



## **Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date** Monday 6 March 2023  
**Time** 9.30 am  
**Venue** Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham

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### **Business**

#### **Part A**

**Items which are open to the Public and Press**  
**Members of the public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement,**  
**and if registered to speak.**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2023 (Pages 3 - 12)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties, if any
6. Housing Update (Pages 13 - 52)
  - (i) Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth
  - (ii) Presentation by the Head of Planning & Housing
7. Minutes of the County Durham Economic Partnership Board held on 23 November 2022 (Pages 53 - 60)
8. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

**Helen Lynch**  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham  
24 February 2023

To: **The Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillor K Robson (Chair)  
Councillor A Jackson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Abley, A Batey, G Binney, K Earley, D Haney, G Hutchinson,  
C Lines, L Maddison, R Manchester, C Marshall, C Martin, J Miller, B Moist,  
R Ormerod, A Reed, I Roberts, A Sterling, A Surtees and S Wilson

**Co-opted Members:**

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

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**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ECONOMY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of the **Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Monday 19 December 2022** at **9.30 am**

**Present:**

**Councillor B Moist (Chair)**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors A Batey, G Binney, G Hutchinson, C Lines, R Manchester, C Martin, R Ormerod, I Roberts, A Sterling and A Surtees

**Co-opted Members:**

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

**In Attendance:**

Councillor K Shaw

**1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Abley, A Jackson, C Marshall, J Miller and A Reed.

**2 Substitute Members**

There were no substitutes.

**3 Minutes of the meeting held 7 November 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4 Declarations of Interest, if any**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties, if any**

There were no items from Co-opted Members of Interested Parties.

**6 Skills delivery and supporting the Inclusive Economic Strategy**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Growth which set out the current skills performance and supporting infrastructure operating across County Durham and examined the opportunities to deliver the people and skills aspirations and requirements set out in the Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES) (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chair welcomed A Kerr, Head of Economic Development who provided an introduction to the report noting the current performance and infrastructure to support development and delivery of skills in County Durham. He explained that the report examined those opportunities to deliver skills and meet aspirations, alongside detailing some of the recent policy changes which may help to provide further alignment in the development and delivery of skills in the future. He noted that the Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES) had been agreed by Cabinet at its meeting held the previous week, which now provided a clear strategic direction under the people element of the IES, identifying local skills needs and work with partners to align skill priorities to that need with clear actions to be embedded in the resulting action plan.

G Wood, Economic Development Manager then provided Members with some context to the skills infrastructure, noting the focus on policy changes and the ability to support increasing productivity and growth. As a result, this had increased the employer's priority to articulate their current and future needs.

He went on to provide details surrounding the current skills infrastructure and at a local level noting that this reflected the broad national mix of learning establishments. He also explained that the council as an Education Authority also held a contract with Department for Education to deliver Adult Education and the budget to support it was outlined in appendix 2 of the report.

Moving on the report provided detail surrounding skills performance, highlighting that the qualifications profile for County Durham had started to change since the last Skills Strategy was produced with some improvements in relation to qualifications obtained at Level 4 and above.

He further explained how these qualifications linked to sustained employment in higher skilled roles, however he highlighted that the UK Employer Skills Survey, last undertaken in 2019 and due for publication next year would provide a comprehensive resource on employer skill needs for the future, which would help assess harder to fill vacancies and skill shortages.

The Economic Development Manager went on to provide more detail relating to the recent skills policy changes with the Skills and Post 16 Education Act 2022 further enhancing the role of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) placing them on a statutory footing and enables the Secretary of State to designate Employer Related Bodies (ERBs) to lead the development and review of LSIPs for a specified local area, places duties on training authorities to co-operate with ERBs in the development and review of LSIPs and once developed to have regard to LSIPs in shaping their provision. He highlighted the importance of ensuring that there was alignment between local skills and educational offer in County Durham and confirmed that across the NE Combined Authority area, the NE

Automotive Alliance (NEAA) had been designated as the ERB with responsibility for developing the LSIP.

He continued by informing the committee that a lengthy consultation was undertaken on Skills Funding and Accountability reforms which ended in October 2022, this consultation focussed on the support and incentives to deliver change in the skills system and included making further changes to accountability and funding including the introduction of accountability agreements, with LSIPs forming the basis of local priorities to which providers are accountable and changes to Ofsted inspection regime to include how well providers are contributing to meeting skills needs.

The Economic Development Manager then explained that in developing the LSIP, the NEAA have identified key sectors linked to growth of the regional economy and these closely reflect the key sectors identified in the IES such as construction and advanced engineering and are currently undertaking a three-stage process which seeks to understand the current workforce skills requirements, translate into provision, and address learner demand and employer engagement.

He further explained that the NE LEP have undertaken significant efforts to align school based education with pupils potential careers and progression pathways using a series of benchmarks with a pilot running across two academic years. The implementation of the Gatsby benchmarks by providers was intended to focus on the immediate career and progression opportunities available to learners after leaving school. He confirmed that Government has now adopted the Gatsby benchmarks into their 2017 Careers Strategy for all schools and colleges in England. The Gatsby benchmark programme was embedded in the North East Ambition Programme with the NELEP's strategic economic plan in 2018 including developing a primary school benchmark pilot, adopt the Gatsby Good Career Guidance benchmarks by all secondary schools and colleges and secure and deliver a £3.4m North East Ambition programme which ensures that our education system provides young people with the skills to meet the long-term needs of the NE economy.

He further explained that funding had also recently been sourced from the Poverty Action Group to deliver a new Work Places Project, with students in Year 10 and Year 12 being able to learn about specific employment sectors, different job roles within those sectors, as well as recruitment processes. They would also be afforded time with employees to find out about their pathways into work, to show them the opportunities that are available within County Durham.

He then explained the key skill issues highlighted by the Economic Review in the county, to be addressed, this data has been used to develop the people strand of the IES with a specific focus on supporting people into education, training jobs and to excel in business and their careers. It was highlighted that delivery of the Economic strategy is a partnership activity with the Business, Enterprise and skills thematic group taking the lead on skill issues and ensuring that skills are aligned to business need. The timing of the IES delivery plan for people will link with and support the LSIP process ensuring that strategic alignment of regional and local skills delivery with established and evidenced employer needs.

Mrs R Morris, Co-optee thanked officers for the depth of information provided in the report noting the challenges ahead. She went on to ask a number of questions including how the council intended to bring all the organisations and partners together to achieve the desired outcomes. In reference to the last bullet point of paragraph 13, page 15 of the report relating to matching demand and supply of skills she commented that she was quite disappointed in the statement that better matching between demand and supply of skills will make only a modest contribution to levelling up in areas where the demand is relatively low – level skills, these areas should be a priority and brought up to the same level as elsewhere in the county. . In addition, she asked about the make-up of the Economic Partnership and ensuring there was adequate coverage of key industries not just those in digital and energy sectors. A further question was raised regarding careers advice, Gatsby benchmarks and who was responsible for checking that the Gatsby benchmarks is being delivered in schools as she was aware that in some school's teachers were doing this in addition to already heavy workloads.

In response the Head of Economic Development advised that it was important to create the right skills for the population and confirmed that a priority in the IES is to increase the number of higher skilled jobs within the county and particularly in relation to those areas of the county with low skill levels. He continued that to attract investment into these areas we need the required skill base for employers. With regard to the Economic Partnership, he advised that the membership was being reviewed, with larger employees from alternative sectors being encouraged to join the board.

The Economic Development Manager further explained in relation to levelling up, that it was about bringing together supply and demand and working with employers who were operating with lower skill sets, to assist them in being more productive through research and development to help increase their skills profile.

With regard to the Economic Partnership, he noted the range of SME's represented and further wider representation from the North East Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses.

In relation to the use of the Gatsby benchmarking this is driven by the NE LEP with evaluations being undertaken of the use of Gatsby, these evaluations have been positive. Concerning the Gatsby model and careers advice J Murray, Head of Education and Skills advised that a log was maintained of where DCC schools are providing benchmarking data and he confirmed that there is an established network within County Durham that meet and discuss the application of the benchmarking. He also referenced the drive around pastoral care with a careers' focus and drive to improve school attendance.

Mrs R Morris, asked what could be done to bring all these groups together and asked whether a cross group facility could be established to better inform trainers of what the industry needed in terms of skills for the future.

Councillor Martin commented that it was important to maintain the dialogue between business and trainers to ensure the ongoing provision of high-quality apprenticeships to add to the skills population.

He further noted that he welcomed the measures through Ofsted, to enable links to be formed with training providers, however suggested that their principle concern may be to get numbers in seats, rather than ensuring the courses provided were relevant and where there were genuine skills shortages.

The Head of Economic Development acknowledged the comments made, noting that work was being done to reach all training providers, encouraging collaborative work, and assessing what jobs were out there and not only the skills required to do those jobs, but also the quality of the jobs available.

Councillor Sterling commented that speaking from experience she felt that teachers in schools were time poor and did not have the in-depth knowledge to be able to talk to young people about career opportunities in the various sectors. She felt that careers fayres were an excellent way to raise the aspirations of young people. She highlighted that there is a need to engage with children at a younger age at primary school.

In response the Head of Education and Skills noted that during Year 8, careers development formed part of pastoral tuition, however noted that DurhamWorks, also provides further career support such as career fayres in targeted schools in areas of deprivation and this could be looked at collectively as part of the DASH programme.

The Chair at this point thanked the officers for the report and commented upon current skills performance, noting that it was important to also look to save at risk jobs, from those where the advancement of technology may replace their manual jobs. He further referenced paragraph 29 of the report, referring to the careers agenda, and asked who would be responsible for pulling this piece of work together. He continued that in order to achieve the objectives of the strategy, working together with relevant partners and providers was imperative.

Cllr Surtees commented that in relation to the UK SPF, it is a further 18 months before the funding can be drawn down for the people and skills element and asked what funding we have available currently.

The Chair suggested that this could be responded to when considering the next agenda item.

Councillor Lines asked that in relation to the performance information presented in the report regarding the level of skills performance in County Durham compared to other Local Authorities in the region, did we have any data for Tees Valley.

The Economic Development Manager advised that there was a nationally published table, so it would be possible to get information on jobs in the Tees Valley area, he did however note that there were some local authority boundary constraints and the authority would need to be cognisant of existing local skills improvement plans.

Councillor Batey suggested that it would be beneficial to target primary children as well as those in secondary school with early careers development. In addition, she commented that connectivity was crucial, as many locations within the county still do not have good access to internet and this limited their opportunities for hybrid or home working jobs.

The Head of Economic Development reassured members that this issue was picked up in the IES under the 'Places' theme but also in the connectivity strategy.

## **Resolved:**

- i) That the committee note the countywide arrangement for the identification and delivery of skills to meet current economic priorities.
- ii) That the committee receive a further update on the development of the North East Local Skills Improvement Plan.

## **7 UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which provided an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), setting out details of the UKSPF Investment Plan for County Durham. The report further included an update on the Multiply, and adult numeracy programme funded through the UKSPF, and the new Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Economic Development explained that County Durham had a UKSPF allocation of £30,830,613 and a Multiply allocation of £2,803,077, over the next three financial years (2022/23 to 2024/25), Durham County Council had been identified as the lead authority to deliver the funds. He went on to explain that in order to unlock those funds, the council was required to produce and submit a high-level UKSPF Investment plan to government by 1 August 2022. For the Multiply allocation a separate Investment plan was submitted by 30 June 2022.

The Funding and Programmes Manager then went on to provide further detail of how the funding was allocated. She explained that the overarching aim of UKSPF was to build 'pride in place and increase life chances' through three core investment priorities: Local Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills (including Multiply, a new programme aimed at addressing low level adult numeracy).

To inform the development of the Investment Plan several guiding principles were agreed including a focus on a limited number of high-level interventions and outcomes that enable County Durham to maximise flexibility, as well as adopting a more holistic approach to delivery over the funding period. It was also recognised that the challenges and opportunities faced by Durham's residents, businesses and communities could not be addressed by a single intervention in isolation, and an integrated response was required. In addition, the specific UKSPF Interventions chosen to address the challenges and opportunities under the Fund's three Investment Priorities, Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills were set out within Appendix 3 of the report.

She went on to advise that government approved the UKSPF 2 weeks prior and a pipeline of activity including producing an implementation plan was being undertaken. Further information was also provided regarding Multiply and its rationale, to improve numeracy skills with a longer-term goal of individuals having higher levels of income and wellbeing and producing a positive impact on economic productivity.

Moving on the Funding and Programmes Manager provided some detail surrounding the Rural England Prosperity Fund. This fund is aligned to the UK SPF and is seen as a rural



top up fund and will provide capital grants to support activities that address challenges that rural businesses and communities face. County Durham has been allocated £3,500,000.

The committee was informed that the County Council as lead authority will be the accountable body for these funds and will be responsible for the ongoing management of the allocation, including assessing and approving applications, processing payments and day to day monitoring. The Funding and Programmes Manager continued that as the guidance required the establishment of a partnership to guide and advise on the delivery of the UKSPF funds, the existing County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) was broadened to incorporate wider representation, reflecting the nature of the Fund. The partnership has helped to develop the investment Plans and will have an ongoing role in the fund's governance arrangements.

Mrs R Morris, Co-optee asked whether a copy of the Investment Plan was available to be shared with the members of the committee. She added that she was slightly disappointed that she didn't see anything new in this report and thought that the funding would be linked with the IES in relation to priorities however she could not see a link and felt that science and technology should be recognised. In addition, she felt that this was a huge amount of work and responsibility for the CDEP to take on and asked what, if any, additional support would be available to them.

The Chair commented that in relation to the Delivery Plan there will need to be a performance element in relation to those receiving funding.

The Funding and Programmes Manager advised that ultimately Durham County Council were the accountable body for administering funding. A reporting framework would be in place for quarterly feedback to be provided to government on progress.

She further commented in relation to points made about innovation, that there was to be an accelerated programme supporting innovating technologies and the delivery of this aspect of work would come forward as a result of the UKSPF. The Head of Economic Development commented that this was a tool; to help the county deliver and develop a framework as to where to invest in priority sectors for growth.

The Head of Economic Development commented that SPF is a funding source and that the IES includes the sectors mentioned above and that it would be ensured that the link is there between the priorities in the IES and funding.

Cllr Moist commented that open calls often lack direction and asked whether DCC would be able to give direction.

Councillor Surtees added that she felt that the level of funding to be received in County Durham was insulting. The plan for delivery was confusing and that the social fabric of our neighbourhoods was key. She asked whether a breakdown could be provided regarding the UK investment plan noting that figures contained in Communities and Place were very different, with data provided from the Econ-versation in her opinion extremely poor. She added that the community spirit was dying and that she found it difficult to find any positives, there is nothing in the report to suggest this will change, people are disillusioned and Durham County Council does not have the money that it needs to make a difference across the county.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that the bid had just been agreed and that DCC needs to ensure that bid allocations achieve the priorities identified in the IES. DCC will also be supporting people to develop bids. He continued that the rural allocation is a relatively small amount for the rural nature of the county and highlighted that we will need to use all tools available to deliver the IES.

**Resolved:**

- i) That the content of the report be noted.
- ii) That the EE OSC receive further reports as the programme continues to be implemented over the life of the programme (currently 2022/23- 2024/25).

## **8 Quarter Two 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Outturn**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which provided details of the forecast outturn position for quarter 2 revenue and capital for Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) as at 30 September 2022 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Finance Manager Resources & Regeneration explained that the service were forecasting an overspend of £0.621 million, against a revised budget of £57.802 million, which was a reported improvement on Quarter 1. He further provided details of the level of additional funding from central contingencies which would be required to be drawn upon to support budget shortfalls as a result of post covid pressures and lost income.

The report further detailed budget adjustments required to original service budgets, noting some of the more significant adjustments such as that made in respect of the Pay Award for 21/22, which had been higher than forecast. In addition, he referenced the overspend in Planning and Housing of £0.557 million, mainly relating to Housing Solutions and the additional expenditure incurred as a result of temporary accommodation charges following the government initiative to protect and vaccinate all rough sleepers during the pandemic. He confirmed that the service is continuing to look at the ongoing impact of this budget pressure.

He then went on to advise that despite the service not being able to maintain spending within its cash limit, the overall Regeneration Cash Limit Reserve remained in a healthy position.

**Resolved:**

That the content of the report be noted.

## **9 Quarter Two 2022/23 Performance Management Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director Resources which presented an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlighted key messages to inform strategic priorities and

work programmes. The report further provided performance in and to the end of quarter two 2022/23. July to September 2022 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Corporate Policy and Performance Manager provided an overview of performance noting key performance highlights and areas which required attention as the council continued its transition into a post-pandemic world.

He made particular reference to paragraph 26 of the report regarding homelessness preventions, noting that filling staff vacancies and providing training increased the number of preventions by 42%.

In addition, he noted paragraph 29 of the report which highlighted that post-consultation engagement with all partners and stakeholders was now complete and the Inclusive Economic Strategy had now been considered by Cabinet and approved.

Further highlights were reported in respect of Business Durham activity and increased occupancy rates for premises and Town Centres. Tourist attraction and events had also seen large numbers of attendees, with Bishop Auckland Food Festival generating a direct economic impact of almost £420,000, a 697% return on DCC's £60,000 investment.

With regard to areas of performance which weren't doing as well, the Corporate Policy and Performance Manager noted that the number of rough sleepers had continued to rise due to the current financial climate, with more new presentations being seen by the team on the streets as opposed to returners.

Further details were reported in respect of lost Leisure Centre income post-pandemic, with visitor numbers being further compounded by the current economic crisis.

Other areas worthy of note and highlighted by the Corporate Scrutiny & Strategy Manager included an update on the selective licensing scheme which came into effect on 1 April 2022, noting that only 17% of eligible properties in County Durham were fully licensed. A further 9% had submitted applications.

The Chair asked for further information/breakdown of the reason for the plus 9 % increase in presentations to the Housing Solutions Service. The Corporate Policy and Performance Manager suggested that he would endeavour to get some better analysis in relation to the reasons for the increase.

**Resolved:**

That the content of the report and the direction of travel in relation to quarter two performance, the continuing impact of COVID-19 and the increased cost of living on the council's performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic be noted.

**10 Minutes of the County Durham Economic Partnership Board held on 27 September 2022**

The Minutes of the County Durham Economic Partnership Board held on 27 September 2022 were noted for information.

## Economy & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### Housing Update



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### Report of Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

#### Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

#### Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides an update for the members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on three areas of interest relating the Council's housing service including the Councils engagement with Registered Providers, the progress of the Selective Licensing Scheme and the work being undertaken to address the number of empty homes.

#### Executive summary

- 2 This report and accompanying presentations will provide the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the three areas of interest that members have asked to consider.
  - i. An overview of Council's housing function and how it engages with Registered Providers in the county.
  - ii. An update on the progress of the Selective Licensing Scheme
  - iii. An update on the progress and approach to tackling empty homes across the County
- 3 The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are joined for this report by Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee because of the cross-cutting nature of the areas under consideration.

#### Recommendation

- 4 The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members

- i. Note the content of the report and presentation and provide feedback accordingly
- ii. Receive further reports and presentations on the review of the Council's Housing Strategy and the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy as part of the consultation process in due course.

## **Background**

5 The Council has a number of statutory and retained housing functions even though Durham County Council and several of the previous district council took decisions in the past to transfer their housing stock to newly established Registered Providers.

6 The Council's housing functions include:

- Development of the Local Plan which sets the context and planning policies by which new development in the County will be considered.
- Preparing the Housing strategy which sets out the housing needs of the County and how they will be met.
- Preparing the Homelessness strategy which sets out approach to prevent and assisting people threatened with homelessness
- Determining the Allocations Scheme (DKO) which sets out how applications for social housing in the County are prioritised.
- Private Sector Housing (Enforcement) working with landlords to ensure any housing provided meets the required standards.
- Selective Licencing provides for the regulation of landlords in designated areas of the County.
- Bringing Empty Homes across the county back into use.
- Providing Disabled Facilities Grants to help people with a disability live independently by adapting their home.
- Promoting Energy efficiency and helping owners and tenants to obtain grants and other assistance with their housing costs.
- Ensuring adequate Gypsy and Roma Traveller site provision across the County and managing the councils existing six GRT sites.
- Asylum and humanitarian support for Syrian, Afghan, Ukrainian etc refugees.

- 7 Members of the Economic and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee have asked to receive a report and presentation on three areas of housing activity:
- An overview of Council's housing function and how it engages with Registered Providers in the county.
  - An update on the progress of the Selective Licensing Scheme
  - An update on the progress and approach to tackling empty homes across the County
- 8 The Economic and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with colleagues from the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously received a presentation on Empty Homes at an informal information session on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2022.
- 9 Each of the areas of interest is covered within this report with additional information and explanation being provided by officers during the presentation when there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The questions should be focussed on the general nature of the presentation and subject areas rather than in connection with specific cases which can be discussed with relevant officers outside of the committee setting.

### **Working with Registered Providers**

- 10 Together the Registered Providers in County Durham manage approximately 45,000 homes. Approximately 40,000 of these homes were transferred from council ownership as part of Large-Scale Voluntary Transfers (LSVT) undertaken by the County Council (post 2009) and borough and district councils (pre-2009).
- 11 As a reminder for Members about the LSVT arrangements:
- Derwentside DC transferred 7,600 homes to Derwentside Homes in December 2006 to later merge with Isos in April 2017 to form Karbon Homes.
  - Teesdale DC transferred approximately 1,500 homes to Teesdale Housing Association as part of North Star Group, which was established in 2006 to bring together, Endeavour and Teesdale Housing Associations, then Darlington Housing Association joined the North Star Group in 2016.

- Chester Le-Street DC transferred 4,200 homes to Cestria on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2008, Cestria joined ISOS in 2014 and merged with Derwentside Homes in April 2017 to become Karbon Homes.
  - Sedgefield DC transferred 8,500 homes to Sedgefield Borough Homes on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 it rebranded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2011 as Livin
  - DCC transferred 18,500 homes (Former Durham City Council, Easington District Council and Wear Valley Homes) to County Durham Housing Group in April 2015 then on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 it rebranded as Believe Housing.
- 12 As part of LSVT the ownership and direct management responsibility for the housing stock became the responsibility of the respective Registered Providers (Housing Associations).
- 13 Several important housing functions remain the statutory responsibility of the Council to deliver, and given it does not own any housing stock, close partnership working with the Registered Providers operating across the County is required to deliver these.
- 14 The Councils statutory housing functions include:
- Homelessness Strategy and statutory responsibility for homelessness.
  - The Housing Allocations Scheme
  - Private Sector Housing Enforcement
  - Disabled Facilities Grants
- 15 The Council has other important housing and housing related functions that it is responsible for, including:
- Development of the Local Plan (statutory but wider than housing)
  - Selective Licensing (regulated activity)
  - Gypsy and Roma Travellers
  - Asylum Seekers & Humanitarian Support
  - Energy Efficiency
  - The Housing Strategy
- 16 The Registered Providers are responsible for
- Housing Management
  - Rent Collection



- Tenancy Conditions
  - Tenancy Enforcement
  - Repairs and Maintenance
  - Tenant Engagement
  - Providing nomination rights to the council
  - Housing Development
  - Assisting the Council with its Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
  - Tenant complaints
- 17 As members will be aware Cabinet has previously agreed to the development of 500 new council homes and the Council has acquired approximately 50 homes to assist with the provision of temporary accommodation for rough sleepers and people excluded from the housing register.
- 18 The Council is currently reviewing its Housing Strategy and separately the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and will be consulting with the Registered Providers and the Scrutiny Committee as part of this process. The final draft of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is aiming to be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 and the final draft of Housing Strategy in March 2024.
- 19 Registered Providers are independent bodies overseen by their Board. The Board must ensure effective governance arrangements that deliver their aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent, and accountable manner.
- 20 The Council does not have any role in monitoring and overseeing the activities of the Registered Providers operating across the County and they are not accountable to councillors. Registered Providers are independent bodies overseen by their Boards and regulated through their governance framework and the Regulator for Social Housing. The Council does, however work closely with the Registered Providers, and they are supportive of helping the Council achieve the outcomes set out in the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategies.
- 21 Registered Providers are subject to a Regulatory Framework developed by the Regulator for Social Housing which sets out specific expectations upon them to work with local authorities e.g. *“Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities’ strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities’ homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements.”*

- 22 Durham Key Options, the Choice Based Lettings scheme, is an example of partnership working, where we have a joint approach with an agreed lettings policy which all the partners operate, the partners contribute towards the cost of operating the scheme. We are about to commence a review of the scheme and it is proposed that reports are brought to Overview and Scrutiny as this review progresses. In addition, the Head of Planning and Housing considers any Stage 3 appeals in relation to the operation of Durham Key Options covering the activities of the full partner Registered Providers.
- 23 Where a Registered Provider is considering a new development within the County, they are required to discuss their plans with the Council. Homes England ensure that the proposals have the support of the Council before any grant approval is given.
- 24 The Regulator for Social Housing has established a number of Regulatory Standards that Registered Providers must comply with covering Economic Standards relating to Governance and Financial Viability, Value for Money and Rent and Consumer Standards relating to the Home, Tenancy, Neighbourhood and Community and Tenant Involvement and Empowerment.
- 25 The Regulator for Social Housing issues Regulatory Judgements on an Annual basis in respect of each Registered Provider regarding their Governance arrangements and Financial Viability.
- 26 Registered Providers are also subject to the Housing Ombudsman Service which is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations. The service is free, independent, and impartial.
- 27 There are effective partnership arrangements in place with the Registered Providers. The County Durham Housing Forum meets quarterly. This is chaired by the Council and attended by the main registered providers operating across County Durham. The aim of the Forum is outlined in the terms of reference to.
- i. act as the strategic partnership within County Durham for the consideration of housing and related policy issues.
  - ii. oversee and enable the delivery of the housing and related strategies,
  - iii. assist with the development of more sustainable communities and
  - iv. support the health and well-being of County Durham.
- 28 Several themed task and finish groups sit beneath the housing forum to assist with the delivery of the housing and homelessness strategies.

These are attended by registered providers and a series of joint projects have been introduced as result of this. The themes cover:

- Safeguarding
- Domestic abuse
- Durham key Options
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Housing development
- Specialist accommodation working with health and social care

### **Selective Licensing**

- 29 The scheme covers 42% of the private rented sector (PRS) in County Durham (approximately 28,500 homes) and is one of the largest schemes in the Country. Where a Selective Licensing Scheme covers more than 20% of the Private Rented Sector the specific consent of the Secretary of State is required before a scheme can be introduced. The Selective Licensing Scheme was approved by the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 30 November 2021.
- 30 The scheme covers 103 of the 324 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in County Durham and in each of the LSOA, evidence was provided to demonstrate that the area met at least one of the conditions required by legislation, and some areas met the conditions for all three. These relate to:
- Significant and persistent anti-social behaviour
  - Low demand
  - A high level of deprivation
- 31 The legal powers to set up a scheme for the licensing of properties is contained in Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004. The scheme lasts for five years. Following a three-month notice period, the scheme went live in April 2022.
- 32 The key elements of this scheme in Durham are:
- promotion of good practice in terms of management and maintenance which is capable of being enforced,
  - mandatory licence application for every PRS property within the defined scheme,

- landlords must pass a 'fit and proper person' test in advance of receiving a licence,
  - appropriate staffing structure in place to support scheme administration, inspection, and enforcement,
  - property inspection regime in place, and
  - support for landlords to comply with licence conditions.
- 33 To date 8,681 Applications have been received, 7,337 Licences issued and £3.4 million in income has been received. Work is progressing on ensuring all landlords operating in the designated area are licensed.
- 34 Selective licensing provides a regulatory framework which allows for pro-active monitoring of the private rented sector and the opportunity for enforcement against poor landlords. It facilitates a multi-agency approach making the best use of a range of powers available in addition to selective licensing.
- 35 It is acknowledged that this is part of the solution, all previous interventions are still needed to, not just stabilise but, enhance our communities moving forward.
- 36 The licensing fee is a maximum of £500, with discount available for each of the following:
- An early bird discount of £60 for those applying for a license before 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022
  - Previous accreditation with either Durham County Council (DCC) or current accreditation with the National Residential Landlords Association (£55 discount per licence), and
  - landlords with two or more properties (£35 discount for each licence after the first property).
- 37 All income is ringfenced for the operation of the selective licensing scheme only. Approximately £12 million may be raised across the five years of the scheme.
- 38 Civil Penalties can be used as alternative to prosecution for Selective Licensing Offences, including for not having a licence, non-compliance with licence conditions, or for improvement notices.
- 39 The maximum penalty for each offence is £30,000. Income received from a civil penalty can be retained by DCC, providing it is used to further the statutory functions in relation to enforcement activities covering the private rented sector.

- 40 The teams continue to work proactively in the selective licensing areas to ensure all landlords obtain a license and comply with licence conditions, by making full use of both informal measures as well as robustly pursuing enforcement action.
- 41 Details of the current progress with the licensing scheme will be provided within the presentation.

## **Empty Homes**

- 42 The Empty Homes function sits within the Planning and Housing Team within the Regeneration and Growth Directorate of the Council, and the team undertake various activities aimed at bringing empty properties back into use. The team works proactively with teams in Community Protection, Council Tax and Building Control to use the wide range of powers available to the Council to tackle this issue. There are currently over 10,000 homes vacant across the County for a variety of reasons, some relate to the normal operation of the housing market which are not seen as a problem. It is the homes that remain vacant for a prolonged period and deteriorate that are the main issue.
- 43 Members may recall that the Economic and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with colleagues from the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously received a presentation on Empty Homes at an informal information session on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2022.
- 44 There are many reasons why some homes stand empty, and it is accepted that a proportion of the homes are empty as part of the normal operation of the housing market. The main reasons why properties remain empty for longer periods of time include:
- Lack of finances to carry out refurbishment
  - Property for sale – Property chain or unrealistic selling price
  - Second Homes
  - Waiting for planning consent
  - Property subject to legal dispute e.g., marital breakdown
  - Complications with probate – this may include instances where the owner has passed leaving no living relative
  - Owner may be residential care, hospital, or prison
  - Lack of demand
  - Properties awaiting regeneration or demolition

- 45 The officers deal with a wide range of issues relating to empty home including the:
- Provision of advice, support and assistance to owners and landlords of empty properties, to bring them back into occupation,
  - Provision of financial assistance by way of empty homes loans,
  - Completing external visual inspections on empty properties when reported, this inspection allows officers to determine the level of intervention required to bring the property back into occupation,
  - Working closely with several service areas to ensure a more comprehensive approach is adopted to bringing properties back into use.
- 46 The officers use a range of options to work with owners to bring a property back into use and enforcement would always be used as a last resort after exhausting all options available.
- 47 In order to take enforcement action such as an Enforced Sale, Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO) or Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) officers need to work closely with other service areas who have the required enforcement powers.
- 48 An action plan has been developed to ensure the work of the team is targeted effectively on a needs and area basis. This will be covered in more detail within the slide presentation which also provides information on the number of empty homes and our performance in bringing empty homes back into use.

### **Next Steps**

- 49 The Economic and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a presentation on the three areas of interest and make any comments and observations they feel appropriate.
- 50 The Committee receive further reports and presentations on the review of the Council's Housing Strategy and the review of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy.

### **Background Papers**

- Regulator for Social Housing Regulatory Framework  
[www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards)

### **Author(s)**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Registered Providers are subject to the Regulatory Framework developed by the Regulator for Social Housing.

Registered Providers are overseen by the Boards and are also subject to the requirements of the Companies Act, the Charities Commission, Industrial and Provident Society depending upon the constitution of the organisation.

Local authorities will be required to obtain confirmation from the Secretary of State for any selective licensing scheme which would cover more than 20% of their geographical area or would affect more than 20% of privately rented homes in the local authority area.

### **Finance**

The income from the Selective Licensing Scheme is ring-fenced to the scheme

### **Consultation**

Consultation will be undertaken widely with regard to the development of the Council's Housing Strategy and the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

The Council will take all opportunities to get feedback from hard-to-reach groups across the county and the strategy will be accompanied by an equalities impact assessment.

### **Climate Change**

The Planet and the green economy are a key consideration in the Housing Strategy which will consider net zero and other environmental considerations.

### **Human Rights**

None.

### **Crime and Disorder**

Selective Licensing can be used effectively to ensure landlords comply with their legal requirements.

### **Staffing**

None.

**Accommodation**

None.

**Risk**

None.

**Procurement**

n/a



# Housing in County Durham

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 March 2023



# In Today's Presentation

## Cover 3 Areas of Interest

- The Role of Registered Providers and how the Council works with them on key housing issues across the County
- The Selective Licensing Scheme that was introduced in April 2022 and how we are progressing with the implementation plan.
- Empty Homes covering the number of empty homes, why homes stand empty and what action is being taken to bring long term empty homes back into use.

An opportunity for discussion and questions at the end

# **Working with Registered Providers of Social Housing**

# Housing Roles – the Council (1)

## **Local Plan\***

Spatial context and policies for all future development.

## **Housing strategy**

Sets out the vision and priorities for housing and housing related services across the county, including the steps needed to get there.

## **Homelessness strategy\***

Sets out strategic approach and key priorities and actions towards preventing homelessness across the County.

## **Allocations scheme (DKO)\***

Sets out how the council (and its partners) allocate properties and ensures “reasonable preference” is given to certain categories of applicant (Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996).

## **Private sector housing (Enforcement)\***

Address tenant complaints and ensure properties are fit for habitation and meet minimum standards, taking enforcement action against those who fail to comply

# Housing Roles – the Council (2)

## **Selective Licencing**

Selective licensing gives certain powers to a local authority to regulate landlords and managing agents of private rented property but only in designated areas.

## **Empty homes**

The Empty Homes team are responsible for bringing residential empty properties across the county back into use, working proactively with the owners of empty homes.

## **Disabled Facilities Grants\***

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) assist people to live independently by helping to fund suitable adaptations to their properties.

## **Energy efficiency**

We assist with grants for boilers, heating sources, and insulation; reducing energy bills and switching tariffs; new central heating schemes; and funding to acquire and improve properties.

# Housing Roles – the Council (3)

## **Gypsy & Roma travellers**

The GRT Site Management Service is responsible for the six permanent sites owned by Durham County Council. Responsibilities include allocation of pitches, void management, income recovery, addressing anti-social behaviour, health and safety, along with repairs and maintenance of amenity blocks and communal areas.

- **Asylum and humanitarian support**

We provide a multiagency approach ensuring that all services deliver a co-ordinated response to the needs of the individual families from Afghanistan, Syria, and the Ukraine. We act as the lead professional for the family and provide intensive and tailored packages of support.

# Housing Roles – Registered Providers

Registered Providers (Housing Associations) are organisations that provide housing and housing related support services to local people. Their role is varied, with some providing accommodation and services to specific service users (e.g. older persons) but generally their role includes:

- Allocate empty homes and work with the council to meet local housing need
- Collecting rent
- Repairing and maintaining their stock
- Ensuring tenants comply with their tenancy agreement (e.g. pay rent and don't cause a nuisance)
- Taking enforcement action when tenants (or their family or visitors) break tenancy conditions
- Engaging with tenants to ensure their services meet their needs
- Providing new homes
- Dealing with complaints from their tenants

# Partnership Working

- Work together developing key strategies
- RPs provide nomination rights to the Council
- New Development requires Council Support
- Housing Forum meets quarterly
- Task and Finish Groups
- Regular Liaison Meetings



# Registered Providers in Durham

\*Believe (Durham City, East Durham Wear Valley)

\*Karbon Homes (Derwentside & Chester Le Street)

\*Livin (Sedgefield)

\*North Star (Teesdale)

Accent

Anchor Hanover

Bernicia Homes

Castles & Coasts Housing

Durham Action Single Housing

Durham Aged Miners

Hellens Residential

Home Group

Housing 21

Johnnie Johnson

Places for People (Divesting Stock)

Railway Housing Association

Riverside North East

Sherburn Housing Charity

Thirteen Group

The total homes managed by RP's is 45,000

\*Livin, Believe, Karbon and North Star (LSVTs) have 39,000 homes

# Regulation of Registered Providers

- Registered Providers are independent bodies
- Overseen by their Boards
- Regulated by Regulator for Social Housing
- Must meet Regulatory Standards
  - Economic Standards
  - Consumer Standards
- Subject to Regulatory Judgements
- Under Jurisdiction of Housing Ombudsman
- Scrutiny by tenants
- Oversight by Homes England on funded schemes



Regulator of  
Social Housing

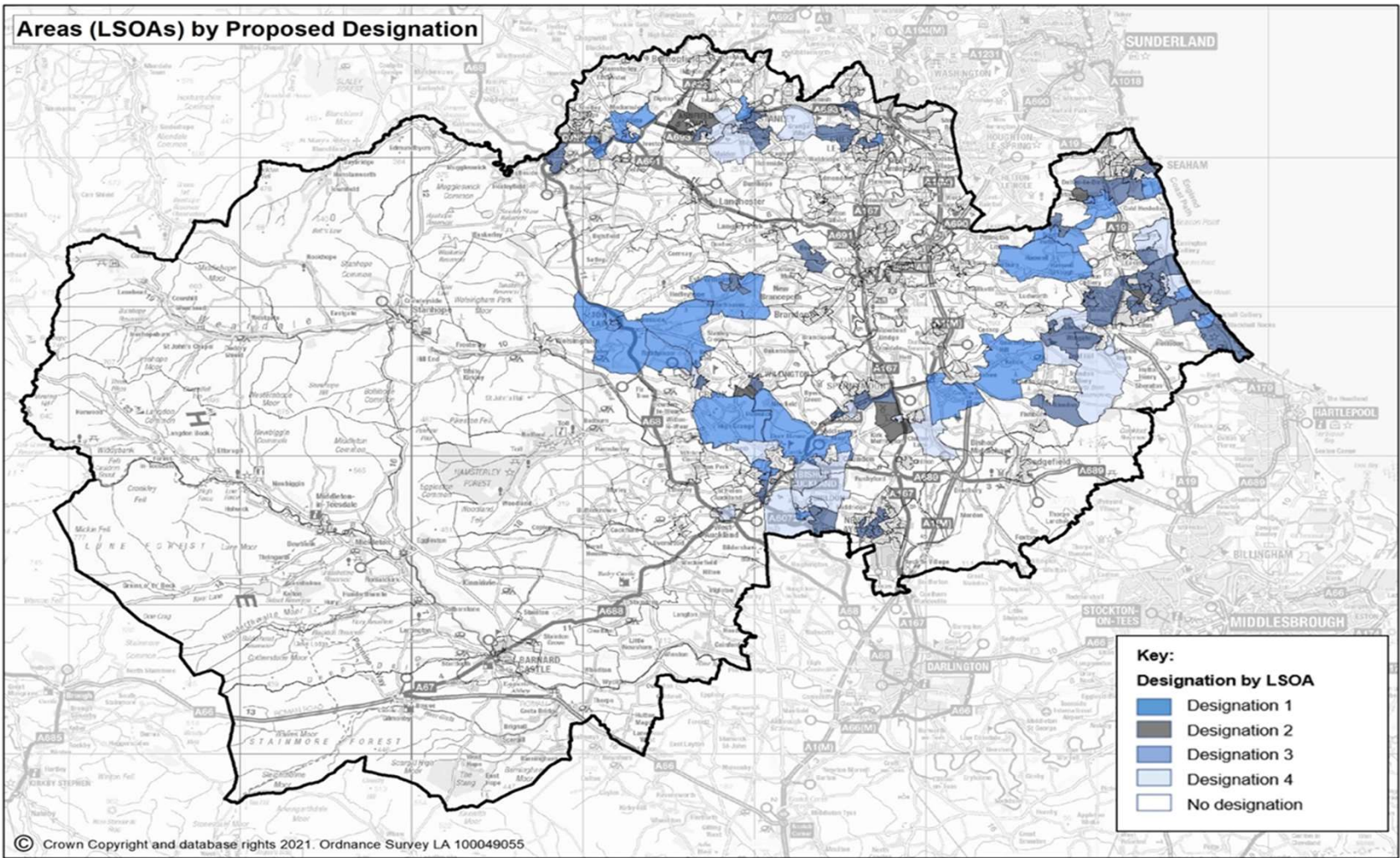


# Selective Licensing

## Selective Licensing Scheme

- Approved by Secretary of State on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021
- In force 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 lasts for 5 years
- Covers 42% of the private rented stock 29,000 properties
- Covers 103 Lower Super Output Areas across 4 designations
  - (i) ASB
  - (ii) Deprivation
  - (iii) Low Demand
  - (iv) Areas that satisfy all 3 criteria

### Areas (LSOAs) by Proposed Designation



## Licensing so far

- 8681 Applications received
- 7337 Licences issued
- £3.4 million received
- Ringfenced to SL activities
- 800 inspections carried out
- Enforcement Action underway
  - Improvement Notices for Disrepair
  - PACE interviews being conducted (no application or non-compliance with Improvement Notices/Licence Conditions)





# Enforcement and Compliance

- 731 Inspections carried out
- 146 follow up inspections for remedial work which have lead to
  - 11 Improvement Notices
  - 1 Emergency Remedial Action
  - 1 Prohibition Order
- 8 interviews under caution scheduled for no licence
- 1 licence revoked after landlord not “fit and proper”



# Penalties

- Prosecution (unlimited fine) or a civil penalty of up to £30,000
- Management Order
- Rent Repayment Order
- Banning Order
- Entry on Rogue Landlord Database
- No S21 Notice (no fault eviction)





## Future Activity

- Identification of properties without a licence using Council Tax and Housing Benefit data
- Landlords written to advise that they need to apply for a licence to avoid enforcement action
- Delivery Plan - Enforcement and Compliance teams working through all LSOAs in first 3 years of the scheme
- Review data in years 4 and 5 to consider areas that may be included in extension of the scheme

# Empty Homes

# Roles and Responsibilities

- Various Teams involved
  - Housing – Bringing property back into use
  - Community Protection – Wardens, Enforcement and ASB
  - Council Tax – Premiums for empty homes
  - Building Control – Safe and Secure
  - Planning Enforcement – Where property is detrimental to local area

# Empty Properties

Year	Private Sector & RSL combined data			Private Sector only			RP only		
	LTE	STE	Total	LTE	STE	Total	LTE	STE	Total
<b>2015</b>	6851	4826	<b>11,677</b>	6530	4445	<b>10,975</b>	321	381	<b>702</b>
<b>2016</b>	6301	4329	<b>10,630</b>	6034	4054	<b>10,088</b>	267	275	<b>542</b>
<b>2017</b>	6299	4163	<b>10,462</b>	6069	3860	<b>9929</b>	230	303	<b>533</b>
<b>2018</b>	6286	4261	<b>10,547</b>	5984	3812	<b>9796</b>	302	449	<b>751</b>
<b>2019</b>	6804	4811	<b>11,615</b>	6401	3976	<b>10,377</b>	403	835	<b>1238</b>
<b>2020</b>	6864	3951	<b>10,815</b>	6423	2927	<b>9350</b>	441	1024	<b>1465</b>
<b>2021</b>	6306	3564	<b>9870</b>	5851	2710	<b>8561</b>	455	854	<b>1309</b>
<b>2022</b>	6455	3739	<b>10,194</b>	5923	2913	<b>8836</b>	532	826	<b>1358</b>

## Empty Homes Back Into Use

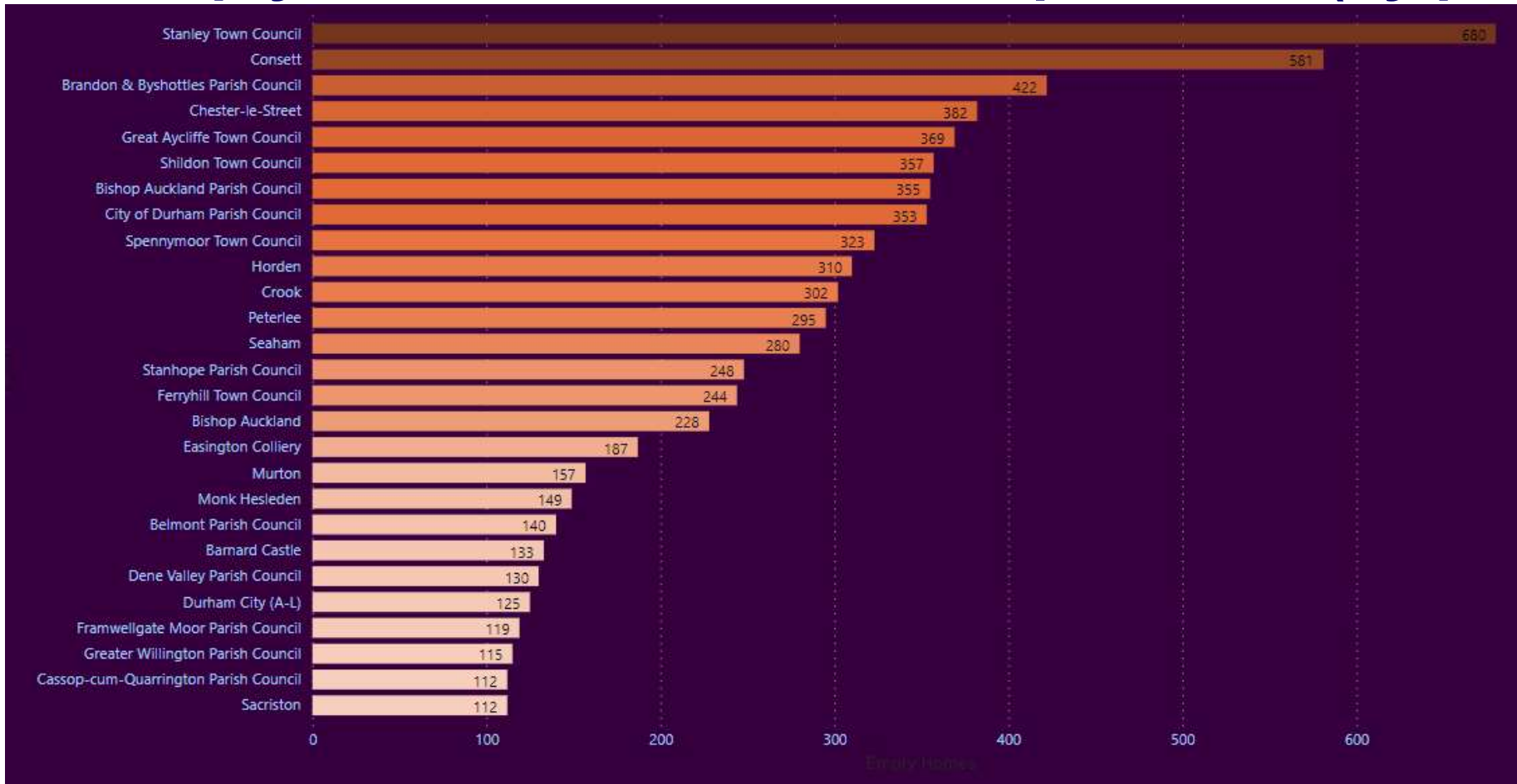
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Achieved	Target
<b>16/17</b>	29	27	38	42	136	120
<b>17/18</b>	45	68	40	45	198	120
<b>18/19</b>	56	55	31	44	186	120
<b>19/20</b>	73	43	48	48	212	200
<b>20/21</b>	59	40	35	37	171	200
<b>21/22</b>	24	53	40	37	154	200
22/23	55	68	54			200

## Regional And National Data

- Information from “Action on Empty Homes” website and sent to all LAs
- Does not include second homes:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Durham	1.69%	1.70%	1.87%	1.56%	1.63%
Regional	1.38%	1.46%	1.66%	1.39%	1.43%
National	0.89%	0.92%	1.08%	0.95%	1.02%

# Empty Homes Numbers - Hot Spot areas (by parish)



# Why are homes left empty?

- Lack of finances to refurbish
- Property for sale – Chain or unrealistic selling price
- Second Homes
- Awaiting planning consent
- Legal dispute – i.e. divorce settlement
- Complications with probate
- Owner in residential care, hospital or prison
- Lack of demand
- Pending Regeneration





# Action

- Provide advice, support and assistance
- Empty homes loans
- Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme
- Respond to complaints
- Council Tax Premiums
- Enforcement where informal action fails
  - Enforced Sale
  - Empty Dwelling Management Order
  - Compulsory Purchase



# Action Plan

- Targeted proactive work
  - Targeted Delivery Plans
  - Selective Licencing
  - Community Action Team
- Database in development
- Working with legal on enforced sale
- Better Enforcement
  - Delegated powers
  - Agreements in place with EHCP/Neighbourhoods/Planning/Building control
  - Notices / joint working
- Council Tax non payers / High payers
  - Joint working with CT on complex/ long term empty properties

# Time for Questions?



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**Meeting:** County Durham Economic Partnership Board

**Date & Time:** Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at 1pm

**Venue:** Salvus House, Aykley Heads, Durham



Better for everyone

<b>Present:</b>	Name	Organisation/Pillar Rep
	Glyn Llewellyn (GL)	Chair
	Alison Gittins (AG)	Durham Business Group
	Cllr Elizabeth Scott (Cllr ES)	Durham County Council
	Kate Burrows (KB)	VCS Voice
	Michelle Cooper (MC)	VCS Voice
	Reshma Begum (RB)	Federation of Small Business
	Sue Parkinson (SP)	Resources
	Tim Hammond (TH)	Innovation
	Angela Brown (ABro) (Minutes)	Durham County Council
	Darren Knowd (DK)	Head of procurement, Sales and Business
<b>Also in attendance via zoom:</b>		
	Danielle Jackson (DJ)	Metro Dynamics (Consultant)
	Andy Kerr (AK)	Durham County Council
	Claire Williams (CW)	Durham County Council
	Andy Broadbent (AB)	People
	Bill Fullen (BF)	Inclusive Growth
<b>Apologies:</b>		
	Amy Harhoff	Durham County Council
	Sarah Slaven	Business Competitiveness
	Andy Bailey	Partnership Team, DCC

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	GL welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked DBG for hosting the event today  ABro listed the apologies		
2.	<b>Minutes of the meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>	The minutes from the meetings in September were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting		
3.	<b>Rural England Prosperity Fund Addendum – Claire Williams</b>	<p>CW gave an update on the Rural England Prosperity Fund. She shared slides with the Board, and asked for comments in particular on areas of focus, which she presented as:</p> <p><b>Investment Priority: Supporting Rural Business £2.2m</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1.Small scale investment in micro and small enterprises</li> <li>• 1.3 Developing and the promoting the visitor economy</li> </ul> <p><b>Investment Priority: Supporting Rural Communities £1.3m</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.2 Investment in Capacity Building and Infrastructure Support for Local Civil Society and Community Groups</li> </ul> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>In response to Board comments, CW clarified that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although element 2.2 had not been selected, the activities which this encompasses are able to be accommodated under element 2.2, which is broader in scope.</li> </ul>		

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is possible to utilise funding to facilitate landowners or farmers to convert properties but it would be prudent to bear in mind the size of the overall budgetary envelope available under this programme.</li> <li>- Whilst this funding is purely capital, it will be critical that this is aligned with revenue activity, so that each facilitates the other and provided an example of where this may be possible in relation to business start up space, and reminded the Board that there is an allocation in UKSPF for R and D for high tech businesses, which could provide more scope for activity than would be possible within this restricted budgetary envelope.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The CDEP Board endorsed the areas of focus and the submission to Government on that basis</b></li> </ul>	<b>All</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Inclusive Economic Strategy (Final Draft) – Danielle Jackson &amp; Andy Kerr</b>	<p>AK gave an update on the Inclusive Economic Strategy, which had been brought to the Board earlier in the year for comment. The purpose of presenting this at this meeting was to seek CDEP approval from the Board before it is considered by Cabinet in December for approval. He made the point that DCC Overview and Scrutiny Committee, recognising that the Partnership has accountability for driving forward its delivery in partnership, was keen that the Board felt that the Strategy fully allowed them to do so.</p> <p>DJ mentioned that the Strategy has evolved substantially since it was presented at the last CDEP Board, and the views expressed by the Board had now been incorporated. The language now is clear that this is a Partnership document and that the CDEP Board is working together in Partnership to transform the Economy of County Durham. DJ thanked everyone who contributed to the changes over past few months.</p> <p>In terms of next steps, contingent on CDEP Board approval, then individual Board members may wish to adopt this strategy through their internal governance structures. Cabinet will consider the strategy in December, followed by a press</p>		

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
		<p>launch. Thereafter, AK proposed that there would be a subsequent Board meeting to begin planning for delivery, with sub-groups created to take forward the different thematic delivery plans strands. This would then facilitate the creation of the delivery plan with supports the Strategy, and which, once agreed by CDEP Board, will be considered by Cabinet towards the end of 2023.</p> <p>GL thanked AK</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>There was a widely held recognition that this reflected the Board's previous input and welcomed the language of partnership, recognising that this conferred not only ownership but also responsibility. Overall, the document was felt to be well balanced, accessible and relevant.</p> <p>There was some concern about the perception that may arise when individual town centres were named, rather than reference being made to the more generic "major centres".</p> <p>It was suggested that some nationally significant developments such as the Northern Accelerator and NE IOT appeared to have been lost in this version, and AK confirmed that this was unintentional and would be rectified. Attention was also drawn to the availability of more recent data on health related work absence.</p> <p>The inclusion of housing as a key driver of the economy was welcomed.</p> <p>The proposed arrangements for the development of the delivery plan were welcomed. The Chair made the point that delivery is the absolute key so that people and businesses in County Durham can see a positive difference being made.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DJ and AK to take forward the issues raised above, and on that basis the CDEP Board endorsed the Strategy</b></li> </ul>	DJ & AK	



Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Further Board meeting to consider arrangements for Delivery Plan development</b></li> <li>• <b>The Chair thanked colleagues for their input and for the significant amount of genuinely inclusive work which had gone into the production of the Strategy.</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All</b></p>	
5.	<b>Board membership – Sue Parkinson</b>	<p>The Vice Chair reminded the Board that, at its last meeting, it had agreed to receive a paper which refreshed the Board Terms of Reference and membership, to more closely align both to the IES, and the paper was circulated with the Agenda.</p> <p>Updated Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The re-alignment of individual members against the structure of the Inclusive Economic Strategy</li> <li>• The replacement of specific named members where postholders have changed or roles restructured: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Substitution of Andy Kerr for Ray Brewis, Durham County Council</li> <li>○ Substitution of Kate Burrows for Joanna Laverick, Durham Community Action</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The suggested inclusion of new members, to be invited subject to Board approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Centre for Process Industries (Productivity)</li> <li>○ Engineering and Manufacturing Network (Voice of Business)</li> <li>○ Visit County Durham, Private Sector Board Member (Promotion and Voice of Business)</li> <li>○ Head of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (Place and Promotion)</li> <li>○ Northeast Chamber of Commerce (Voice of Business)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Clarification of the position that attendance at Board is limited to named members and of the ability to set up ad hoc working groups, for instance to support the development of the IES delivery plan</li> </ul>		

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
		<p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once TOR are agreed it will be necessary to inform County Durham Partnership that they had changed slightly</li> <li>- AK suggested the inclusion of the Chair of the Youth Council would add the dimension of a young person's voice.</li> <li>- It was suggested that the involvement of the Northeast Automotive Alliance in the wider partnership would be useful, as would the involvement of larger employers such as Northumbrian Water. The Chair was particularly keen to see the involvement of smaller SMEs. Overall the point was made that the involvement of business voice through representative organisations at the Board allowed for a breadth of views to be considered, but that not all involvement with the Partnership needed to be, or indeed should be, only via Board membership. By way of example, Durham Business Club has 220 members 50 of which are corporate members, which presented a platform for hearing wider views.</li> <li>- The recommendations of the paper were agreed, with the inclusion of the Chair of the Youth Council to those suggested in the paper and including invitations to Trade Union Congress and County Durham Association of Head Teachers. The Board would then wish to consider a wider piece of work, working through and with partners to look at the business voice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Board agreed the paper, and that the Vice Chair would support the Chair to operationalise this.</b></li> </ul>	GL/SP	
6.	<b>County Durham Pound – Darren Knowd</b>	DK introduced a presentation on the County Durham Pound, which was based on Durham partners operating as a collective, ensuring that their buying and employing power and social value contributions work to benefit the people and communities of County Durham.		

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
		<p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>The work was very warmly welcomed, and the lead which County Durham was taking was applauded and supported.</p> <p>DK acknowledged that there were difficulties with partners who procured nationally, but pointed out that there were still opportunities to explore and exploit, that notwithstanding.</p> <p>It was recognised that there was significant potential to exploit in the delivery of the objectives of the ECCP and the wider “green agenda”.</p> <p>The economic demography of the County was such that much of the business stock comprised small and micro SMEs, and there was therefore potential for partners to use their purchasing power to benefit those same businesses through lower value procurements.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that work would be needed so that businesses could visualise and experience the opportunities that this could bring, and Cllr Scott agreed The Durham Pound should form a workstream of the delivery plan of the IES, which would allow for people within the partnership to help to shape that.</p> <p>DK thanked all partners for their commitment to this</p> <p><b>Action: The County Durham Pound be one of the workstreams in the development of the Delivery Plan for the IES.</b></p>	<p>As per Action 2 Agenda Item 4</p>	

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
7.	<b>Partner Updates</b>	<p>SP referenced an update on UKSPF that needed to be shared with CDEP Plus Board. The Technical Funding Group, which acted under delegation from the CDEP+ Board, had met to progress activities for Year 1 UKSPF spend. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning a short piece work to design enterprise support delivery</li> <li>• Commissioning a short piece of work looking at rural businesses and how we apply SPF to ensure that it is inclusive of rural areas</li> <li>• Potentially developing a piece of preparatory work for any capital activity planned for years 2 and 3</li> </ul> <p>The Board noted the position.</p>		
8.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	<p>Abroad highlighted some extraneous references in the ToR to his position, which appeared to relate to those of his predecessor.</p> <p><b>Action: ABro to remove</b></p> <p>GL thanked everyone for attending today and felt this is good starting point for plan going forward</p>	<b>ABro</b>	
	<b>Date and time of Next Meeting</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 3pm Location TBC</b>		