."

Prior to the conclusion of business, the Chairman thanked the Scrutiny Officer for his hard work and dedication in driving scrutiny at Chester-le-Street forward over the past 2 years. He went on to wish him every success in the future.

Members proceeded to give the Scrutiny Officer a round of applause.

The meeting terminated at 6.55 pm

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

REPORT TO: People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE OF MEETING: 30th July 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Corporate Performance Report Summary
April 2007 – March 2008

ITEM NUMBER:

1 Purpose and Summary

1.1 The Council is seeking to improve its monitoring of its performance as part of its performance management framework. Previously it has reported performance in a range of ways. This report provides a summary of key areas of performance from achieving the corporate plan to complaints. The document attached in Appendix 1 is a summary of a more detailed document which has been separately made available as a background paper. It includes full details of performance on Best Value Performance Indicators for the quarter. It is considered that the council continues to make progress on corporate issues although there remains a great deal to be done.

1.2 It has been another significantly positive year for the council. This has been against challenges of a time of significant change as a result of local government re-organisation and in terms of transferring its housing function to a registered Social Landlord, Cestria Homes. The council's performance has been captured in the most positive Annual Audit and Inspection Letter received from the Audit Commission in the council's history. During the year the council marked its achievements against its ambitious improvement programme by becoming the first council to move from a 'poor' to a 'good' Comprehensive Performance Assessment categorisation. This has been followed by achieving a significant range of external assessed awards including a Chartermark for ICT, Investors in People accreditation for the whole council and the Quest Accreditation for the Leisure centre.

1.3 Members are recommended to consider and comment on the progress on improvements and the contents of the Performance Report in Appendix 1 of the Report, address the learning and remedial measures identified and

identify any other areas where improvements are required to corporate performance.

2. Consultation

2.1 The Chief Executive and Directors have been engaged in challenging the performance identified in the Corporate Performance Report and views have been accommodated in revised documents.

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

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

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

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process.

3.3 The performance management framework is a principle part of the Council's Transition Plan. This framework includes the reporting of performance to Executive and subsequently to Scrutiny on a quarterly basis. This report is part of the embedding of the framework.

3.4 The contents of this report not only includes progress on the plan but provides information on performance on corporate issues and all the priorities set out in the plan.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications and value for money statement

While there are no specific financial implications to this report a summary of financial performance information is incorporated within it. Any corrective or remedial action required by under-performance may have financial impacts. These impacts will be picked up in any proposals to address under-performance by relevant service team managers. From a value for money point of view the report shows that performance across the organisation is generally good and there is evidence of continued improvement in many areas. The Annual Audit and Inspection letter includes specific positive comments about value for money.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are no direct implications of the recommendations of this report to Local Government Review. The Corporate Performance Report will identify issues relating to progress and performance on LGR from the councils perspective. The Corporate Performance report does advise that the council is in the process of developing a Transition Plan which will have LGR implications. These will be reported when the Transition Plan is reported to full council.

4.3 Legal

There are considered to be no direct legal issues of significance arising out of this report.

4.4 Personnel

While there are no specific human resource implications to this report any choice of action to address under-performance may have an impact on human resources. This impact will be taken into account by service team managers in addressing remedial action to address under-performance.

4.5 Other Services

The corporate performance relates to all Services within the Council and has implications for improvement in Service Delivery.

4.6 Diversity

Progress on Equality and Diversity is a key issue in respect of the report. The council is improving on equality and diversity issues. The report has no implications on excluding any customer from accessing services delivered by the council. This month's diagrams have been improved to provide greater accessibility when copied in black and white. In addition full details of Best Value Performance Indicators have been included to help better understanding of definitions.

4.7 Risk

There are clear risks to the organisation in failing to measure performance and not taking remedial action to put things right if they go wrong or stray off target. The purpose of this report is to assist in addressing this risk. The council is progressing well in terms of improving risk management and details are provided in Section 5 of Appendix 1.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder. However the report covers progress on agreed priorities and performance indicators relating to this area of the council's activities.

4.9 Data Quality

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

4.10 Other Implications

The report does not relate to a key decision. It is considered that the information can be communicated to the community by inclusion on the web – site. While the report has no specific impact on e-government proposals the work of the Modernisation team was a key area of performance reported. The report raises no key issues in respect of procurement, service planning, sustainability, human rights or social inclusion outside the consideration of relevant performance indicators and corporate plan progress.

5. BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL

5.1 The report is the result of improvements the council continues to make in embedding its performance management framework. The Corporate Performance Summary Report attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of a more detailed document which has been made available to Executive Members. Members may wish to refer to that document to understand how summarised conclusions have been drawn. This format is as agreed at the CMT/Executive Away Day on 1st July 2005. It includes performance against:

- The corporate plan, where appropriate;
- Best Value Performance Indicators;
- Local Performance Indicators where available;
- Financial monitoring when appropriate;
- Risk management;
- Human resources;
- Equality and Diversity;
- The Improvement and Recovery Plan;
- The Modernisation Team;
- Audit Reports;
- Partnerships;
- Data Quality;
- Contribution to Local Government Re-organisation;
- Corporate Governance; and
- Compliments, Comments and Complaints.

5.2 The Summary sets out achievement and non-achievements while identifying learning and remedial action where appropriate. It is considered that the previous year was an incredibly successful year for the council. Since the CPA success in June 2008 the council received a significant set of accolades which showed that it was on the road towards excellence.

5.3 It has been another significantly positive year for the council. This has been against challenges of a time of significant change as a result of local government re-organisation and in terms of transferring its housing function to a registered Social Landlord, Cestria Homes. The council's performance has been captured in the most positive Annual Audit and Inspection Letter received from the Audit Commission in the council's history. During the year the council marked its achievements against its ambitious improvement programme by becoming the first council to move from a 'poor' to a 'good' Comprehensive Performance Assessment categorisation. This has been followed by achieving a significant range of external assessed awards including a Chartermark for ICT, Investors in People accreditation for the whole council and the Quest Accreditation for the Leisure centre.

The council's performance over the last year can be summarised as follows:

- The corporate plan proposals and priorities have reviewed through the development of a Transition Plan which was adopted by the council at the end of March 2008. The council now has a single priority 'People and Place' which it is now actively working to achieve;
- While 57% of indicators have achieved targets less are showing improvement since last year (57% compared with 67%), 47% of indicators show top quartile performance compared with only 40% last year although more also show bottom quartile performance.
- In terms of the 19 key indicators in need of improvement, 57% have seen targets achieved, 69% have improved, 62% show an improving trend and there are now more in top quartile and less in bottom quartile. This shows a significant improvement since last year;
- Local indicators continue to show performance improvement as 70% have improved last year compared with only 51% last year;
- 75% of actions in the Risk Strategy have been completed and work commenced on the remaining 25%, strategic risks will be re-assessed as a result of the adoption of the emerging Transition Plan;
- There is strong HR performance at a time of reduced capacity which not only included the transfer of a significant number of staff to Cestria but also included the achievement of Investors in People. Sickness levels within the council have improved. Staff turnover is high for the first time this year with a 15% turnover rate being recorded, reflecting the impact of uncertainty around LGR;
- There are no actions in the Equality Plan action plan behind target and the council now leads on equality in terms of Local Government Review;

- It has been agreed that the work of the Modernisation Team has been achieved and the Team no longer meets;
- The Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP2) has been drawn to a close following the council officially coming out of intervention. This has been replaced by an Improvement plan which is now accommodated in the Transition Plan;
- During the year the council has received some crucial and significant Audit Commission reports including a 'good' CPA report, a significantly and seriously positive Annual Audit and Inspection letter including a positive Direction of Travel statement following CPA recategorisation. In addition the council has achieved IIP accreditation (which proves the progress the council has made in supporting and developing its people), a Charter Mark for ICT, Quest accreditation for Leisure Services, Golden Green Apple Award, Green Flag Awards and a significantly positive Pilot Benefits Inspection judgement. The council also won the first regional Shine Improvement Award for proving to be the most improved council in the country;
- There have been significantly less complaints this year than last (234 compared with 339 this time last year) and the proportion of compliments, is improving towards one compliment being received for every one complaint received. Only 27% of complaints were considered justified compared to 44%% this time last year;
- Response times to corporate standards continued to improve overall;
- Significant progress has been made on Data Quality and a good Audit Commission Data Quality audit was received before the end of the year and was reflected in the Annual Audit letter and Direction of Travel Statement. At the end of the year the council reviewed its Data Quality Policy and its Data Quality Strategy Action Plan;
- Local Government Reorganisation has begun to impact on the work of the council and the council is taking a significant role in the programme; and
- Strong and positive arrangements in corporate governance exist and are improving

5.4 Members are advised that the report includes summaries of audit reports that have been received during the quarter. Action Plans have been agreed by officers to address recommendations made by the Audit Commission. This is considered to be the best way to bring these to the attention of the Executive. It is proposed that the next Corporate Performance Report will include Health and Safety. Modernisation Team progress will no longer be reported as the work of this service improvement team has been successfully achieved.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Members are recommended to consider and comment on the progress on improvements and the contents of the Performance Report in Appendix 1 of the Report, address the learning and remedial measures identified and identify any other areas where improvements are required to corporate performance.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED**

- 7.1 Corporate Performance Report April 2006 – March 2007
- 7.2 Corporate Performance Report April – September 2007
- 7.3 Corporate Performance Report April – June 2007
- 7.4 Corporate Performance Report April 2007 – March 2008
- 7.5 Audit Commission Corporate Assessment June 2008
- 7.6 Audit Commission Benefits Service Pilot Inspection September 2007
- 7.7 Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter March 2008
- 7.8 Charter Mark Assessors Report August 2007
- 7.9 Investors in People Assessors Report October 2007
- 7.10 Transition Plan 2008/2009 March 2008
- 7.11 Corporate Plan 2006/2009 and 2007/2010

Ian Forster
Director of Corporate Services
8th June 2008
Version 1.0

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Chester-le-Street District Council

Annual Corporate Performance Report Summary April 2007 to March 2008

Report of Corporate Management Team

Data Quality

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the information presented in this Report. The council is committed to improving its data quality management. As part of this it has developed a Self Assessment, a Data Quality Policy and a Data Quality Strategy was developed in September 2006. The Director of Corporate Services has officer responsibility for data quality and the Executive member for Community engagement and Partnerships is Data Quality Member Champion. The Audit Commission has concluded that there are at least adequate arrangements in place to endure good data quality across all their Key Lines of Enquiry.



Chester-le-Street
District Council

This report is a summary of the detailed document entitled **Corporate Performance Report April 2007 – March 2008**. This is available on request. It provides a summary of the council's progress on key areas of its performance, what learning is taking place and how any under achievement is being addressed.

Contents:

- 1. Corporate Plan Progress**
- 2. Best Value Performance Indicator Performance**
- 3. Local Performance Indicator Progress**
- 4. Financial Position**
- 5. Risk Management Progress**
- 6. Human Resource Progress**
- 7. Equality and Diversity Position Statement**
- 8. Improvement and Recovery Plan Position Statement**
- 10. Audit Feedback**
- 11. Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints**
- 12. Partnerships Progress**
- 13. Data Quality Progress**
- 14. Local Government Reorganisation Progress**
- 15. Corporate Governance Progress**
- 16. Overall Performance**

1. Corporate Plan & Transition Plan Progress

1.1 Summary

The new Corporate Plan was published at the end of June. Progress against the plan has been delayed because of the uncertainty around Local Government Review. At the meeting of the Executive in October Members agreed a revised approach to re-assessing priorities and proposals. Revisions were considered by the Executive in December.

As a result of Local Government re-organisation, a new unitary Council will come into being in April 2009 and Chester-le-Street District Council will cease to exist. In order to set out a framework as to how the Council will conduct its business during this final year a Transition Plan has been adopted.

The objectives of the Transition Plan are to:

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

This plan is now the overarching plan for Chester-le-Street District Council during the transition period, and as such sets out how services and projects will be facilitated, delivered and resourced. It incorporates a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010 and sets out the Council's new priority of **'People and Place'**.

The Plan was only adopted at the end of March 2008 and therefore it is too early to measure performance against. At the time of writing this report significant progress had been made.

2. Best Value Performance Indicators

2.1 Summary

There have been a number of indicators removed from the BVPI set for this financial year. There are now 44 Best Value Performance Indicators which the authority are required to collect and report for 2007/2008. These equate to 74 individual returns.

At the time of reporting, where indicators relate to Cestria, the data was not available to us. Performance for these indicators will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan. For the purpose of this report, the analysis below is based on performance against the remaining set of indicators.

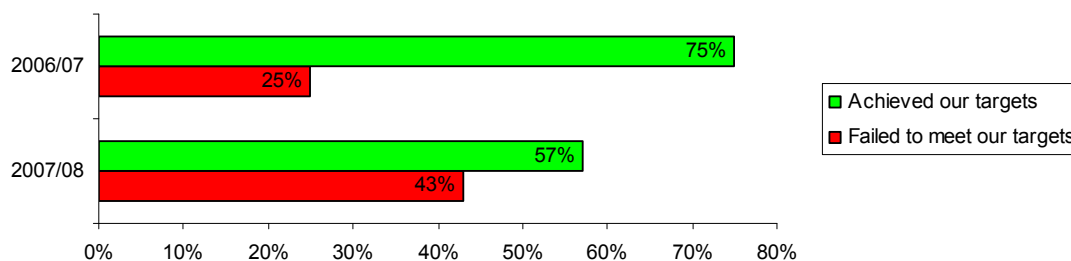
Best Value Performance Indicators

Performance for the Best Value Indicators is as follows (comparisons against last year's outturn figures are shown in brackets):

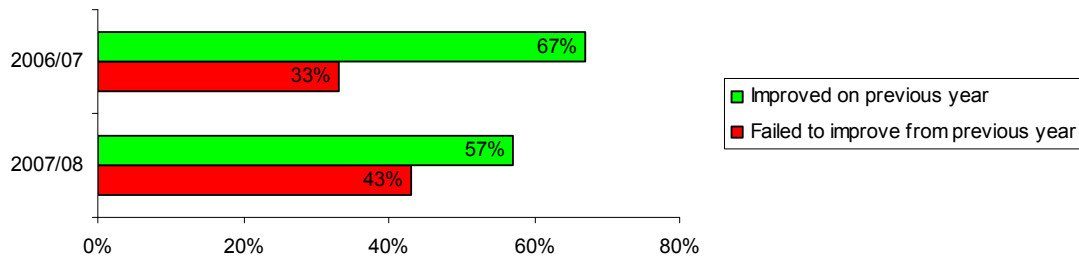
57% (75%) have achieved target
43% (25%) have failed to meet targets
57% (67%) have shown an improvement from last year
43% (33%) have failed to improve from last year
57% (65%) have shown an improvement over 3 years
33% (27%) have failed to improve over 3 years
47% (40%) show best quartile performance
28% (22%) show worst quartile performance

(Note: Quartile figures are estimated figures comparing performance against the National District Councils 2006/07 outturns published by the Audit Commission.)

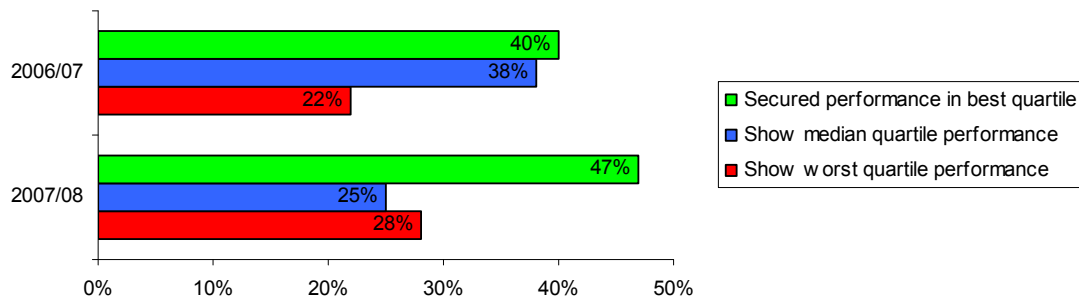
BVPI Achievement against Target



BVPI Improvement from last year



BVPI Quartile Comparisons



Figures indicate a dip in performance in terms of achieving targets and improvement from last year as well as showing an increase in the number of indicators within worst quartile. However, figures continue to show improved performance over the year in terms of securing best quartile performance.

Corporate Performance Clinics

Corporate Performance Clinics continue to be held each quarter and prove to be very effective. The Audit Commission has also acknowledged that the Clinics add value to data use and reporting and suggest it would be beneficial to continue with them.

The Clinic held on 22 February 2008 principally focused on April to December 2007 performance; Data Quality Audit; Data Quality Policy; Data Quality Strategy Action Plan; Access to Services Inspection; and the National Indicator Set update. The Clinic held 22 April 2008 principally focused on LGR; Target Setting for the new National Indicator set; Data collection; Best Value Performance Plan; and the Annual Audit and Inspection Report. The next Clinic is scheduled to take place in August 2008.

Key 19 Best Value Performance Indicators

A set of 19 key Best Value indicators have been identified from last year's annual performance as requiring additional focus throughout this year. These indicators either: did not achieve target, did not improve, did not show an improvement trend, or were within the worst quartile performers.

The set of 19 indicators are listed in the table below. (Those highlighted in bold were also included in the key 20 indicators monitored last year.)

BVPI	Description	Why focus?
8	% invoices paid in 30 days	Target not achieved Worst Quartile
9	% council tax collected	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend Worst Quartile
10	% non domestic rates due	Target not achieved Worst Quartile
11a	Percentage of top-paid 5% of staff who are women	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
12	No days lost as a result of sickness	Worst Quartile
64	Number unfit private dwellings returned into occupation	No improvement Downward trend Worst quartile
66a	Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owned on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	Worst quartile
184a	% non decent homes	Target not achieved No improvement Worst Quartile
184b	% proportion of non decent homes	Target not achieved Worst Quartile
212	Average time to re-let homes	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	No improvement Downward trend Worst quartile
76c	The number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit fraud investigations carried out by the Local Authority per year, per 1,000 caseload	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
78a	The average processing time taken for all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims submitted to the Local Authority, for which the date of decision is within the financial year being reported	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend

BVPI	Description	Why focus?
82a(ii)	Total tonnage of household waste arisings sent by the Authority for recycling	Worst quartile
199b	The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend Worst quartile
200b	Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme sets out?	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
127a	Violent crime per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend
174	The number of racial incidents reported to the Local Authority, and subsequently recorded, per 100,000 population	Target not achieved No improvement Downward trend

Performance against the 19 key indicators is as follows:

46% have achieved target
54% have failed to meet targets
69% show an improvement
31% have failed to improve
62% direction of travel shows an improvement trend
31% direction of travel shows a declining trend
10% show best quartile performance
50% show worst quartile performance

Figures show improved performance over the year in terms of achieved targets and improvement from last year. However, there is a dip in performance in respect to securing best quartile performance as well as an increase in the number of indicators within worst quartile.

2.2 Detailed performance Information

Detailed performance information to support the above figures is available on the attached spreadsheet.

2.3 Learning and remedial action

Remedial measures to improve performance are agreed as part of the action planning and Performance Clinic work.

We continue to drive performance improvement through ensuring that:

- people are clear as to what has to be achieved;
- an action plan to deliver is in place;
- procedures are changed to provide capacity to improve; and
- careful monitoring of measures are in place.

2.4 New National Indicators

From 2008/2009 the Best Value Performance indicators will be abolished and replaced with a new single set of National Indicators to measure the Government's national priorities. The new performance framework is focused on outcomes and their delivery through stronger partnership working.

As some of the Best Value Performance Indicators have proved to be useful in measuring our performance we are to retain a small number of these indicators to be monitored in-house.

3. Local Performance Indicators

3.1 Summary

We continue to measure the local performance indicators which were developed for 2006/2007. These are not statutory indicators, but indicators that show our performance in other areas of service provision that are of local, rather than national, interest. This year there are 34 local performance indicators. These equate to 37 individual returns.

At the time of reporting, where indicators relate to Cestria, the data was not available to us. Performance for these indicators will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan. For the purpose of this report, the analysis below is based on performance against the remaining set of indicators.

Performance for the local performance indicators is as follows (comparisons against last year's outturn figures are shown in brackets):

56% (51%) have achieved target
44% (49%) are behind target
70% (n/a) have shown an improvement from last year
30% (n/a) have failed to improve from last year

Figures show improved performance over the year in terms of achieved target and improvement trend.

3.2 Detailed Performance Information

Detailed performance information to support the above figures is available on the attached spreadsheet.

3.3 Learning and Remedial Action

Remedial measures to improve performance are agreed as part of the action planning. We will continue to work to refine these indicators.

4. Financial Monitoring Position

The mid year financial monitoring report was considered by the Executive in December. It has not been possible to report final outturns at the time of writing this report. Details will be provided as soon as this is available.

5. Risk Management

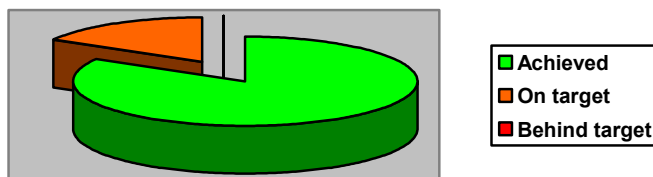
5.1. Summary

Implementation of the Corporate Risk Management Strategy for 2007-08 comprises 24 key actions which include the following achievements within the current period:

- Environmental Risk Review
- Annual Service Planning & Risk
- Support to Stock Transfer Insurance

The delivery of the strategy continues with 15 of the 18 actions due to date completed and the remaining 3 on target to complete to timescale.

Progress on the Strategy is therefore as follows:



The Corporate Plan set out 20 Key Strategic risks and it is considered that these have been effectively managed over the current year. The Strategic Risk Profile was updated for the current Corporate Plan and a more comprehensive review is due to be undertaken later in 2007-08 alongside the review of priorities and development of the transition plan.

5.2 Learning and remedial action

The council has committed to re-assess its key strategic risks as a result of its learning and this has been identified within the corporate planning cycle. Risk management will also be further embedded through the next round of service planning and key decision making. Progress is good in terms of the implementation of the strategy and no remedial action is considered necessary.

6. Human Resources

6.1 Summary

At the end of the period the Council employed 350 staff. Staff turnover for the year was 15%, which includes Casual staff.

Staff sickness was an average of 11.0 days per employee for the period, which can be broken down as follows;

Authority total: 11.0 days average
 6.2 days (long term)
 4.8 days (short term/occasional)

Directorates:

Resources 9.5 days average
 4.1 (long term)
 5.3 (short term/occasional)

Development 11.4 days average
 6.4 days (long term)
 5.0 (short term/occasional)

Community 13.7 days average
 8.1 days (long term)
 5.6 (short term/occasional)

CE/Corporate Services 8.1 days average
 4.9 days (long term)
 3.2 days (short term/ occasional)

A total of 105 employees achieved 100% attendance for 2007/08.

- 8 employee suggestions were made through the employee scheme, over the period.
- The Authority took part in Investors in People assessment in September 2007 and has successfully been awarded the IIP accreditation.
- The Council's Organisational Development Programme for 2007 "Rising Stars" is underway.
- 360 degree appraisals have now been concluded for Service Team Managers, the Council's Corporate Management Team and for Executive members.
- The Council's Organisational Development Strategy is on target.

- The Employee survey 2007 was issued to staff in September 2007 and we have recently received the results.
- TUPE transfer of employees to Cestria Community Housing Association has been completed.
- A procedure for devising Personal Profiles for all employees is currently being designed, prior to briefing sessions and implementation.

6.2 Learning and remedial action

Significant progress is being made in terms of HR performance. All action plans are on target. Action Plans will be developed where improvement is not being achieved. Progress has been made in improving sickness performance, from 11.8 days per employee for 2006/07 to 11 days for 2007/08.

The Organisational Development Programme has been significantly progressed and learning from this has been built in the Corporate Training Plan and Learning Strategy. In particular 11 Action Learning Sets concluded work on a range of topics to meet the council's priorities in the Corporate Plan and the Improvement and Recovery Plan. This approach has taken place once again during 2007/2008 as part of the next organisational development programme, with the three Action Learning Sets due to present their findings in May 2008. Not only will services improve as a result of implementing recommendations but the learning can be applied to action learning set development in the future.

In addition a programme of CPI (continuous process improvement) projects were also undertaken and completed during the year. These resulted in both measurable outcomes organisationally and individually, for those involved and increased learning and development.

The HR service has contributed to the transfer of staff over to Cestria Homes and the led the approach leading to the successful Investors in People Accreditation during the year.

7. Equality and Diversity Position Statement

7.1 Summary

The revised Diversity Impact Assessment methodology has been implemented by Service Team Managers as part of the service planning process. Completed DIA timetables were submitted to EDWG in February and a schedule of assessment monitoring drawn up. Consultation requirements will be co-ordinated centrally. As part of the LGR process, new impact assessment toolkits have been developed, and these will be rolled out in all 8 councils over the next year.

Local Government Re-organisation will impact in the following ways:

- The Corporate Equality Plan was not revised in January, but will remain unchanged until March 2009. Progress will continue to be monitored quarterly at Equality and Diversity Working Group. Checks will be made to ensure that requirements of the revised Equality Standard for Local Government are being met. A report was submitted to Council in January setting out this position and providing information so Members can be assured of our continued compliance.
- Although it is believed that the Authority meets the requirements of Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government, external validation will not be sought, and therefore we will not be able to declare our Level 3 target at the end of March.
- A number of actions contained within the Corporate Equality Plan action plans have been put on hold. These are primarily Level 4 actions, and therefore do not impact upon our declaration of Level 2.

The Equality and Diversity Working Group is now meeting quarterly rather than monthly. It will continue to monitor progress and performance, but has determined to focus on key events over the next year, covering all 6 strands of the equality agenda.

Performance

Corporate Equality Plan actions:

	Number of actions	% completed	% on target	% behind target
Corporate Equality Plan	115	84% (82%)	16% (18%)	0%
Equality Scheme	53	79% (58%)	21% (42%)	0%
Total	168	83% (73%)	17% (37%)	0%

Equality & Diversity Working Group work programme:

At the November meeting of EDWG, it was agreed to draw a line under the existing work programme and start afresh in the New Year with a new programme that reflects the group's objectives for the next 15 months.

7.2 Learning and remedial action

Following a review of the Equality and Diversity Working Group's effectiveness, in November it was agreed to move to quarterly meetings. Monitoring and performance management would still take place, but the group agreed to focus on a series of events over the following 15 months that would relate to all 6 strands of the equality agenda. This will be done on a task group basis, first 2 events being:

- ▶ February: LGBT history month. A number of activities were carried out including staff quiz within TeamTalk; a dedicated page on our website which contained historical and other interesting information, quizzes and useful links to other websites; and an information stand was set out in the Civic Centre mall.

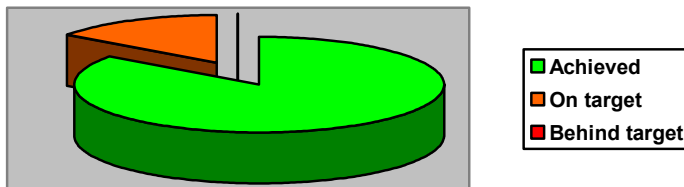
- ▶ April: It's a Knockout – a repeat of the event undertaken by an Action Learning Set in September 2006. There will be mixed participation – those with learning disability, physical disability and able bodied.

8. IRP Position Statement

8.1 Summary

The Council is now out of intervention, and a decision made to draw a line under Improvement and Recovery Plan (2). The remaining objectives to be achieved are about embedding good working practice and it is felt that this will be evidenced in the quarterly performance management report. A new, shorter Improvement Plan, aligned to the LGR Transition Plan, has been agreed, and this will be monitored through Programme Management Board, starting from April 2008. This is focused on the new council priority of People and Place, and will cover the period up to 31 March 2009 when the new unitary authority comes into being. Although the new Improvement Plan has a limited timeframe, it is extremely important that the council continues to ensure improving services for the community during that time.

At the end of December, final performance on IRP 2 was: of the 137 key actions 85% (85%) had been achieved, 15% (15%) remain on target, 0% (0%) were behind target.



8.2 Learning and remedial action

The implementation of 2 Improvement and Recovery Plans has led to an enormous amount of learning for both individuals and the organization as a whole, culminating in the 'good' CPA result. This should place people in a stronger position in terms of finding roles in the new authority.

10. Audit Feedback & Summary

10.1 Summary

The formal CPA Judgement was received in June and was reported in the last quarterly report. Chester-le-Street has moved from a 'poor' to a 'good' council.

There was only one key Audit Commission Report published during the second quarter. This was the result of the Pilot Benefits Inspection.

Earlier this year the Benefits Team volunteered to take part in an Audit Commission Pilot to help develop a new Inspection Framework for the Benefits Service. The learning from the pilot is intended to establish a completely new inspection regime following the merger of the former Benefits Fraud Inspectorate's merger with the Audit Commission.

The process is a 'harder test' based on customer outcomes rather than the previously process orientated performance standards approach. An inspection was undertaken in June and an Inspection report was issued in August. The Inspectors found that the service was now a 'good' service with 'promising prospects for improvement'. This was the best result out of all the pilots. We unofficially now have a better service than the likes of Bradford and Tower Hamlets.

This is another excellent result for the council and shows how much progress the benefits team has made. They were labeled a poor service in 2004.

In August the ITC section received the Charter Mark accreditation, the first in the region to do so.

In October the council was successful in gaining the Investors in People Accreditation. This is a significant success and proves how well the council supports and develops its workforce in delivering its services. In the same month Leisure services achieve the Quest Accreditation. The council has received many other accolades through external assessment such as the 'Loo of the year award', the Golden Green Apple award and Green Flags.

The only Audit Report to be received in the third quarter was confirmation that the Best Value Performance Plan complied with the relevant legislation.

The audit commission submitted its Annual Audit and Inspection letter to the council at the end of March 2008. This was reported to Council at the end of the month and is available on the Council's website.

Every year the Audit Commission publish their Annual Audit and Inspection letter. This year's letter was issued at the end of March and can be downloaded from the link at the right hand side of this page.

It provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. It draws on the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council for 2006/07 and from any inspections undertaken since the last Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. It includes the council's Direction of Travel report for the previous year. The letter provides some very positive messages about the council's progress over the last couple of years.

It is considered that the Annual Audit and Inspection report demonstrates the massive progress the council has made over the last few years. The report acknowledges that the council was the first council in the country to make such a significant improvement in its CPA and considers the council's performance improvement to be 'impressive'. The letter identifies that overall Use of Resources judgement has improved to a Level 3 and the Value for Money judgement has been maintained at a level 2.

The key messages arising from the Commission's inspection work are:

- The Council has continued to improve its services in its priority areas and overall. The scale of the Council's improvement is now reflected in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) category which has improved from 'poor' to 'good' as a result of a CPA inspection in June 2007. The Council was the first District Council to achieve such a significant improvement in its CPA category.
- Progress against the Council's priorities and contribution to wider community outcomes is good. There are many examples of where the Council has worked closely with residents and partners in delivering significant improvements.
- In common with Councils across Durham, the Council has implemented good regeneration projects. However, the Councils are not working together well enough to close the gap between economic prosperity in Durham and the rest of the country.
- The Council has good arrangements for further improvement.

The Key messages arising from their audit work are:

- they were able to issue an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounts
- the Council considered stakeholder views when deciding not to produce an annual report

- the Council continues to ensure that its medium term financial strategy, budgets and capital programme are soundly based and designed to deliver its strategic priorities;
- the Council has continued to improve arrangements for controlling spending and reported an overall underspend in 2006/07;and
- the Council has improved arrangements in internal control and continues to perform well in this area

Other Key messages

The Government has decided to take forward the option of local government reorganisation in County Durham. The Council will demise next year and its functions will be transferred to a new unitary council that will cover the whole of County Durham. Early indications are that the Council is making a positive contribution to making a success of the new Council but this early impetus needs to be maintained over the coming months. In particular the Commission recommended that the Council should:

- Prioritise making a positive contribution to transitional working designed to establish the new Council
- Set aside or secure sufficient resources to make the above contribution; and
- Ensure that attention is given to maintaining key public services in the transition period

10.2 Learning and remedial action

The council has learned much from the CPA and Pilot experiences and service improvement has been undertaken as a result. Most importantly the council volunteered for both inspections. Indeed Investors in People is a voluntary accreditation and this proves that the council is open to external scrutiny and evaluation.

This has been an excellent year for the council in terms of progress in its improvement programme which is clearly shown by external assessment responses and successes.

The council's progress has been recognised at regional level when the council won the first Shine Improvement Award.

11. Compliments, comments and complaints Analysis

11.1 Summary

Throughout 2007-2008 the Council continues to focus upon embedding the culture of handling and responding to complaints in a timely and positive manner. Complaints should be seen as an opportunity for feedback from customers and a way to influence the way we deliver services in the future. To further embed the complaints culture into the organisation, a continual process improvement project commenced in December 2007 with specific aims to raise awareness of the importance of dealing with complaints and also to evaluate and improve the process overall.

Total Complaints

The following statistics represent the information received for the period April 2007 – March 2008. Figures for the same period last year are indicated in brackets.

234 (339) formal complaints were received by the Council.

27 % (44 %) were considered to be justified

73 % (56 %) were considered to be unjustified

10 (14) Ombudsman complaints were received during the period.

No (No) complaints were upheld by the Ombudsman

191 (224) compliments/letters of thanks were registered during the period.

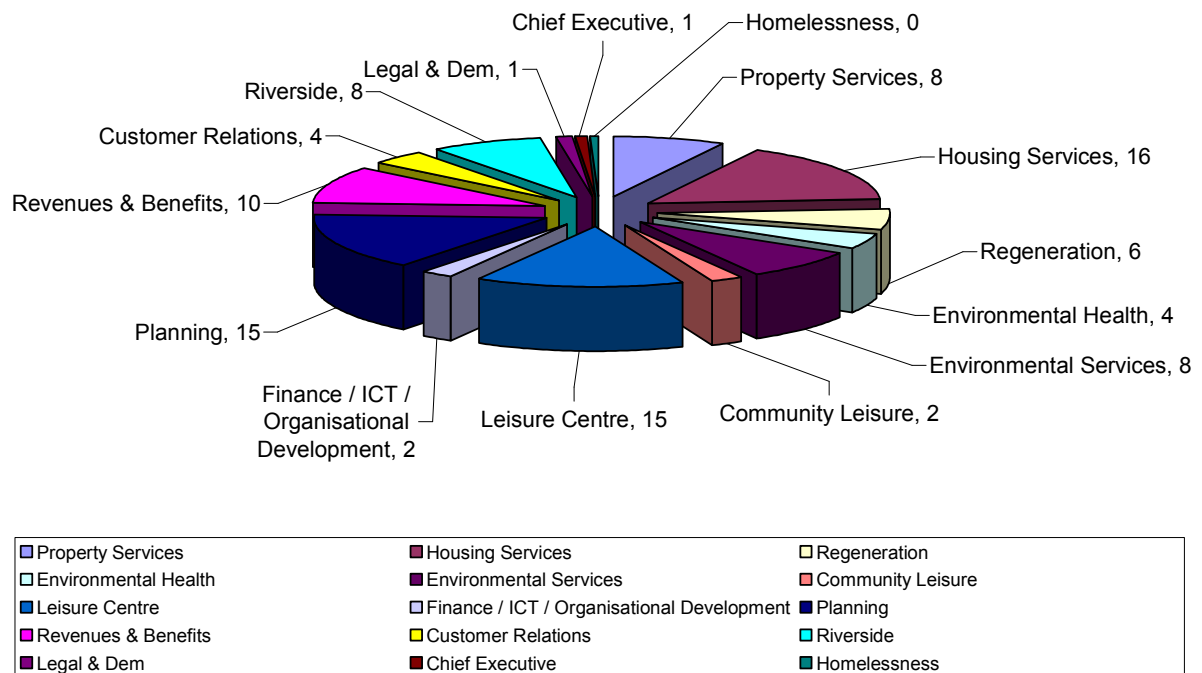
11.2 Formal Complaints April 2007 – March 2008

A total of 234 (339) formal complaints were submitted in the period

Nature of Complaints – Service Teams

- 10 % (8 %) related to the Revenue and Benefits service
- 8 % (8 %) related to the Environmental Services
- 8 % (8 %) related to the Property Services
- 16 % (18 %) related to Housing Services
- 25 % (27 %) related to the Leisure Services
- 15 % (15 %) related to Planning Services
- 6 % (5 %) related to Regeneration
- 4 % (4 %) related to Environmental Health Services
- 4 % (4 %) related to Customer Relations
- 2 % (2 %) related to Finance / ICT & Organisational Development

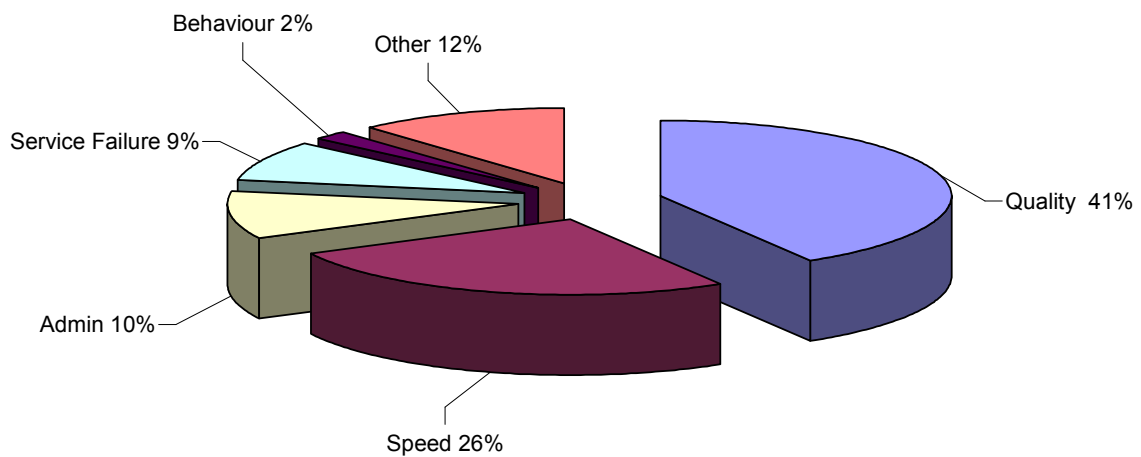
**% of complaints received by Service Area
April 2007 - March 2008**



Nature of Complaints – Complaint Types

41 % (45 %) were in respect of *quality of service*
10 % (11 %) were in respect of *administration of services*
2 % (2 %) was in respect of *behaviour of staff*
9 % (5%) were in respect of *service failure*
26 % (25 %) were in respect of the *speed of service provided*
12 % (12 %) were in respect of other reasons

Nature of complaint 2007/2008

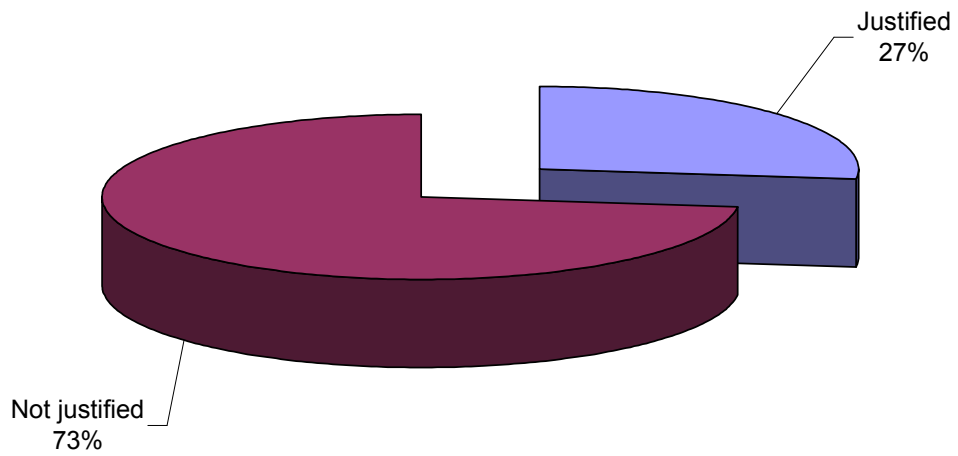


Outcome

27 % (44 %) were considered to be justified

73 % (56 %) were considered to be unjustified

Proportion justified / unjustified complaints 2007/2008



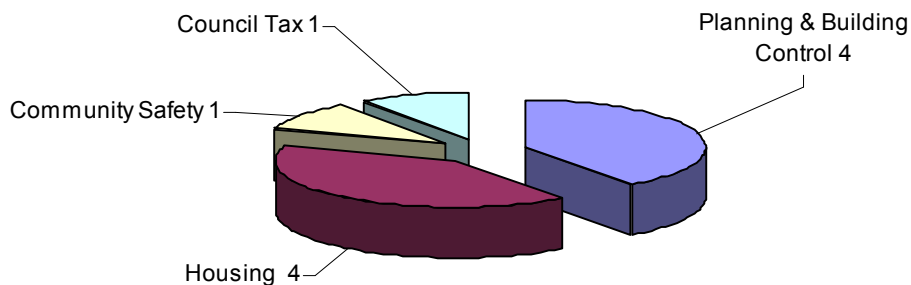
11.3 Ombudsman Complaints April 2007 – March 2008

- 10 (14) Ombudsman complaints were received during the period.
- No (No) complaints were upheld by the Ombudsman
- The overall number of complaints raised against the council has reduced by 29% compared to 2006 – 2007
- All complaints were responded to within the Ombudsman’s target time (29 days)

Nature of Complaints

40% related to planning services
40% related to housing services
10% related to council tax
10% related to community safety

Ombudsman by classification 2007 / 2008

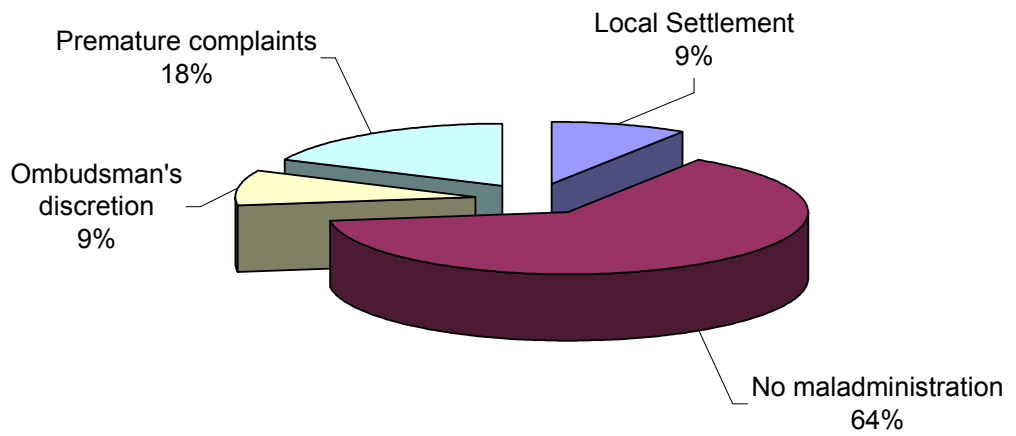


Outcome

The Ombudsman issued 6 decision letters in the period – no complaints were upheld against the Council:

Local settlement	9%
No evidence of maladministration	64%
Ombudsman Discretion	9%
Premature complaints	18%

Ombudsman decisions 2007 /2008



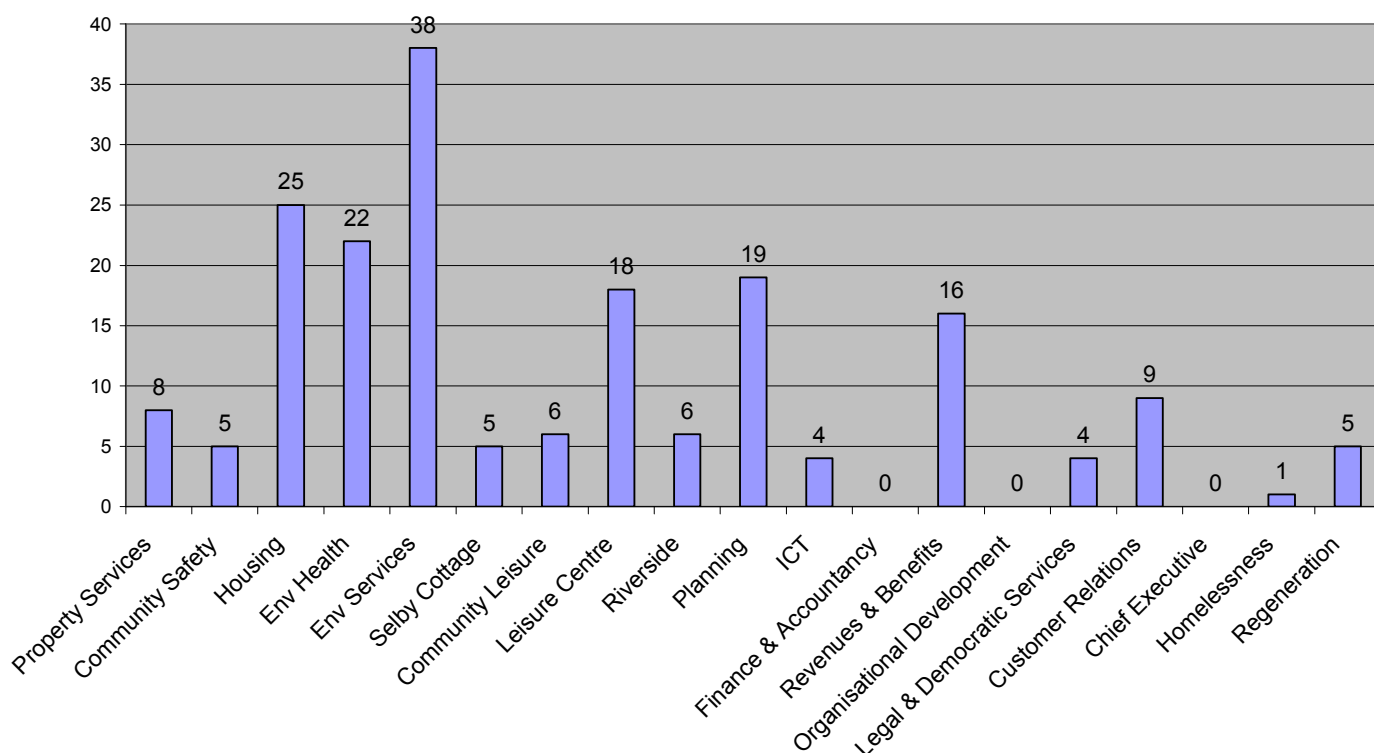
11.4 Compliments April 2007 – March 2008

191 (224) compliments/letters of thanks were registered during the period.

Nature of Compliments

- 16 related to the revenue & benefits service
- 38 related to the environmental services
- 25 related to housing services
- 27 related to the leisure services
- 19 related to planning services
- 22 related to environmental health services
- 5 related to regeneration
- 9 related to customer relations
- 4 related to resources / ICT / organisational development
- 10 related to council / combined services

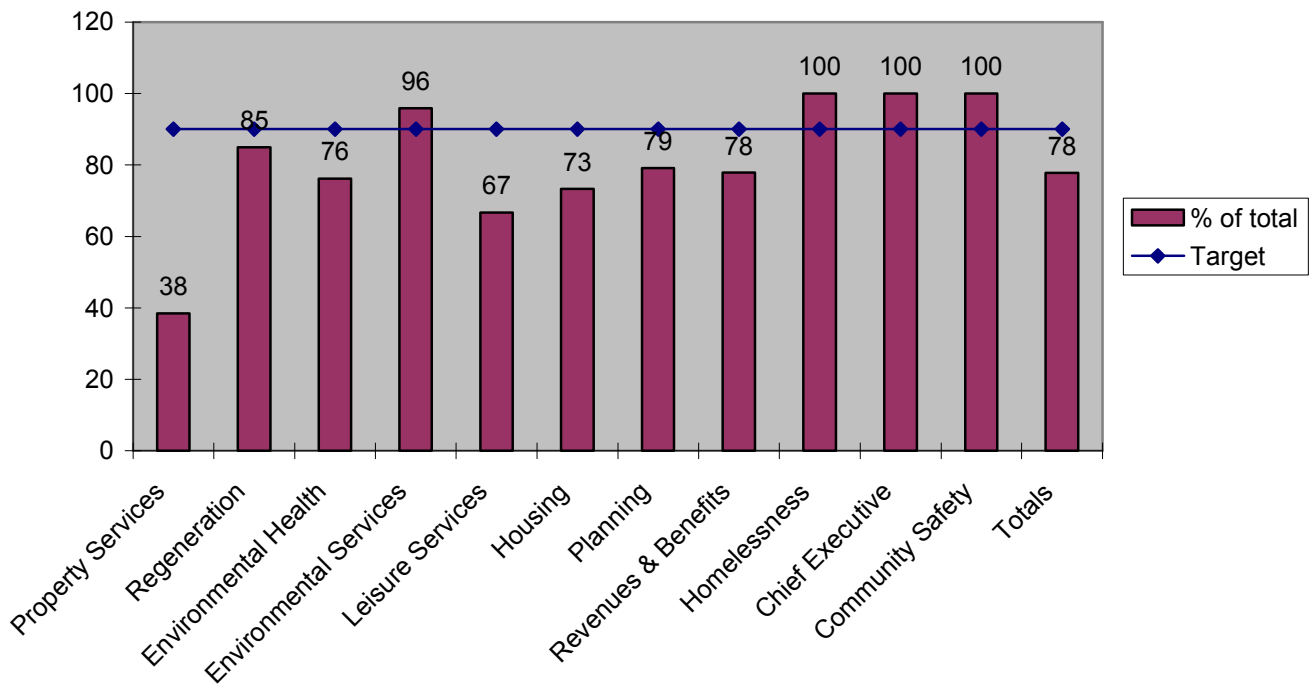
Compliments Received by Teams April - December 2007



11.5. Response to MP Enquiries within 10 Working Days

The graph below shows the performance by each service team in dealing with MP enquiries within the agreed service standard performance of 10 working days.

MP Enquiries % response within 10 days April 2007- March 2008



Total Number of Enquiries Received from MP	
Total Number of MP enquiries / complaints received 2007 / 2008	151
Total Number which were MP enquiries	122
Total Number which were MP complaints about the Council	29

Performance has dropped slightly by 1% compared to the previous quarter but has increased by 2% against the same period in 2006 / 2007. IF we were to discount the performance of the services transferred to Cestria, the overall performance of the remaining council services would increase to 84% for the whole 2007 – 2008 period.

11.5 Other Performance Information

New monitoring processes were put in place last year and the following results can be identified:

- 85 % of complaints were responded to in 10 days (target 90%)
- 78 % MP queries were responded to in 10 days (target 90%)
- 97 % Freedom of information enquiries were responded to in 20 working days (target 100%)
- 93 % of e-mail enquiries were responded to within 24 hours (target 100%)

11.6 Learning and remedial action

It has become clear over the year that the analysis of complaints at service level is necessary in order that individual services can learn from complaints and share this learning across the organisation. Proposals have been built into the Learning Strategy to embed this throughout the organization.

A further analysis of results shows that:

- The number of complaints logged compared to the same period last year has reduced by 31% – 234 compared with 339, however part of this can be attributed to the handover of housing services to Cestria Community Housing Group in February 2008.
- Most complaints related to Leisure Services, Planning and Housing which combined equate to 58% of all complaints received.
- 41% of complaints related to the quality of service people have received.
- The % of justified complaints has reduced from 44% to 27% when compared to the same period in 2006 / 2007.
- Targets set to respond to a range of complaints and enquiries have not been met throughout the year, however there have been clear signs of improvement compared to the same quarter in 2006 / 2007, namely an overall 2% increase in MP enquiries dealt with in target time and also overall handling of complaints within target time has increased by 2.7%. It is also encouraging to note that the remaining council services all achieved a 100% target achievement for the final ¼ of the financial year and this issue will continue to be addressed and promoted as part of the wholesale review of complaints procedures and processes as part of the Council's Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) project between December 2007 and May 2008.

12. Partnerships Progress

12.1 Summary

As part of the council's Improvement and Recovery Plan there were clear actions to consider and improve the effectiveness of existing partnerships. To add weight for the need of this the Audit Report, identified in Section 10 (page 17), suggested that the council was underperforming in this area. Whilst the council was therefore already aware of this there was a clear need to make change.

The council has responded by approving a Partnership Strategy in November 2006 with a detailed Action Plan. The council has commissioned an electronic Partnership 'toolkit' through the North East Centre of Excellence and provided training to Corporate Support Team. The Chief Executive has been selected as the council's Partnership Champion and the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Partnerships is the Member Champion.

It is clear that partnership working is fundamental to what we can achieve in the District. Many of the achievements set out in the Corporate Plan could only have happened by working with others. 'Working in Partnership' is a firm priority and we have developed a Partnership Strategy to help us achieve our vision. The key components of the strategy are:

- understanding what partnerships we are in;
- understanding how effective they are;
- understanding how healthy they are; and
- ensuring that we improve those which need to be.

Programme Management Board is monitoring implementation of this toolkit.

The review of our partnerships has a significant impact on the development of a single priority of '**People and Place**'. An assessment of the potential gaps in performance of partnerships and what we can do in the council's remaining lifetime to secure sustainable change is part of ongoing work to develop the new priority. Progress will be reported here in due course.

The Transition Plan has addressed what needs to be done and a significant part of the '**People and Place**' priority is to develop the partnerships as part of the 'Strengthening Partnerships' Action Learning Set. At the time of writing this report a Delivery Plan to address improving partnerships had been agreed by the Executive.

12.2 Learning and Remedial Action

It is too early to measure improvement as a result of the introduction of the Strategy. Similarly it is too early to gain any learning from our experiences and with the use of the toolkit. We have found that some partners are reluctant to engage in our effectiveness activity and we will need to find ways of convincing partner organizations of mutual benefits. Clearly we need to ensure that both the strategy works for the council and meets our objectives and addresses the previous findings of the Audit Commission. Programme Management Board will capture such learning and will consider remedial action against **'People and Place'** .priority delivery plan implementation underperformance. The Strategy itself will be reviewed as part of the process agreed by Executive for reviewing strategies in the light of local government re-organisation.

13. Data Quality Progress

13.1 Summary

The following progress has been made in respect of the implementation of the Data Quality Policy since April 2007:

- The adoption of the Strategy and action plan;
- Data quality risks, commitment and proposals built into Corporate plan;
- Data Quality Policy and Strategy communicated to customers through the Internet;
- Data Quality Policy and Strategy communicated to staff and members through the Intranet;
- Data Quality built into Performance Management Handbook and communicated to staff;
- Data Quality considered as part of the Performance Management Review;
- Data quality commitment incorporated as a feature of Corporate Performance Reports and within performance clinics:
- Decisions made not to publish information because data quality was not proved e.g. a decision not to publish BV 166 quarterly statistics because the information as to performance was not dependable, and now resolved.
- Data Quality included in Corporate Training Plan as part of Performance Management training.
- Intranet site developed
- Corporate Guidelines developed and implemented
- Corporate Audit devised and built into intranet, will identify gaps to assist strategy development
- Further awareness undertaken as a result and data quality is communicated more clearly now. Communications plan developed and on intranet
- Data Quality Responsibility Register developed and significantly completed
- Programme Management Board taking stronger role on monitoring of data Quality
- Improved sign off with LPI's following same process as BVPI's
- Data quality incorporated into all corporate reports and built into Report Writing Protocol
- Developed revised Service Plan Guidance
- Staff and Managers Audit undertaken
- Training presentation provided to all staff
- Data Quality Training provided as part of Members Induction programme
- Data quality built into Performance Clinics
- A review of the Data Quality Strategy Action Plan and the Data Quality Policy has been completed

- A Revised Policy and Strategy Action Plan was agreed at the end of March

The Audit Commission has carried out an audit of Data Quality Arrangements. This has proved to be positive with few recommendations made. The council has reviewed its action Plan in the light of the recommendations made.

There are no issues of Data Quality failures or exceptions to be reported during this year

13.2 Learning and remedial action

Significant progress has been made in respect of the implementation of the Data Quality Strategy largely around corporate awareness. The Audit Commission produced a positive audit report.

As a result of the audit we now have a good understanding of where there are potential weaknesses in the Authority and will be able to address these in the future.

No remedial action is required as part of any Data Quality failures or exceptions during the current quarter.

14. Local Government Reorganisation Progress

14.1 Summary

In September 2007 a project team was set up to help manage the council's contributions potential transition to a new single unitary authority. The team is led by the Director of Corporate Services and based around the council's Performance and Improvement Team. It also includes key Human Resources, communications, a representative for the trade unions and support staff. So far it has:

- Developed and agreed terms of reference and principles;
- Developed an Intranet site to allow access to key documents and information for staff and members;
- Developed an Information Request Register and responded to initial data requests where appropriate;
- Developed a communications plan; and
- Published three newsletters to staff and Members
- Engaged in transitional arrangements.

The team will be commencing development of a project plan as soon as there is clarity on the future following decisions on judicial review.

The council has re-organised its senior management to assist it in developing the capacity within the organisation to deliver business as usual while contributing to the transition to the new organisation. At the same time the council has commenced developing a transitional plan which will help it focus on a single priority of 'people and place' through to March 2009.

The council is now significantly engaged in assisting the transition to the new authority .It has key officers who are leading and engaging in the workstreams and taking best practice into the new council.

14.2 Learning and remedial action

Significant progress has been made in establishing a team to assist the council positively contributing to the smooth transition to a new unitary authority.

15. Corporate Governance Progress

15.1 Summary

The council has taken corporate governance seriously as part of its Improvement Programme. During the year the corporate working group which drives corporate Governance improvement – the Corporate Governance Group (CGG) lost two key members of the team as a result of them moving to other appointments outside the authority. The team has regrouped and is now chaired by the Director of Corporate Services providing a key steer from the corporate centre. Members of the group have ensured progress and the CGG has

- Developed and secured council approval of the Local Code of Governance;
- Implemented the associated action Plan;
- Commenced work on this years Annual Governance Statement;
- Commenced work on this years Use of Resources submission;
- Contributed to the development and review of the Data Quality Policy and Strategy action plan, agreed by the Council in March 2008;
- Developed an Intranet site to allow access to key documents and information for staff and members;
- Considered reports on the effectiveness of Internal Audit and the Annual Internal Audit report which both show positive achievement of internal audit at a time of change;
- Set out Strategic risk assessments for the Transition Plan and agreed key strategic corporate risks with Corporate Management Team;
- Commented on the Audit commissions annual Audit and Inspection letter; and
- Raised awareness of corporate governance through a range of LGR workstreams

Significant progress has therefore been made and it is considered that the council is strong in terms of its commitment and delivery to corporate governance. It is considered that the very positive Annual Audit and Inspection letter from the Audit Commission reflects this point of view.

15.2 Learning and remedial action

Significant progress has been made in maintaining a team to assist the council in ensuring high standards of effectiveness of corporate governance.

16. Overall Performance

16.1 Summary of Overall Performance









It has been another significantly positive year for the council. This has been against challenges of a time of significant change as a result of local government re-organisation and in terms of transferring its housing function to a registered Social Landlord, Cestria Homes. The council's performance has been captured in the most positive Annual Audit and Inspection Letter received from the Audit Commission in the council's history. During the year the council marked its achievements against its ambitious improvement programme by becoming the first council to move from a 'poor' to a 'good' Comprehensive Performance Assessment categorisation. This has been followed by achieving a significant range of external assessed awards including a Chartermark for ICT, Investors in People accreditation for the whole council and the Quest Accreditation for the Leisure centre.








The council's performance over the last year can be summarised as follows:






- The corporate plan proposals and priorities have been reviewed through the development of a Transition Plan which was adopted by the council at the end of March 2008. The council now has a single priority 'People and Place' which it is now actively working to achieve;
- While 57% of indicators have achieved targets less are showing improvement since last year (57% compared with 67%), 47% of indicators show top quartile performance compared with only 40% last year although more also show bottom quartile performance.
- In terms of the 19 key indicators in need of improvement, 57% have seen targets achieved, 69% have improved, 62% show an improving trend and there are now more in top quartile and less in bottom quartile. This shows a significant improvement since last year;
- Local indicators continue to show performance improvement as 70% have improved last year compared with only 51% last year;
- 75% of actions in the Risk Strategy have been completed and work commenced on the remaining 25%, strategic risks will be re-assessed as a result of the adoption of the emerging Transition Plan;
- There is strong HR performance at a time of reduced capacity which not only included the transfer of a significant number of staff to Cestria but also included the achievement of Investors in People. Sickness levels within the council have improved. Staff turnover is high for the first time this year with a 15% turnover rate being recorded, reflecting the impact of uncertainty around LGR;
- There are no actions in the Equality Plan action plan behind target and the council now leads on equality in terms of Local Government Review;





- It has been agreed that the work of the Modernisation Team has been achieved and the Team no longer meets;
- The Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP2) has been drawn to a close following the council officially coming out of intervention. This has been replaced by an Improvement plan which is now accommodated in the Transition Plan;
- During the year the council has received some crucial and significant Audit Commission reports including a 'good' CPA report, a significantly and seriously positive Annual Audit and Inspection letter including a positive Direction of Travel statement following CPA recategorisation. In addition the council has achieved IIP accreditation (which proves the progress the council has made in supporting and developing its people), a Charter Mark for ICT, Quest accreditation for Leisure Services, Golden Green Apple Award, Green Flag Awards and a significantly positive Pilot Benefits Inspection judgement. The council also won the first regional Shine Improvement Award for proving to be the most improved council in the country;
- There have been significantly less complaints this year than last (234 compared with 339 this time last year) and the proportion of compliments, is improving towards one compliment being received for every one complaint received. Only 27% of complaints were considered justified compared to 44%% this time last year;
- Response times to corporate standards continued to improve overall;
- Significant progress has been made on Data Quality and a good Audit Commission Data Quality audit was received before the end of the year and was reflected in the Annual Audit letter and Direction of Travel Statement. At the end of the year the council reviewed its Data Quality Policy and its Data Quality Strategy Action Plan;
- Local Government Reorganisation has begun to impact on the work of the council and the council is taking a significant role in the programme; and
- Strong and positive arrangements in corporate governance exist and are improving.








Best Value Performance Indicators - 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008




BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
2a	The level of the Equality Standard for local government to which the Authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability	2	2	3		No	x	→	N/A	High	Although we meet the criteria at Level 3 of the ESG, we are unable to declare this as an external validation is required costing up to £8,000. Given the move to a new unitary authority by April 2009 which would negate all levels and validations of the constituent authorities, it is felt that this is unnecessary expenditure.
2b	The quality of an Authority's Race Equality Scheme (RES) and the improvements resulting from its application	84%	95%	89%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Further embedding of equality and diversity into service delivery has led to improved performance.
8 	Percentage of invoices for commercial goods & services paid by the Authority within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms	90.27%	93.68%	95.00%		No	✓	↗	x ₃	High	Performance has improved since last year due principally to the undertaking of a CPI project to drive improvement.
9 	The percentage of council tax collected by the Authority in the year	97.24%	97.53%	98.80%		No	✓	↘	x ₃	High	Performance has improved since last year. More stringent and proactive recovery procedures are now in operation and direct debit uptake has increased.
10 	The percentage of national non-domestic rates collected in-year	96.69%	98.20%	97.90%		Yes	✓	↗	x _B	High	Performance has improved since last year. A new effective bailiff was appointed who has contributed significantly to the NNDR recovery rate. More stringent procedures and recovery methods are utilised to maximise NNDR collection.




PI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
11a 	Percentage of top-paid 5% of staff who are women	25.00%	30.00%	31.00%		No	✓	↗	x ₂	High	Performance has improved since last year principally due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfers to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008.
11b	The percentage of the top 5% of Local Authority staff who are from an ethnic minority	3.57%	5.00%	2.50%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance has improved since last year principally due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfers to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008.
11c	Percentage of the top paid 5% of staff who have a disability (excluding those in maintained schools)	3.57%	0.00%	3.00%		No	x	↘	x _B	High	Target has not been achieved due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfers to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008. There are now less staff in the top 5% earners who have a disability.
12 	The number of working days/shifts lost to the Authority due to sickness absence	11.09 days	11.01 days	10.65 days		No	✓	↗	x _B	Low	Performance has improved from last year. This can be attributed to the reduction of long term sickness cases.
14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total work force	0.23%	1.39%	0.50%		No	x	↗	x _B	Low	Target has not been achieved due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfer to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008.
15	The percentage of local authority employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce	0.00%	1.05%	0.00%		No	x	↘	x _B	Low	Target has not been achieved due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfer to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008.
16a	The percentage of local authority employees with a disability	3.27%	1.81%	2.50%		No	x	↘	x _B	High	Target has not been achieved due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfer to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in





BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
16b	The percentage of the economically active population in the local authority area who have a disability	18.16%	18.16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Housing Association took place in February 2008.
17a	The percentage of local authority employees from ethnic minority communities	0.9%	1.8%	1.5%		Yes	✓	↗	x ₂	High	Performance has improved since last year principally due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfers to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008 coupled with an increase in employees from an ethnic minority.
156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for, and accessible to, disabled people	23.53%	20.00%	40.00%		No	x	↘	N/A	High	The transfer of buildings to Cestria Community Housing in the last quarter of the year has resulted in a change in the calculation and the target becoming unachievable.
63	The average SAP rating of local authority-owned dwellings	66	To follow	67	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
64	 Number of non-local authority-owned vacant dwellings returned to occupation or demolished during the financial year as a direct result of action by the local authority	0	0	2		No	x	↘	x _B	High	This area of work was a service priority in 2007/8, however, the action plan was significantly delayed as we did not have accurate baseline information.
66a	 Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owned on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings	97.52%	To follow	97.80%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report these indicators. When available, these will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
66b	Percentage of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) rent arrears	4.93%	To follow	5.25%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
66c	Percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	15.96%	To follow	18.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	







PI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.49%	To follow	0.47%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
184a	The percentage of local authority dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the financial year	46%	To follow	38%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
184b	The percentage change in the proportion of non-decent dwellings between the start and the end of the financial year	0%	To follow	17.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	
212	Average time (days) taken to re-let local authority housing	38 days	To follow	32 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
183b	The average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	0.00	0.00	3 weeks		Yes	✓	↗	✓	Low	Performance remains constant and within top quartile. We have not temporarily accommodated anyone in refuges or hostels as this is rarely accepted by homeless families.
202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	5	5	0-10		Yes	✗	→	✗ _B	Low	The figure is an estimate as we have to rely on local intelligence. We are currently within target.
213	Number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local housing authority's housing advice service(s), and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation	4	4	1.6		Yes	✗	↗	✓	High	We have met our target due to the increase in prevention methods available.
76b	The number of fraud investigators employed by the Local Authority, per 1,000 caseload	0.39	0.38	0.38		Yes	N/A	→	N/A	N/A	We have met our target. The number of fraud investigators employed has not changed since last year.








BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
76c 	The number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit fraud investigations carried out by the Local Authority per year, per 1,000 caseload	48.80	56.55	48.00		Yes	✓	↗	N/A	High	Performance has exceeded last years outturn. Work is very closely monitored and managed to ensure that the team maintain the number of fraud investigations completed.
76d	The number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit prosecutions and sanctions, per year, per 1,000 caseload, in the Local Authority area	5.98	10.89	7.00		Yes	✓	↗	N/A	High	Performance has exceeded last year's outturn. More emphasis has been placed on obtaining sanctions. Cases are risk assessed and only cases where investigators feel a sanction can be obtained are actually investigated.
78a 	The average processing time (days) taken for all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims submitted to the Local Authority, for which the date of decision is within the financial year being reported	25.6 days	23.4 days	24.0 days		Yes	✓	↗	✓	Low	Performance has exceeded last years out turn. Performance is very closely monitored to ensure that it remains in top quartile and work is prioritised accordingly.
78b	The average processing time (days) taken for all written notifications to the Local Authority of changes to a claimant's circumstances that require a new decision on behalf of the Authority	6.9 days	8.1 days	7.0 days		No	✗	↘	✗ ₂	Low	Performance has dipped from last year. This is due to less experienced/trainees working on changes of circumstances as part of their individual training plans.
79a	The percentage of cases within a random sample for which the Authority's calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit is found to be correct	99.60%	99.60%	99.10%		Yes	✗	→	✓	High	Improved accuracy checking and audit controls have ensured that accuracy of processing has improved and is maintaining top quartile performance.









PI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
79b(i)	The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered as a percentage of all HB overpayments	112.48%	70.44%	95.00%		No	x	↘	x ₃	High	Due to operational staffing issues in the final quarter only minimum overpayment work was completed. It is fair to assume that outstanding debt is increasing due to the identification of more overpayments as a result of increased processing and identifying higher levels of fraud and error. The team is more proactive in finding errors, which cause overpayments.
79b(ii)	HB overpayments recovered as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the year plus amount of HB overpayments identified during the year	70.99%	45.63%	65.00%		No	x	↘	✓	High	Due to operational staffing issues in the final quarter only minimum overpayment work was completed. Processing work is the main priority of the service and due to current staffing difficulties only the minimum amount of overpayment recovery work is being completed. Assistance is being provided by other members of the service team to ensure that the slippage is controlled.
79b(iii)	Housing Benefit overpayments written off as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the year, plus amount of HB overpayments identified during the year	1.94%	1.78%	1.00%		No	✓	↗	N/A	Low	The amount of debt written off has reduced compared with 2006/2007 performance. However, we believe this shows an improved performance. Debt is managed and progressed much more effectively, with a dedicated overpayment resource for three quarters of the year, which has reduced the requirement to write off. Old debt is managed much more effectively however, and is written off where appropriate.

BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
82a(i)	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for recycling	17.08%	To follow	16.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Due to issues surrounding the treatment of waste sent for recycling by Premier Waste, performance figures for these indicators will be delayed pending discussions with Durham County Council.
82a(ii)	Total tonnage of household waste arisings sent by the Authority for recycling	3683.57	To follow	3425	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	
82b(i)	The percentage of household waste sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	7.58%	To follow	8.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	
82b(ii)	Total tonnage of household waste sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	1634.03	To follow	1712.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	
84a	Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head of the population	405.45	To follow	422.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
84b	Percentage change from the previous financial year in the number of kilograms of household waste collected per head of the population	0.76%	To follow	-4.01%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
86	Cost of household waste collection per household	£37.36	£39.84	£41.40		Yes	x	↘	✓	Low	Costs have increased by just over 6% since last year but still remain under the target amount.
91a	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of recyclables (one recyclable)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance is consistent with last year and remains within top quartile. All residents are served by kerbside collections of recyclables.
91b	Percentage of households resident in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance is consistent with last year and remains within top quartile. All residents are served by kerbside collections of recyclables.

PI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
199a	The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	7.0%	11.0%	7.0%		No	x	↘	x ₃	Low	Performance has deteriorated since last year. This may partly be attributable to the transects which were selected to be surveyed this time around which are different to those selected last year. The number of complaints we have received about litter during this year has actually fallen compared to last year.
199b	The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	5%	6.0%	4.50%		No	x	↘	x _B	Low	The level of graffiti seen throughout the district has increased slightly since last year. This may be partly be attributable to the transects which were selected to be surveyed this time around which are different to those selected last year.
199c	The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible	0%	0.0%	0%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	Low	No incidents of fly-posting were detected in selected transects.
199d	The year-on-year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with 'fly-tipping'	Good	To follow	Good	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	DEFRA will produce the performance figure based on information inputted onto the Flycapture database. Data will not be available until July/August 2008
166a	Score against a checklist of best practice for: (a) Environmental Health	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance remains constant and within top quartile.

BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
216a	Number of 'sites of potential concern' in the local authority area with respect to land contamination	11	134	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The authority reported 11 sites last year. Further investigation with the contractor responsibly revealed this was largely a notional figure representing the top "batch" of a list of over 700 sites of potential concern. During 2007/8 the data set has been rationalised via the removal of historic duplications and amalgamations of relevant adjacent sites.
216b	Number of sites for which sufficient detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all 'sites of potential concern'	9%	0%	9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	The service is not yet at a stage where we can actively address this issue and the main thrust of activities to date has been concentrated on the production of a meaningful data set and the prioritisation of the sites.
217	Percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time	100%	100%	100%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance remains constant and within top quartile.
218a	Percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24hrs of notification	99.47%	100.00%	99.00%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance has improved since last year and remains within top quartile.
218b	Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the Authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance remains constant and within top quartile.
106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	90.11%	100.00%	65.00%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance has improved and is within top quartile.
109a	Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks	87.50%	66.67%	88.00%		No	✗	↘	✗ _B	High	Performance is well below locally set targets. This has occurred due to unforeseen resource issues across most of the financial year. It is of some comfort to note that although the performance is below local targets it nevertheless meets CLG minimum targets as defined in Audit
109b	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	92.41%	75.00%	92.00%		No	✗	↘	✗ ₃	High	

KPI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
109c	Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	95.40%	85.67%	96.00%		No	x	↘	x ₃	High	Commission advice (of 60%, 65% and 80% respectively).
200a	Did the local planning authority submit the Local Development Scheme by 28th March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3-year rolling programme?	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	✓	↗	N/A	N/A	Performance has remained constant.
200b	Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme sets out?	No	No	Yes		No	x	↘	N/A	N/A	The target has not been achieved due principally to a 2 month delay in publishing the issues and options consultation programmed for September but not achieved until November.
204	The number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications, as a percentage of the total number of planning appeals against refusals of planning applications	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%		No	x	↘	x _B	Low	Target has not been achieved. Only 6 decisions reported for 07/08, compared to 8 in 2006/07 therefore date taken from smaller field and hence more subject to sharp fluctuations.
205	The local authority's score against a 'quality of planning services' checklist	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance remains constant and within top quartile.
219b	Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up-to-date character appraisal	100%	100%	100.00%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance remains constant and within top quartile.
126a	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households in the Local Authority area	7.06	10.21	6.91		No	x	↘	x _B	Low	The target has not been achieved. We continue to work with the Police on a crime initiative targeting burglary. We also continue to work with Neighbourhood Watch to implement crime prevention initiatives.

BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
127a 	Violent crime per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	17.86	15.02	17.68		Yes	✓	↗	x ₃	Low	Performance has improved since last year as we continue to work with the Police on a multi crime initiative as well as work in conjunction with the CCTV operators. A further Police operation which targeted drug supply has had a positive effect on violent crime.
127b	Robberies per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	0.47	0.30	0.46		Yes	✓	↗	x ₂	Low	Performance has improved since last year. Police operations targeted shoplifting, purse theft and robbery as a priority with higher Police presence on the street. We also run a shopwatch scheme in conjunction with CCTV operators.
128	The number of vehicle crimes per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	6.35	5.64	6.17		Yes	✓	↗	✓	Low	Performance has improved since last year principally due to targeting known hotspots with crime prevention initiatives.
174 	The number of racial incidents reported to the Local Authority, and subsequently recorded, per 100,000 population	5.64	3.76	9.40		Yes	✓	↗	N/A	Low	Performance has improved since last year. We have engaged with minority groups in an effort to encourage the reporting of racial incidents. Leaflets and literature have been distributed at various events regarding racial hate crime.
175	The percentage of racial incidents reported to the Local Authority that resulted in further action	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		Yes	✓	↗	✓	High	Performance has remained on target with all cases resulting in further action.
225	Actions against domestic violence. The percentage of questions from a checklist to which a local authority can answer 'yes'.	45.5%	54.5%	60.0%		No	✓	↗	N/A	High	We have been unable to meet the target due to time constraints over prior months. We continuously strive to increase our methods of homeless prevention and ensure that customers are provided with timely support and advice to prevent domestic violence.










KPI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
226a	Total amount spent by the Local Authority on Advice and Guidance services provided by external organisations	£75,384.99	£75,384.99	£75,384.99		Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Spend has remained constant as there has been no growth in budgets for funding of external agencies.
226b	Percentage of monies spent on advice and guidance services provision that was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark at 'General Help' level and above	50.27%	50.27%	50.27%		Yes	x	➔	N/A	High	Spend has remained constant as there has been no growth in budgets for funding of external agencies.
226c	Total amount spent on Advice and Guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters which is provided directly by the authority to the public	£530,471.19	£542,918.58	£542,918.58		Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	This is the same amount of time as last year however amount differs to reflect increase in salaries. No change in services provided therefore no change in amount spent
YES						32	30	31	20	BEST Q	47%
NO						24	23	18	4	2ND Q	9%
NO									7	3RD Q	16%
WORST QUARTILE									12	WORS	28%
CONSTANT TREND								5			
TOTAL						56	53	54	43		
TOTAL N/A						18	21	20	31		
TOTAL OVERALL						74	74	74	74		

Required to produce a total of 44 indicators	
Equates to 74 separate indicators	
We:	
Achieved our targets	57%
Improved on previous year	57%
Secured best quartile performance	47% <i>Estimated</i>
Direction of Travel shows improvement over 3 years	57%
Unfortunately we:	
Failed to meet our targets	43%
Failed to improve from previous year	43%

ACTUALS FOR YTD 2006/07	ACTUALS FOR YTD 2005/06	ACTUALS FOR YTD 2004/05
75%	66%	47%
67%	79%	53%
40%	33%	32% <i>Actuals</i>
65%	68%	44%
25%	34%	53%
33%	21%	47%













BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
	Show worst quartile performance		28%	Estimated		22%	30%	36%	Actuals		
	Direction of Travel shows a decline over 3 years		33%			27%	17%	40%			




Summary of Performance by Category	Achieved Target	Not Achieved Target	Improved from Previous Year	Not Improved from Previous Year	Secured Best Quartile	Show Worst Quartile
Corporate Health	27%	67%	53%	40%	13%	40%
Housing	25%	8%	8%	25%	17%	17%
Benefits & Council Tax	56%	44%	44%	44%	33%	0%
Waste & Cleanliness	33%	17%	25%	25%	33%	8%
Environmental Health	67%	0%	67%	0%	67%	0%
Planning	38%	63%	38%	63%	25%	0%
Culture & Related Services	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
Community Safety & Wellbeing	80%	0%	60%	20%	20%	10%














KEY:	
	CPA performance indicators
	LAA performance indicators
	Better than Target Performance
	On Target Performance
	Worse than Target Performance
Best Quartile	Quartile comparisons are based on National District Council's 2006/07 audited data
	Key 19 indicators identified from 2006/2007 outturns where improvement is required. (Those highlighted in bold were also included in the key 20 indicators monitored last year.)
	Yes
	No
	No - 2nd quartile performance

PI	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Trend over 3 years	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
		x₃	No - 3rd quartile performance								
		x_B	No - worst/bottom quartile performance								
		→	Remaining constant								
		↘	Deteriorating performance								
		↗	Improving performance								

Key 19 Performance Indicators - 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008




BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Direction of Travel	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
8 	Percentage of invoices for commercial goods & services paid by the Authority within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms	90.27%	93.68%	95.00%		No	✓	↗	x ₃	High	Performance has improved since last year due principally to the undertaking of a CPI project to drive improvement.
9 	The percentage of council tax collected by the Authority in the year	97.24%	97.53%	98.80%		No	✓	↘	x ₃	High	Performance has improved since last year. More stringent and proactive recovery procedures are now in operation and direct debit uptake has increased.
10 	The percentage of national non-domestic rates collected in-year	96.69%	98.20%	97.90%		Yes	✓	↗	x _B	High	Performance has improved since last year. A new effective bailiff was appointed who has contributed significantly to the NNDR recovery rate. More stringent procedures and recovery methods are utilised to maximise NNDR collection.
11a 	Percentage of top-paid 5% of staff who are women	25.00%	30.00%	31.00%		No	✓	↗	x ₂	High	Performance has improved since last year principally due to the decrease in the number of staff as transfers to Cestria Community Housing Association took place in February 2008.
12 	The number of working days/shifts lost to the Authority due to sickness absence	11.09 days	11.01 days	10.65 days		No	✓	↗	x _B	Low	Performance has improved from last year. This can be attributed to the reduction of long term sickness cases.
64 	Number of non-local authority-owned vacant dwellings returned to occupation or demolished during the financial year as a direct result of action by the local authority	0	0	2		No	x	↘	x _B	High	This area of work was a service priority in 2007/8, however, the action plan was significantly delayed as we did not have accurate baseline information.

BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Direction of Travel	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
66a	Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owned on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings	97.52%	To follow	97.80%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report these indicators. When available, these will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.49%	To follow	0.47%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
184a	The percentage of local authority dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the financial year	46%	To follow	38%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
184b	The percentage change in the proportion of non-decent dwellings between the start and the end of the financial year	0%	To follow	17.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	
212	Average time (days) taken to re-let local authority housing	38 days	To follow	32 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	
202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	5	5	0-10		Yes	x	→	x _B	Low	The figure is an estimate as we have to rely on local intelligence. We are currently within target.
76c	The number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit fraud investigations carried out by the Local Authority per year, per 1,000 caseload	48.80	56.55	48.00		Yes	✓	↗	N/A	High	Performance has exceeded last years outturn. Work is very closely monitored and managed to ensure that the team maintain the number of fraud investigations completed.
78a	The average processing time (days) taken for all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims submitted to the Local Authority, for which the date of decision is within the financial year being reported	25.6 days	23.4 days	24.0 days		Yes	✓	↗	✓	Low	Performance has exceeded last years out turn. Performance is very closely monitored to ensure that it remains in top quartile and work is prioritised accordingly.








BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Direction of Travel	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
82a(ii) 	Total tonnage of household waste arisings sent by the Authority for recycling	3683.57	To follow	3425	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Due to issues surrounding the treatment of waste sent for recycling by Premier Waste, performance figures for these indicators will be delayed pending discussions with Durham County Council.
199b 	The percentage of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	5%	6.0%	4.50%		No	x		x _B	Low	The level of graffiti seen throughout the district has increased slightly since last year. This may be partly be attributable to the transects which were selected to be surveyed this time around which are different to those selected last year.
200b 	Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme sets out?	No	No	Yes		No	x		N/A	N/A	The target has not been achieved due principally to a 2 month delay in publishing the issues and options consultation programmed for September but not achieved until November.
127a 	Violent crime per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	17.86	15.02	17.68		Yes	✓		x ₃	Low	Performance has improved since last year as we continue to work with the Police on a multi crime initiative as well as work in conjunction with the CCTV operators. A further Police operation which targeted drug supply has had a positive effect on violent crime.
174 	The number of racial incidents reported to the Local Authority, and subsequently recorded, per 100,000 population	5.64	3.76	9.40		Yes	✓		N/A	Low	Performance has improved since last year. We have engaged with minority groups in an effort to encourage the reporting of racial incidents. Leaflets and literature have been distributed at varrious events regarding racial hate crime.
YES						6	9	8	1	BEST Q	10%
NO						7	4	4	1	2ND Q	10%






BVPI No.	Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Direction of Travel	Secured Best Quartile	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action	
	NO									3	3RD Q	30%
	BOTTOM QUARTILE									5	WORS	50%
	CONSTANT TREND							1				
	TOTAL					13	13	13	10			
	TOTAL N/A					6	6	6	9			
	TOTAL OVERALL					19	19	19	19			






19 separate indicators	
We:	
Achieved our targets	46%
Improved on previous year	69%
Secured best quartile performance	10% <i>Estimated</i>
Direction of travel shows an improvement	62%
Unfortunately we:	
Failed to meet our targets	54%
Failed to improve from previous year	31%
Show worst quartile performance	50% <i>Estimated</i>
Direction of travel shows a decline	31%














Key:	
	Remaining constant
	Deteriorating performance
	Improving performance

Local Performance Indicators - 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
CSS03	% of telephone calls answered within 15 seconds	94.6%	n/a	92%	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	We are unable to report performance for this period due to a technical fault currently experienced with the telephone system.
CSS07	% complaints responded to within 10 working days	82.3%	85%	90%		No	✓	High	Overall performance has steadily increased throughout the year. The greater concern is that we have consistently failed to reach our target, however, it is pleasing to note that all remaining council teams i.e. those not including Cestria services achieved a 100% target for the final quarter of the financial year.
HRLP01	% of voluntary leavers as % of staff in post	6.32%	15.00%	5.5%		No	✗	Low	Performance is higher than last year due to a clean up of the payroll system with casual posts being terminated. Also changes with LGR has resulted in a rise in resignations this year.
HRLP04	% of disciplinaries as a % of staff in post	3.05%	1.08%	1.0%		No	✓	Low	Performance is above target due to a number of disciplinary cases coupled with a drop in staff numbers. Staff numbers decreased dramatically due to staff transferring to Cestria Housing Association.
HRLP05	% of grievances as a % of staff in post	1.09%	0.86%	1.0%		Yes	✓	Low	Performance is ahead of target. This is principally because of the decrease in number of staff due to TUPE transfer of Departments.
HRLP14	% of recruitment enquiries responded to within 48 hours	100%	100%	80%		Yes	✓	High	Performance is ahead of target.
ITLP16	% of customer satisfaction regarding information and services available on the council website and associated portals	66%	67%	70%		No	✓	High	Satisfaction levels have improved as more services are made available on the website. Improved content from web content guidelines. Changing the Home Page design to make transactional services easier to find.
ITLP17	Increase in the use of the authority's website	105,652	135,628	108,946		Yes	✓	High	We have seen an increase in the use of the website. Improved communications regarding electronic services leading to increased take up. Based on last years take up we set a target to increase take up by about 3% and expected visits each quarter to be about the 27,000 figures. Instead the average quarterly visit was nearly 40,000 visits.

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
FSLP12	% of registered invoices approved/actioned within 7 days	90.91%	89.00%	90%		No	✘	High	The slight under performance was minimal against target. The variance is relatively small percentage and the exchequer section relies heavily on the performance of other Service Teams in promptly passing invoices for payment. The section also lost a member of staff to Cestria during December 2007.
FSLP13	% of sundry debtors raised within 5 days of request	93.89%	99.47%	95%		Yes	✔	High	The performance has been driven up by a planned approach and multi-tasking by staff.
FSLP31	% of actions completed from Risk Management Strategy	95.83%	90.09%	100%		No	✘	High	As a result of LGR the Risk Management Strategy for Chester-le-Street DC has to a large extent been subsumed into work that is ongoing for the creation of the new Unitary Authority for County Durham. Of the 24 original actions, 20 were completed, 2 were deferred to LGR activity and 2 remain on target for completion during Qtr 1 2008-09.
FSLP40	% of actions completed from Procurement Strategy	94.64%	75.00%	100%		No	✘	High	As a result of LGR the Procurement Strategy for Chester-le-Street DC has been subsumed into work that is ongoing for the creation of the new Unitary Authority for County Durham. The initiatives completed to date have proved successful and have helped to lay foundations for Procurement at the new authority.
FSLPACC 10	Statement of Accounts presented to Council within statutory deadline	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	✔	N/A	The performance target has been met.
HSLPPS1	% of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits	96.27%	To follow	97.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPPS2	Average time taken to complete non-urgent responsive repairs	25.18 days	To follow	22 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPPS3	% of repair appointments that were made and kept by the authority	93.79%	To follow	94%	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
HSLPTP2	% of tenants involved in the housing services	40%	To follow	35%	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPIM1	Former tenant arrears as a % of rent roll	1.04%	To follow	0.93%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPIM2	% of rent written off	0.63%	To follow	0.73%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPIM3	Current rent arrears as a % of rent roll	2.46%	To follow	2.46%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Low	Transfer to Cestria Housing - Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
HSLPSH1.07	All new housing development in the district of Chester-le-Street to include 30% affordable homes	0	100%	100%		Yes	✓	High	The target has been achieved as all new housing developments include 30% affordable homes.
HSLPSH2.07	The number of households threatened with Homelessness re-housed in the private rented sector	0	26	8		Yes	✓	High	We have increased our homeless prevention methods and work closely with PLA officer to prevent homelessness. More cases rehoused in the private sector.
HSLPSH3	% of homeless households re-housed in Social Rented Sector (RSL Accommodation)	2	16	15		Yes	✓	High	We have exceeded our target. We have increased our homeless prevention measures and in addition to this we no longer have LA stock therefore a high percentage of preventions will now be RSL due to the transfer of stock to Cestria.
HSLPSH4	The number of Private Landlords who are members of Chester-le-Street's Landlord Accreditation Scheme	41	33	46		No	✗	High	A review of the scheme has taken place and a number of landlords subsequently left the scheme. 8 landlords have left the Scheme in the last year. No recruitment drive has yet taken place.
HSLPSH5	The number of accredited properties in the Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme	80	67	90		No	✓	High	Unfortunately we have not met our target this year due to a number of landlords leaving the scheme resulting in a decrease in properties that are accredited.

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
ESLP10	% of designated grass areas cut within 10 working day cycle	98.1%	94.5%	90%		Yes		High	This year's target has been achieved although we have not achieved the same level of performance as last year. The previous year's performance was enhanced by exceptional weather conditions during the cutting season.
EHLP04	% of primary food hygiene inspections achieved of those planned	98%	99%	95%		Yes		High	We have exceeded our stated target this year.
PLLP33a	% of pre-application enquiries responded to within target (major)	78.10%	92%	90%		Yes		High	Major enquiry performance has improved in comparison to last year. This has been achieved as a result of the hiring of a temporary consultant to mitigate for the vacant officer post and the fact that the Team were (for the most part) fully staffed for the final quarter of the year. The investment in IT has also helped improve major enquiry performance.
PLLP33b	% of pre-application enquiries responded to within target (minor)	70.10%	74%	90%		No		High	Performance has significantly improved for minors due to a new officer appointment in September 2007. This is a key post within the team for dealing with minor pre-application enquiries. In addition the decision to 'train up' an Admin Officer to be able to deal with minor enquiries has also been instrumental in improving performance.
PLLP02	% of householder planning applications determined in 8 weeks	97.32%	87.0%	95%		No		High	Performance has fallen in comparison to last year. The reason this has occurred has been due to significant staffing shortages within the team across most of the financial year. Measures have been taken to address this and there is every reason to believe that performance will be back on target for next year.
PLLP29a	% of planning enforcement enquiries responded to within target (Category 1 cases)	100%	100%	90%		Yes		High	The single category 1 case received was investigated and a response provided to the complainant within 24 hours.
PLLP29b	% of planning enforcement enquiries responded to within target (Category 2 cases)	100%	100%	90%		Yes		High	13 category 2 cases were received. These were investigated and a response provided to the complainant within 7 days.

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
PLL29c	% of planning enforcement enquiries responded to within target (Category 3 cases)	99.5%	67.8%	90%		No		High	152 category 3 cases were received. Enquiries accounted for 91.6% of all cases received and of the 152 cases received, 103 were responded to within the target response times. The change in performance with regard to category 3 cases has largely been attributed to the significant staffing and resources implications experienced during the Spring and Summer months of 2007.
LDLP25	% of standard searches carried out in 10 working days (originally BV179 deleted from 2006/07 set)	98.91%	99.39%	99%		Yes		High	Performance has exceeded last year's outturn. New staff now in post and cover provided when required.
LSLP11	Net spend per head of population (of the broad spectrum of services currently provided by the Leisure Services Team)	£33.66	£31.27 (estimated figure)	£38.50		Yes		Low	This is only an interim figure based on the probable outturn reported to members in February. It is anticipated that the actual outturn for leisure services will be very similar and so have minimal impact on the figure.
LSLP14	Total number of user visits to all the main 4 leisure sites (Leisure Centre, Riverside (including Park), Golf complex, Selby Cottage) and the services and activities provided by the community leisure team	902,246	To follow	975,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
LSLP15	% of young people (those under 16 yrs old) within the total user visits to the 4 main leisure sites (excluding Riverside Park) and the services and activities provided by the community leisure team	35.06%	To follow	42.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	High	Data is currently unavailable to report this indicator. When available, this will be reported through the Best Value Performance Plan.
YES						15	19		
NO						12	8		
TOTAL						27	27		
TOTAL N/A						10	10		
TOTAL OVERALL						37	37		

Report a total of 34 Indicators	
Equates to 37 separate indicators	
We:	

ACTUALS FOR YTD 2006/07

LPI No.	LPI Description	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Target 2007/08	Current Perf Status	Achieved Target?	Improved on previous year?	Good Perf	Comments, Remedial Measures and Action
	Achieved our targets	56%		51%					
	Improved on previous year	70%		n/a					
	Unfortunately we:								
	Failed to meet our targets	44%		49%					
	Failed to improve on previous year	30%		n/a					



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Executive Forward Plan and Work Programme



July 2008

About this document

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

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

This document is in two parts:

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

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

Part One

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

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

What are 'key decisions'?

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

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

Part Two

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

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

Who are the Executive?

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

Cllr. Linda Ebbatson	Tel: 0191 387 2090
Leader of the Council with responsibility for Human Resources, Equalities, and Young People	E-Mail: lindaebbatson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Cllr. Simon Westrip	Tel: 0191 387 2090
Deputy Leader and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: simon.westrip@bigfoot.com
Cllr. Chris Jukes	Tel: 0191 389 1136
Regeneration and Strategy Planning Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: chris.jukes1@btopenworld.com
Cllr. Lawson Armstong	Tel: 0191 3873195
Resources and Value for Money Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: lawson.armstrong@btopenworld.com
Cllr Mike Sekowski	Tel: 0191 3703416
Community Engagement and Partnerships Portfolio Holder	E-Mail: m.sekowski@metronet.co.uk

How do I find out when the Executive is meeting?

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

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

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

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



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part One: Executive Forward Plan



July 2008

6 June 2008

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Executive Forward Plan

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Communities Facilities Working Group Report	Executive	Revised date July 2008	Jorge Lulic 0191 387 2232	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Community Development Manager or by email to jorgelulic@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Bad Debt report Quarterly Report	Executive	July 2008	Ian Herberson 0191 3872343	Head of Revenue and Benefits Accountancy Manager Internal Auditor	In writing or by telephone, to the Head of Corporate Finance or by email to ianherberson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Bad Debt report Quarterly Report	Executive	October 2008	Ian Herberson 0191 3872343	Head of Revenue and Benefits Accountancy Manager Internal Auditor	In writing or by telephone, to the Head of Corporate Finance or by email to ianherberson@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Business Improvement Districts	Executive	October 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Traders Association	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Handlon Tracking System	Executive	October 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Partnerships for Futures Board	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Part Two: Executive Work Programme



July 2008

6 June 2008

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Executive Work Programme






Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Regeneration Quarterly Report	Executive	July 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
NHS Life Check Programme	Executive	July 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Relevant Executive Members Communities for Health Working Group	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Tender for the Big Lottery Play work	Executive	July 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Relevant Executive Members	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Employee Survey Results	Executive	Revised date August 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Employees Trade Unions	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Training and Development Plan	Executive	Revised date August 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder Employees Trade Unions	In writing or by telephone to the Director of Corporate Affairs or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Tenders for the Heart of the Village	Executive	August 2008	Leila Dawson 0191 3872233	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder NRP Board	In writing or by telephone to the Acting Head of Regeneration or by email to leiladawson@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance Report April 2008 to June 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	September 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Internal consultation e-mail	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Taxi Licensing Policy	Executive	Revised date October 2008	Tony Galloway 0191 3872100	Corporate Management Team Portfolio Holder	By phone, or in writing to the Director of Development Services or by email to Tonygalloway@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Summary of Non Key Decision	Decision Taker and Documents to be considered	Decision Date	Contact Officer	Consulted Parties and means of consultation	How to make representations and when by (If making representations in writing, please address them to the Director/Manager named at: Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3UT)
Corporate Performance Report July 2008 to September 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	December 2008	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Internal consultation e-mail	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk
Corporate Performance Report October 2008 to December 2008	Executive Corporate Performance and covering report	March 2009	Ian Forster 0191 3872130	Relevant Executive Members Corporate Management Team Internal consultation e-mail	In writing or by telephone to the Assistant Chief Executive or by email to ianforster@chester-le-street.gov.uk

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		Actual Figures										Not on Target
		Quarterly Figures										On target
		Target Figures for this year										
Indicator	Description	Agency Responsible for achieving	2005/06 Actual	2006/07	2007/08	1st Quarter Apr-Jun 2008/09	2nd Quarter Apr-Sep 2008/09	3rd Quarter Apr-Dec 2008/09	Year End 2008/09	Target 2008/09	Are we on Target?	Explanation, Reasons & Actions
NI 156	Number of Households living in Temporary Accommodation	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	4 (Q4)	0				2		This indicator records the number of households in Temporary Accommodation on the last day of every quarter. Each quarter we aim to have no more than two people in Temporary Accommodation such as B&B, Hostels etc. We hope to achieve this target through stringent procedures and housing options support in assisting people to obtain accommodation, prevent homelessness and fast tracking homeless applications.
LPI2	The number of Households rehoused in the Private Sector through advice and assistance from the Housing Options Team	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	26	2				28		This indicator records the number of people who the Housing Options team have assisted to secure Private Rented Accommodation. We are currently not on target. This could be due to the situation of the market also the payments required upfront for Private Rented Accommodation, are quite difficult for people to afford (Analysis will be done on this during the year). However through promotion and awareness raising we hope to increase the options for the Private rented sector such as the introduction of the Countywide Rent Deposit Scheme.
Page 87	The number of households re housed in the Social Rented Sector (RSL Accommodation)	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	2	16	20				50		This indicator records the number of people who the Housing Options team have assisted to secure accommodation with a Registered Social landlord. We are currently on target and will continue to increase the options for people obtaining this type of accommodation

LPI4	The number of private landlords on the landlords accreditation Scheme	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New BVPI	41	33	40				38	😊	This indicator records the number of Landlords on the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. We have exceeded this target but will continue to recruit landlords and promote the service.
LPI5	The number of accredited properties in the private landlord accreditation	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New BVPI	80	67	75				77	😊	This indicator records the number of properties accredited. We are on target and will continue to support and work with landlords to accredit more properties.
LPI6	Average length of time taken to assess Homeless Applications	Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	22.8 working days	18 working days	Information not supplied by Cestria				17	Unable to comment	This indicator measures the average length of time taken to carry out assessment and make decision on Homeless Application. We believe that the length of time Homeless Applicants wait for a decision should be kept to a minimum. Cestria is responsible for achieving this indicator as they are acting as our agent in relation to fulfilling our statutory duties.
LPI7	% of applicants in immediate homelessness interviewed the same day	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	Not Collected	100%	100%	100%				100%	😊	This Service Standards ensures that all applicants who are homeless immediately are seen within the same day. We can confirm that everyone is seen within the same day if they state they have no where to sleep that night.
LPI8	% of routine appointments offered within 10 working days	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	Not Collected	96.00	99.50%	99%				100%	☹️	We attempt to ensure all applicants are seen within 10 working days. One person was not seen within 10 working days to due confusion over responsibilities between CLSDC and Cestria, This should not happen in the future.

LPI9	% of applications assessed within 33 working days	Cestria Community Housing	Not Collected	98.40%	100.0%	Information not supplied by Cestria				100%	Unable to comment	This indicator measures the time taken to carry out assessment and make decision on Homeless Application we have a target of 33 working days. Cestria are now responsible for achieving this indicator.
LPI10	Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is prevented through advice and assistance from the Housing Options Team	Chester le Street District Council	Not Collected	New Indicator	New Indicator	14				105	☹️	We are under on prevention and there are a number of reasons that we are currently analysing. We will continue to prevent homelessness and achieve this target.
LPI11	% of Homelessness reviews made within 8 weeks	Chester le Street District Council	Not Collected	100%	100%	100%				100%	😊	This Service Standards records the number of homeless appeals received and decided within 8 weeks.

LPI12	% of Housing Applicants processed within 5 days	Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	New Indicator	Information not supplied by Cestria				100%	Unable to comment	This indicator records the number of Housing Register Applications processed within 5 days. Cestria are the Councils agent in relation to this Statutory responsibility.
LPI13	% of application changes made within 10 working days	Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	New Indicator	Information not supplied by Cestria				100%	Unable to comment	This indicator records the time taken to process a change on a housing register Application. Cestria are the Councils agent in relation to this Statutory responsibility.
LPI14	% of Applications reviewed annually	Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	New Indicator	Information not supplied by Cestria				100%	Unable to comment	This indicator records the number of Housing Register Applicants reviewed on an annual basis. Cestria are the Councils agent in relation to this Statutory
LPI15	Reduce the number of households placed in B&B accommodation	Chester le Street District Council & Cestria Community Housing	New Indicator	New Indicator	New Indicator		3			14	😊	This LPI aims to reduce the number of people placed in B&B accommodation. Both Cestria and CLSDC strive to keep B&B usage for homeless households to a minimum in line with Statutory guidance.

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	People and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 th July 2008
Report from:	Director of Corporate Services
Title of Report:	Review into the future of the unparished area of Chester-le-Street – Scoping Report
Agenda Item Number:	

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a proposed scope for a scrutiny review into a town council for Chester-le-Street. This is following the development of the new People and Place priority and was also raised at the recent scrutiny workshop.
- 1.2 The report also provides a suggested outline timetable, terms of reference and objectives for the review.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Officers from Legal and Democratic Services were consulted in relation to this report.

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE & PLACE PRIORITY

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

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4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report at the current time. However there would financial implications to establishing a town council and these will be explored during the review process.

4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications relating to this report at the current time. However there are legal issues to establishing a town council that will be investigated during the review process.

4.3 Personnel

There are no specific personnel implications relating to this report at the current time. Support to the Task and Finish Group will be provided by the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Democratic Service Officer. An approach will be made for scrutiny support from the County Council in view of future governance implications for the new unitary.

4.4 Other Services

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

4.5 Diversity

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

4.6 Risk

There are no risk implications relating to this report at the current time. The biggest risk is the capacity of the organisation to support the review process. It is hoped that a different way of working will address this risk particularly if support can be gained from the county council.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

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

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4.8 Data Quality

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

4.9 LGR Implications

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

'This could involve the creation of new town councils in places such as Consett, central Chester-le-Street and Durham City centre, capable of providing very local place-shaping and potentially acting as the cornerstones of cooperation for wider clusters of town and parish councils.'

A New County Durham Council – Durham County Council

The proposed review is a firm part of this council's transition plan. The approval of the County Council will not be required although they ought to be consulted on the review to secure their viewpoint.

5. **BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW**

5.1 Through the development of the new single priority 'People and Place' a number of Action Learning Sets (ALS) have been developed to deliver on some of the key themes and projects. ALS3 – Strengthening Partnerships is considering the potential of parish or town councils in the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street.

5.2 The Action Learning Set is very clear in that it wishes to raise awareness of and fully explore the viability of the options for the unparished area in Chester-le-Street and how this will bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

5.3 On 12 May the Council's Executive considered a report by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the legislation which allows consideration of Town and Parish Councils. The law requires a council to undertake what is known as a 'community governance review.' The Executive considered the implications of this including potential costs, bearing in mind a new form of local government will come into force next April and the need to engage with Durham County Council. The Executive

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also considered the fact that the national Boundary Committee is to undertake a review of electoral arrangements within County Durham. The Executive noted the progress available to Chester-le-Street District Council and resolved that

“clarification be sought and discussions undertaken with Durham County Council on the status, cost and scale of a corporate governance review taking into consideration the Boundary Committee for England’s proposed review of local authority electoral arrangements.”

A letter has been sent to Durham County Council seeking such clarification and a response is awaited.

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

6. PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

- 6.1 Parish and town councils in England and community and town councils in Wales are the first tier of local government. They deliver a vast range of services at a community level. There are around 10,000 community, parish and town councils in England and Wales, made up of nearly

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100,000 councillors. These first-tier councils can respond to the needs of the community through delivery of services or providing required representation.

- 6.2 Town and parish councils have a large range of powers and are involved in a great number of activities including planning, promoting tourism, licensing, communal halls and management of town and village halls. A full list of these powers and duties are contained in **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 6.3 Communities Secretary Hazel Blears recently signalled a new era for parish and town councils where they would have a real purpose in modern society. Local parish and town councils are a force for local pride and empowerment and have an important contribution to make in reinvigorating local democracy. They are often the most immediate form of representation, acting as a focal point for local debate and identity.
- 6.4 An 'Empowerment' White Paper, with proposals designed to refresh local democracy and devolve power to the grass roots, is due within weeks. This will be complemented by separate powers for parish councils including:
- Plans to make it easier to bring in local experts to help drive key priorities and shape services that matter.
 - A new 'wellbeing' power for eligible local parish councils. The aim is to shift more power locally, so eligible parish councils can freely make decisions as long as they are in their community's interest and promote the wellbeing of its area.
- 6.5 A survey by Aberystwyth University found that 75% of parish and town councils were expecting to make use of the new wellbeing power once in operation. The new power was extended to eligible parish and town councils by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (LGPIH) 2007. Secondary legislation is being drawn up, in order to bring it into operation later in 2008.
- 6.6 The LGPIH Act 2007 has also devolved responsibility for the creation of parish and town councils to local authorities.
- 6.7 Members need to consider a title for the review and a suggested title is as follows:
- People and Place*** Refreshing Local Democracy – the future of the unparished area of Chester-le-Street.?

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

7. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

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

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

- 8.1 An outline work programme is detailed below but Members should note that a more in-depth programme with timetable of activities will be drafted for discussion and approval by Members when appropriate.

8.2 Introduction

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

8.3 Visits

A visit to be arranged to a neighbouring town council to look at a town council in operation taking evidence from officers and members on the benefits and weaknesses of this model of local government. This may include joint work with the County Council.

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8.4 Evidence Gathering

The Task and Finish Group will seek to engage the public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the formation of parish and town councils in the unparished areas of Chester-le-Street. This may include engagement work that may be required to assist the Boundary Committee Review. This will be done through a series of techniques including questionnaires, consultation events and online surveys.

8.5 Report Findings

The Task and Finish Group will prepare a draft report of their findings to be presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and following agreement to the Executive.

8.6 Lead Members and Officer

The Panel ought to appoint Lead members for the work. The Officer Leads in respect of this review will be Ian Forster, Chris Potter and Colin Turnbull.

8.6 Timeline

The following timetable is proposed:

- Initial meeting to discuss scoping report on 22nd July 2008
- Initial presentation, Scoping report and Task and Finish Group membership agreed 30th July 2008
- Visits to other councils by 31st August 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10th September 2008
- Web based questionnaire by end September with article in next District News by 30th September 2008
- Meeting with Parish Councils and relevant residents associations by 19th September 2008
- Report of findings and Options by 30th September 2008
- Progress Update to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd October 2008
- Meeting with parish councils and appropriate Residents Group representatives on Boundary Committee consultation issues by 31st October 2008
- Task and Finish Group informal meeting to discuss evidence gained by 14th November 2008 and agree recommendations
- Findings of Task and Finish Group reported to **People and Place** Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd December 2008

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9. CONSULTATION FOR THE REVIEW

9.1 The review will gather evidence from a variety of sources. The main evidence will come from information provided by Officers and external partners, likely to include:

- Existing town and parish Councils
- Local residents
- Head of Legal and Democratic Services
- Parish Councils and Community groups
- Durham County Council

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the report.

10.2 That the panel give consideration and agree to the title of the review.

10.3 That Members of the panel discuss and agree the outlined aims and objectives for the review.

10.4 That Members of the panel give consideration to the outlined work programme for the review.

10.5 That Members give consideration to witnesses to be used for consultation purposes during the review.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERED TO:

- Transition Plan & People and Place Priority
- Blears heralds a new era of 'parish power' – Communities and Local Government website
- Putting communities in control – Communities and Local Government website
- National Association of Local Councils – website
- A New County Durham Council – Durham County Council Unitary Submission Document

AUTHOR NAME: Ian Forster

DESIGNATION: Director of Corporate Services

DATE OF REPORT: 2nd July 2008

VERSION NUMBER 2.0

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APPENDIX 1

POWERS & DUTIES OF TOWN and PARISH COUNCILS

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

The powers are listed below.

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments. Duty to provide allotment gardens if demanded unsatisfied	Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908, ss. 23, 26, & 42
Baths and Washhouses	Power to provide public baths and washhouses	Public Health Act 1936, Ss 221, 222, 223 & 227
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, Ss 9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214; Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s.1 Local Government Act 1972, s. 215(6)
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1953, s. 4
Bye Laws	Power to make bye-laws in regard to pleasure grounds, Cycle Parks Baths and Washhouses Open spaces and burial grounds Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7) Public Health Act 1936, s.223 Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15 Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Charities	Duty to receive accounts of parochial charities	Charities Act 1960, s.32

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Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers as to maintenance	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons and common pastures	Powers in relation to enclosure, as to regulation and management, and as to providing common pasture	Enclosure Act 1845; Local Government Act 1894, s.8(4); Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Community Centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19
Crime prevention	Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Education	Right to appoint school governors	Education (No.2) Act 1986, s.4
Entertainment and the arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Highways	Power to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridleways. Power to light roads and public places Provision of litter bins Power to provide parking places for vehicles, bicycles and motor-cycles. Power to enter into agreement as to dedication and widening. Power to provide roadside seats and shelters, and omnibus shelters. Consent of parish council required for ending maintenance of highway at public expense, or for stopping up or diversion of highway. Power to complain to district council as to protection of rights of way and roadside wastes Power to provide traffic signs and other notices Power to plant trees etc. and to maintain roadside verges	Highways Act 1980, ss.43,50 Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301 Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.57,63 Highways Act 1980, ss.30,72 Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1 Highways Act 1980, ss.47,116 Highways Act 1980, s.130 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72 Highways Act 1980, s.96
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11

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Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127 Local government Act 1972, s.139
Litter	Provision of receptacles	Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976, s.7
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Nuisances	Power to deal with offensive ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Open spaces	Power to acquire land and maintain	Public health Act 1875, s.164 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Parish Property and documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s.226
Postal and telecommunications facilities	Power to pay the Post Office, British Telecommunications or any other public telecommunications operator any loss sustained providing post or telegraph office or telecommunication facilities	Post Office Act 1953, s.51; Telecommunications Act 1984, s.97
Public buildings and village hall	Power to provide buildings for offices and for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public Conveniences	Power to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Recreation	Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them Power to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps Provision of boating pools	Public Health Act 1875, s.164 Local Government Act 1972, Sched.14 para.27 Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 s.44 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19 Public Health Act 1961, s.54
Town and Country Planning	Right to be notified of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched.1, para.8
Tourism	Power to contribute to organisations encouraging	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic Calming	Powers to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.30
Transport	Powers to spend money on community transport schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26-29
War memorials	Power to maintain, repairs, protect and adapt war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s.133
Water Supply	Power to utilise well, spring or stream and to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s.125

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	facilities for obtaining water there from	
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(Source: National Association of Councils Website)

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Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	People and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 th July 2008
Report from:	Director of Corporate Services
Title of Report:	Review into the Future of the Market Scoping Report
Agenda Item Number:	

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a proposed scope for a scrutiny review into a town centre market places. This is following the development of the new People and Place priority and the issue was also raised at the recent scrutiny workshop.
- 1.2 The report also provides a suggested outline timetable, terms of reference and objectives for the review.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The council's Town Centre Development Manager was consulted in the preparation of the report

3. TRANSITION PLAN AND PEOPLE & PLACE PRIORITY

- 3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.
- 3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.
- 3.3 The scrutiny topic has a direct impact on the following area of the **People and Place** priority:

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- Investment in the Town Centre.

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

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report at the current time. However there maybe potential financial implications to any recommendations resulting from the scrutiny review process.

4.2 Legal

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

4.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications relating to this report at the current time. The task and finish group will be supported by the Director of Corporate Services, the Town Centre Development Manager and Smartspeed Consulting Services, consultants appointed as part of the ***People and Place*** priority delivery plan.

4.4 Other Services

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

4.5 Diversity

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

4.6 Risk

There are no risk implications relating to this report at the current time other than human resource capacity issues as a direct result of Local Government Re-organisation. This issue is being managed through a different way of scrutiny working by engaging consultancy and Town Centre Development Manager engagement.

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4.7 Crime and Disorder

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

4.8 Data Quality

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

4.9 LGR Implications

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

5. **BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW**

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

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

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- 5.3 The Action Learning Set is very clear in that it wishes to raise awareness of and fully explore the viability of the options for the future of the market
- 5.4 The Action Learning Set project will involve looking at how the market's sustainability can be achieved over the next 5 to 10 years. It will look at other options in managing the markets including private sector engagement.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

6.1 The objective of the review will be to:

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

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

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

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- What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to make in the light of the research findings?

8. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 A proposed methodology and work programme is detailed below.

8.2 Consultancy Guidance

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

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

8.3 Visits

On the guidance of the consultants visits will be arranged to appropriate markets and operators to understand how they operate successfully.

8.4 Evidence Gathering

The Task and Finish Group will seek to engage traders and public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. This will be undertaken through a series of techniques including questionnaires, consultation events and online surveys.

8.5 Report Findings

The Task and Finish Group will prepare a draft report of their findings to be presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and following agreement, to the Executive.

8.6 Timeline

The following timetable is proposed:

- Initial informal discussion on Draft Scoping Report 22nd July 2008
- Initial presentation, Scoping report and Task and Finish Group membership agreed 30th July 2008
- Visits to other markets and operators by 13th September 2008

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

9. CONSULTATION FOR THE REVIEW

9.1 The review will gather evidence from a variety of sources. The main evidence will come from information provided by the consultants, Officers and external partners, likely to include:

- Existing Markets
- Local residents
- Market Traders
- Town Centre Development Manager
- Community groups

9.2 The scoping report is at the preliminary stages of looking at good practice in other local authorities. It is suggested that Members consider visiting similar market town local authorities, to investigate how these issues are dealt with.

9.3 The evidence for the review will be obtained using a variety of techniques including:

- Task and Finish Group engagement and discussion
- Surveys/Questionnaires/Consultation
- Visits
- Desktop Research by Smartspeed Consulting Services.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members note the report.

10.2 That the panel give consideration and agree to the title of the review.

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- 10.3 That Members of the panel discuss and agree the outlined aims and objectives for the review.
- 10.4 That Members of the panel give consideration to the outlined methodology and work programme for the review.
- 10.5 That Members give consideration to witnesses to be used for consultation purposes during the review.

11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERED TO:**

- Transition Plan & People and Place Priority

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