



## **Cabinet**

**Date**        **Wednesday 30 May 2012**  
**Time**        **9.30 am**  
**Venue**       **Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham**

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### **Public Question and Answer Session**

**9.30 a.m. to 10.00 a.m.**

An opportunity for local people to have a 30 minutes informal question and answer session with Cabinet Members.

### **Cabinet Business**

**10.00 a.m. onwards**

#### **Part A**

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.  
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's  
agreement.**

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2012 (Pages 1 - 6)
2. Declarations of interest

#### **Key Decision:**

3. Revitalising Markets within County Durham - Joint Report of Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development [Key Decision: NH/06/11] (Pages 7 - 44)

#### **Ordinary Decisions:**

4. Welfare Reform - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 45 - 68)
5. Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-2016 - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 69 - 92)
6. Visit County Durham Business and Operational Plan 1 April 2011 - 31 March 2014 - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 93 - 118)

7. The National Planning Policy Framework and the Impact on the County Durham Plan - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 119 - 142)
8. Design and Development Brief for Milburngate House, Durham City - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 143 - 148)
9. Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's Policy Programme - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 149 - 188)
10. County Durham Partnership Update Report - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 189 - 206)
11. Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016 - Report of Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services (Pages 207 - 254)
12. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.
13. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information.

### **Part B**

#### **Items during which it is considered the meeting will not be open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential information)**

14. Acquisition of Land at Woodham Community Technology College - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 255 - 264)
15. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

**Colette Longbottom**  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham  
22 May 2012

To: **The Members of the Cabinet**

Councillors S Henig and A Napier (Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council) together with Councillors N Foster, L Hovvels, M Nicholls, M Plews, C Robson, B Stephens, C Vasey and B Young

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**Contact: Ros Layfield**

**Tel: 0191 383 4205**

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**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 18 April 2012 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor S Henig** in the Chair

**Cabinet Members:**

Councillors Foster, Hovvels, Napier, Nicholls, Plews, Robson, Stephens, Vasey and B Young

**Other Members:**

Councillors Armstrong, Arthur, Bailey, E Bell, J Bell, Blakey, Bleasdale, Carr, Chaplow, Dixon, Graham, Gray, N Harrison, Hugill, Lethbridge, Naylor, R Ord, Shuttleworth, Stelling, Stradling, Temple, Todd, Walker and Williams

**1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 29 February and 7 March 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3 Review of Access to and Provision of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)  
Key Decision NS/08/11**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which provided the outcomes from the public consultation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre Review, and recommended the level of HWRC service in County Durham that will form the basis of the upcoming re-procurement of contracts to operate the sites through a competitive tender process, and the alterations to current operational policies in relation to HWRC Permits, acceptable vehicles and opening hours (for copy see file of Minutes).

In response to comments made by Councillors Stelling and Temple about the Broomsdene site at Consett, Cabinet members spoke at length about the site and the reasons for it not being viable to keep open.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**4 Seaham and Murton Masterplan  
Key Decision R&ED/05/12**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development that sought approval of the masterplan that provides the detailed programme of activity that is taking place or is planned in Seaham and Murton by the Council and its partners (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor E Bell advised of his support for the plan, and spoke about the regeneration of the area.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**5 Crook Masterplan  
Key Decision R&ED/04/12**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development that provided information on a programme of proposed regeneration intervention for Crook, and timescales for the delivery of initial elements of the proposed programme (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Bailey expressed his support for the plan and of the excellent work being undertaken on the regeneration of the town. In the absence of Councillor Tomlinson, Councillor Foster advised of the member's support for the masterplan.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**6 Bishop Auckland Masterplan  
Key Decision R&ED/06/12**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development that provides the detailed programme of activity that is taking place or is planned in Bishop Auckland by the Council and our partners (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Lethbridge advised of his support for the plan, and that through regeneration the area is changing and attracting many more visitors.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**7 Children and Young People's Services: Ofsted inspection of local authority Fostering Service**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service that provided the outcomes of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspection of Durham County Council Fostering Service (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service emphasised that all seven judgments were outstanding, and that no single recommendation for improvement had been made. He thanked the officers in his service for this remarkable achievement. Cabinet members congratulated the Corporate Director and his staff.

**Resolved:-**

That the report be noted.

**8 Localisation of Council Tax Benefit: Introduction of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 1 April 2013**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources that provided an overview of the Government's proposals to localise Council Tax Benefit, through the introduction of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 1 April 2013, and to highlight the potential implications for the Council and its residents (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**9 Armed Forces Community Covenant**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive that recommended the Council enters into a Community Covenant with the Armed Forces to support the active Armed Forces community in County Durham as well as ex service personnel and their families (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**10 NHS Reforms**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Adults, Wellbeing and Health, and Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services that

provided an update on recent developments in relation to NHS reforms(for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the report be received.

**11 Evaluation of the 2011 Lumiere Festival**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Adults Well Being and Health, and Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development on the evaluation work which has been undertaken on the 2011 Lumiere programme and the next steps to be taken to ensure that a complete picture is available to members when they consider whether to commission a Lumiere programme for 2013 (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**12 Annual Enforcement Programme Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 and Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services that reviewed enforcement activities under the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991, the Anti-social Behaviour Act and the Licensing Act 2003 for the period April 2011 to March 2012 and sought approval of a new enforcement programme for 2012/13 (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**13 Annual Review of the Constitution**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that presented proposals for the revision of the Council's Constitution (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised of an additional revision to the delegations to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services relating to the determination of applications for approval of drainage systems.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved, together with the additional delegation referred to by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**14 Exclusion of the Public**

**Resolved:**

That under Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

**15 Waste Disposal and Treatment Services**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources relating to the Waste Disposal and Treatment Services, and the Waste Management Company.

**Resolved:-**

That the recommendations in the report be approved.

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**Cabinet**

**30 May 2012**

**Revitalising Markets within County  
Durham**

**Key Decision NH/06/11**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Joint report of Terry Collins, Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development.**

**Councillor Bob Young, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Environment**

**Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To present the findings of the County Durham market review and seek Cabinet approval of the draft strategy for 'Revitalising Markets' within County Durham' for public consultation.
- 2 To present options for the future management and operation of markets across the county for further consideration.

**Background**

- 3 In the pre-19th century the majority of the population made their living through agriculture and livestock farming, most people lived where they worked, with relatively few living in towns. Market towns grew up at centres of local activity and were an important feature of rural life.
- 4 The monarch has always had the power to grant to a subject the right to hold a market without disturbance. This was in essence a monopoly which restricted the right to hold another market within a certain travelling distance of an existing one. This limit was usually a day's worth of travelling to and from the market. This has evolved into the common law distance of six and two thirds miles.
- 5 Markets can be created by grant from the Crown, long user (prescription), local Act of Parliament or under powers in public acts such as the Food Act 1984. If a market has been created by grant, long user or Local Act of Parliament the owner of the market has certain privileges including the right (in some cases) to restrain rival markets within the common law distance set out above. Therefore organisers of new informal markets may be at risk of possible action by existing right-holders. Where a market is held without the authority or right of a franchise or by statute it is an 'unofficial' or 'informal' market. Any concourse or gathering of buyers and sellers may amount to an informal market regardless of whether the activity is described as a market.

## **The Role of the Council**

- 6 There is no statutory duty for Durham County Council (DCC) to provide markets on any particular day at any particular location.
- 7 However, whilst there may be no requirement to hold markets there may be legal considerations relating to the origin and status of the existing markets which dictate when such markets are to be held and their location. In addition, once a market has been formally established, whilst market days and market location may be changed, any such change will be subject to following the correct statutory or other legal processes including consultation, advertisement and change of planning permission.
- 8 Under Part IIA of the Food Act 1984, the County Council is a market authority and can, under the terms of that Act:
  - s.50 Establish or acquire a market
  - s.52 Appoint market days and hours
  - s.53 Demand charges
  - s.60 Make byelaws

## **Local Authority Market Provision**

- 9 Local Authority managed and operated markets currently operate in 10 locations across County Durham namely Durham City, Chester-le-Street, Crook, Consett, Stanley, Seaham, Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland, Barnard Castle and Stanhope. Appendix 2 shows the existing licensed and DCC managed market provision within County Durham. Other markets exist and operate across the County but they are not under the control of the County Council.
- 10 Responsibility for markets was transferred to the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection Service (EHCP) following local government re-organisation in 2009. The existing management arrangements have remained in place since then and as a result the Council has continued to directly manage market provision in some areas. The markets in Consett, Stanley, Seaham and Durham City, are operated under local agreement by independent market operators.
- 11 Therefore there are two management models that exist under the current arrangements for markets across County Durham. Different operators continue to operate and manage the markets under the terms and conditions contained in their agreements which were inherited following local government reorganisation.
- 12 In order to provide a position statement in the current market provision a review of the markets was commissioned by the Head of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection and Head of Economic Development and completed in February 2011.

- 13 The aim of the review was to identify a baseline on which to develop a strategic approach for the revitalisation of markets and encompassed eight key areas:-
- Integration with town centre and local communities
  - Promote good management practice
  - Identify additional investment requirements
  - Consider publicity and marketing
  - The need for a unique selling point
  - Identify sustainable locations
  - Promote partnership working
  - Identify lessons learned from elsewhere
- 14 The scope of the review considered all areas of DCC's services relating to markets including management undertaken by EHCP, town centre management, asset management, regeneration and planning undertaken by Regeneration and Economic Development (RED). As a result of the review and the Council's internal audit process a number of service level improvements were identified which were implemented but these were not designed to have an impact over the strategic view or management of markets.
- 15 The review included representations from existing users and traders as well as research data from private markets and highlighted examples of best practice across the region. The best practice examples were mainly from those authorities with single markets as opposed to larger unitaries where multiple markets were in operation across the local authority area. A copy of the review report has been made available in the member's room.

### **Findings of the markets review**

- 16 With the increase in consumer's mobility and availability of online shopping, it is widely reported that today's shoppers have greater expectations and are often looking for a retail experience including a social and entertainment element; and all in one place. This has stimulated the continued rise and dominance of supermarkets both in and out of centre; and the success of out of town retail parks, that offer ample free parking and a perceived safe and secure environment.
- 17 Nationally this trend has had a significant impact on the sustainability of traditional markets which have generally been in decline across a number of market areas over the past 10 years. The apparent decline in markets could be down to a number of factors and there is no "one size fits all" blueprint for success for a market as each will have their own unique selling point to their existing and potential customers. Recent years have also seen an increase in the opening of discount retail stores often occupying prime, high street premises. Such enterprises have the capacity to bulk purchase and sell on goods at less cost than the market traders can buy at wholesale.

- 18 Like many places nationally, Durham's markets show a mixed pattern and different levels of performance. Some markets are considered more popular than others in terms of number of traders wanting to trade and numbers of visitors but most are operating with varying degrees of under-occupancy. It is clearly evident however that a core of traditional traders are the mainstay of our markets and continue trading despite the challenges faced in the current economic climate. It is also likely that each market will have regular users with some markets having a greater potential to attract visitors from outside the immediate locality.
- 19 In line with the national trends, the review also suggested a number of other reasons contributing to the overall decline in traditional retail markets across the county including:-
- Technological advances leading to increased competition from online sales
  - The rise of the supermarket and out-of-town retail centres
  - Lack of investment or vision in market provision
  - Changing demographics
  - Overall current economic conditions within local town centres
  - Image of the market-quality and appearance of the stalls and general environment
  - Lack of investment in markets including publicity and advertising.
- 20 These factors are reflected in the current level of take up for market stalls within County Durham, where with the exception of the Saturday Market in Chester-le-Street, there are no other markets running at full capacity. Appendix 3 shows the take up of available stalls, identified within a survey undertaken as part of the review of markets across County Durham which showed at that time that many were trading at half or below half capacity.
- 21 Officers within the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection service are responsible for managing five retail open markets, one outdoor farmers market and the contract monitoring of the four licensed markets.
- 22 The four licensed markets operating in Consett; Durham, Seaham and Stanley are directly managed by a market operator under local agreement with the Council and are managed directly by their employees and operate independently of one another. The contracts for these markets have been extended and are due to expire on 30 June 2012.
- 23 The direct salary costs to the Council in managing markets is circa £120,000. There is currently no specific budget provision for publicity and marketing of markets and a limited budget of £21,000 to deal with any associated repairs and maintenance of market infrastructure and equipment.
- 24 Due to the current level of resources, officers have limited capacity to manage and operate all markets within County Durham. An example of this is particularly evident on a Saturday when the team are currently responsible for five active markets. The level of operation is therefore often limited to collecting rents and responding to daily occurrences.

- 25 The management of the market is also restricted in terms of publicity, promotion, seeking new traders and opportunities for funding due to the resources in EHCP.
- 26 Existing agreements for the Consett, Stanley and Seaham markets require a sum payable of 50% of gross receipts from the licensee with the Stanley market requiring a minimum sum payable of £700 per week from the Operator. The agreement for Durham City market requires the licensee to pay 50% of the operating surplus of income less expenditure.
- 27 Income received from markets since 2009 is set out in the Table below:-

	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Stanley	28,320	26,410
Consett	21,100	18,310
Barnard Castle	8,310	8,280
Chester-le-Street	100,890	92,090
Durham City	10,010	6,080
Crook	19,080	16,360
Bishop Auckland	17,920	13,160
Stanhope	1,860	1,670
Spennymoor	1,900	0
	<u>209,390</u>	<u>182,360</u>

Income relating to Seaham market is not included in table as the market has only been operating since 2011.

- 28 Annual income targets for markets have been based upon those originally set by the legacy authorities prior to April 2009 and against the market income target for 2011/12 of £278k. It is not known how the legacy budgets were set and if they included information purely from market income or contained other finances that may have been generated from other sources such as external grants etc. This has resulted in a projected shortfall in income which has presented a significant budget pressure for the EHCP service over the last twelve months and for the years ahead unless a more realistic target can be established and income generated from markets improve.
- 29 The current sustainability of markets operating across the County based upon the current management and operational arrangements is extremely limited and in order to revitalise markets and get the best market offer for County Durham the review concluded that the current management of the market provision would need to change.
- 30 The review recommended that the Council should develop a strategic approach to improve the performance of markets and take appropriate steps to promote market activity within town centres and maximise any opportunities for economic growth.
- 31 Successful markets offer a significant economic benefit to town centres and local communities and remain an important element of the local economy, particularly in relation to: providing a sense of place, independent retailing, local employment / job creation and business start-up opportunities.

- 32 The success and further development of local markets across County Durham is considered key to town centre development and the Council's aim of achieving 'Vibrant and Successful Towns'. Consultations undertaken as part of the preparation of Town Centre masterplans across the County highlight the importance placed by residents on local town centre markets and aspirations for an improved market offer. A number of initiatives have already been delivered in Durham City, Spennymoor and Bishop Auckland and are currently proposed in Consett which have recognised the importance of a local market to encourage visitors to the town centre, support the local economy as well as enhance the overall visitor experience and potential tourism offer.
- 33 The positive contributions markets can make to towns has also recently been recognised by the Portas Review, commissioned by the government to identify opportunities to strengthen and revitalise town centres. This review includes specific recommendations to Government around declaring a National Market Day and recognising the positive contribution to Town Centres that markets can bring.

### **Material considerations**

- 34 Following on from the market review further work has been undertaken in consultation with traders, consumers and other interested parties to develop a strategy for 'Revitalising Markets within County Durham' A copy of the draft strategy is shown in Appendix 4. This sets out the councils overall vision to create,
- 'Our vision is that County Durham's markets should be well-managed, integrated components of successful town centre economies, offering good quality and good value local produce and speciality goods in support of our communities. Shopping in County Durham's markets will be a pleasurable experience, characterised by high quality, accessible stalls, an excellent mix of well-trained and passionate traders and links to retail stores and town centre events and attractions.'***
- 35 Realising this vision, will depend upon the long term commitment of key stakeholders to adapt and respond to the needs of current and future customers. As such the strategy includes a range of measures intended to encourage and support local and regional traders as well as enhance the shopping experience for residents and visitors to County Durham.
- 36 In taking this long-term strategic approach to the revitalisation of markets the council will need to change the manner in which it manages, supports and promotes each local market activity whilst recognising the historic market rights that may exist across the county.
- 37 It must be noted that the aspirations and actions contained in the strategy would not guarantee a marked improvement in the overall performance of each market. There may be a number of factors outside the Authorities control that could play a part in how successful each market will be, but by delivering the actions it would give each market the opportunity to maximise its potential against the existing and emerging factors that are contributing to its apparent decline.

## Key elements of the strategy

- 38 The strategy for revitalising County Durham's street markets has been developed as a logical progression from the findings and initial options analysis that were contained in the Markets Review. The strategy aims to further develop a range of practical interventions that will enable the County Council to optimise support for the enhancement and growth of markets across the county. Underlying this key objective is an evidence base which highlights the substantial economic benefits of the best markets coupled with a desire to ensure that any changes to the ways in which the County Council manages its interests in markets is geared towards an integrated approach to maximising assistance to our town centres, existing retailers and traders, local communities, local producers and future entrepreneurs. The strategy also seeks to translate best practice and recent guidance on securing the future of our high streets into a range of key themes for future potential investment and suggested next steps for action
- 39 The strategy contains eight key themes,
- Structured, Effective Management
  - Engaging Partners
  - Supporting Our Town Centres
  - Place Shaping
  - Supporting Micro-Businesses
  - Supporting Communities
  - Supporting Local Produce and Speciality Goods
  - Marketing and Public relations
- 40 County Durham's markets should be well-managed, integrated components of successful town centre economies, offering good quality and good value local produce and speciality goods in support of our communities. Shopping in County Durham's markets will be a pleasurable experience, characterised by high quality, accessible stalls, an excellent mix of well-trained and passionate traders and links to retail stores and town centre events and attractions.
- 41 The key themes of the strategy essentially, illustrate how our markets should function and what they should look like in order to grow in a sustainable fashion and to best support town centre economies.

Future investment should revolve around these key themes which call for more effective, structured management and engagement coupled with support for fledgling businesses, local communities and local producers. With a better planned offer across the county and strategic marketing and Public Relations, future market provision has the potential to better support town centre economies and help to define and shape distinctive places.

42 The strategy proposes a set of suggested “next steps” in order to begin to deliver the quality of markets that would enhance the county’s offer to shoppers, visitors and tourists. Further work is required as to the detail of the arrangements, but the priority actions are:

- The design and implementation of a more effective management model incorporating, if appropriate, the arrangement of a partner (or partners) to help the County Council to deliver its objectives.
- Co-ordinating efforts to increase footfall and spend, delivering a well-publicised programme of high quality and where appropriate, speciality markets across the county on different days.
- Create an environment which recognises and supports the competition between traders to encourage them to improve and develop
- Supporting existing traders and encouraging new traders, experimental sellers, SMEs, micro businesses and the like via a range of incentives.
- Encourage entrepreneurial activities as well as maintaining business support for existing traders which could lead to their growth and possible expansion into fixed retail outlets
- Ensure the markets provide a good mix of traders whilst promoting and encouraging the sale local produce
- Improving the quality of markets in the context of their setting with the town centre environment by, for example, investing in new stalls and fixtures to improve the cosmetic nature of the existing markets.

In developing the strategy examples of models that have been adopted elsewhere have been considered.

### **Options for future management and operation of markets**

- 43 There are a variety of different management models in operation throughout the Country and the following three options have been identified for further consideration by Cabinet:-.
- 44 **Option One:** Continue to operate the markets as now which creates differing management models and agreements with some markets operated under licence and others maintained by the council. It is considered that the continuation of the current management approach for the Council managed markets is not a sustainable option without further significant investment in the service to ensure that markets are well managed, maintained and promoted. The current level of resources within the EHCP service is already limited and is without capacity to develop markets in the longer term or make any additional investment to support the delivery of key objectives contained within the draft Market Strategy.
- 45 Furthermore should the management and operational arrangements remain unchanged and potential for markets to continue to decline then this would continue to present an even more significant budget pressure within the EHCP service as a result of the widening deficit between projected income targets and actual income received.



- 46 If this option is favoured, it may be that the council would wish to consider whether to cease running any market that is deemed to be failing. This could increase the earning potential of any remaining markets; develop greater trader loyalty as well as providing a larger market in certain localities with a potentially better offer, increased footfall which would also act as a recruitment incentive to new traders. This decision would require considerable consultation and consideration together with additional legal advice on how this could be achieved taking into account the individual legal status of the markets in question.
- 47 **Option Two:** The council to manage all markets and dispense with all existing local agreements to allow the council to retain the strategic and operational management of the markets offering the advantage of accountability, linking markets to wider policy and strategic goals. Bringing the management of markets in house would ensure that all markets are managed consistently throughout County Durham and would increase income potential for the council even at the current level of trading.
- 48 Adopting best practice that has been identified from highly performing markets nationally, this model would however require further investment and enhancement to the existing EHCP service. This option would require the expansion of the existing market team to provide more capacity and include the appointment of a Markets Manager, with overall responsibility for promotion and development of each market to improve their economic vitality and prosperity. Should this option be considered more favourable than others then it is crucial that the markets team is developed to ensure that staff have appropriate skills to deliver initiatives around economic wellbeing and business support and aligned to a service area that is linked closely with town centre regeneration.
- 49 It is estimated that increased revenue costs of £250k would be required to meet additional salaries, repairs and maintenance programme and associated publicity and marketing, it is also expected that further capital investment in new infrastructure, stalls, awnings and equipment would be required. The exact cost of this investment is not known but an assessment of the existing equipment has found that it is in need of updating and replacement in certain cases. That assessment has only been made on the 10 markets currently managed in house.
- 50 Whilst there is a potential for some increase to income by managing all markets directly, both capital and revenue costs would have to be met by the council in full. It is highly unlikely that any increase in income would be significant enough to offset the additional investment required and therefore the predicted budget pressure within EHCP service would likely increase in the short to medium term.
- In addition, for those markets currently operated by independent market operators, such costs are being met by the market operators in line with the terms of their local agreements, consequently if the management of all markets were brought under the councils direct control, any opportunity to attract additional external investment in local markets would be taken away.
- 51 Given the current financial pressures facing the council and existing skills gap within the existing markets management team, this option is not considered to be economically viable in the present climate and would still present risks to the council in terms of increased costs without any guaranteed tangible increase in income.

- 52 **Option Three:** To adopt a management model whereby all markets are operated and managed by independent operators, trader consortia or other interested parties. Harmonising the terms and conditions of contractual agreements/licences would allow the local authority to retain the strategic management of its markets but transfer the operational management function to a third party partner. Such third parties may be private operators or variously structured social enterprise organisations. This model is preferred particularly as there is limited in-house capacity and where external capital investment is required.
- 53 In adopting this approach the council would retain the strategic management and market portfolio but seek a third party partner to manage the day-to-day operation of the markets. Any third party would be expected to have their own development plans and employ their own markets officers to transform markets and support the local traders.
- 54 It could be the case that each market is operated by a different operator who would be considered to be acting in the best interests of that particular market. An assessment of prospective market operators and their interest in running each individual market would need made which must be open, transparent and fair
- 55 If the operational management of the market is placed in the hands of a third party, then contractual arrangements would need to be put in place that encouraged investment, income growth, footfall increases, customer satisfaction, and event participation. Payment mechanisms would be strictly monitored.
- 56 This option would remove much of the responsibility for the market provision and market management from the council but still allow harmonisation of standards, terms and conditions across all markets and within the context of the markets strategy.
- 57 This arrangement would also allow the council to consider setting minimum income levels for each market which also allows the partner / operator to retain a percentage of any surpluses thus encouraging the operator to maximise the markets potential and improve performance.
- 58 It must be noted that the delivery of the strategy will require market operators and traders to work in partnership with the council within the terms of their agreements. It is expected that by the commercial nature of independent operators and traders that they will strive to provide the best market offer to maximise any potential for economic growth within each town.
- 59 Option Three does present an opportunity to revitalise markets within County Durham and as such would be the preferred management model subject to member's consideration.

### **Staff Implications**

- 60 There are five posts (5FTE) which may be affected by the proposals to transfer the management and operation of the markets, three of which are currently vacant and are filled by agency staff to maintain a level of service. A decision to fill these posts has been deferred pending the decision as to delivery of the market function.

- 61 Option Three may present TUPE implications which will be thoroughly explored if this option is agreed as the preferred way forward.
- a. To support the implementation of option three, it is proposed that a new Market Development Officer Post (PO1) be created to oversee and develop the overall aims of the strategy and act as monitoring officer for compliance with the Markets Strategy and any contracts / licences that are in place.
62. The implement any new management model may require further consultation will with both affected staff and their Trades Unions. This will be managed appropriately and in accordance with current guidance and protocols.

### **Financial Implications**

- 63 Whilst option three provides the most cost effective management arrangements for the delivery of the overall 'Revitalisation of Markets Strategy' it will present some financial implications in terms of a potential reduction of income as well as a potential accrued salary savings of £80,000.
- 64 Whilst the new management arrangements will seek to promote better market performance across the County, it is expected that a more realistic income target will need to be established to reflect the sums payable under any contractual agreement. Any revised income target may present a further reduction against the actual income collected during 2011/2012 but could be offset by the overall salary savings from the rationalisation of the existing staffing establishment.

### **Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 65 The legal status of the existing markets within County Durham will differ depending on their history and the manner in which they were established. Therefore, no matter which management option and general market strategy is agreed by Cabinet, more detailed legal advice will be required as to the nature and legal status of each market to determine how such an option and strategy can be implemented. Of necessity this may differ depending on the status of each market.
- 66 If the Council decides to transfer the management and operational delivery of markets to a third party it will need to seek prospective partners. Whilst this will not constitute a formal procurement process, it is recommended that any such exercise is fully transparent and open. This would also enable the Council to establish the most appropriate organisations/persons to deliver its strategy and vision for markets in County Durham

### **Conclusions**

- 67 The council needs to consider the significance of local markets and their future provision within the context of town centre regeneration plans and the employment / business growth potential markets provide. The proposed strategy will give the markets the best opportunity to succeed and provide economic benefits to our towns.

- 68 Existing management arrangements are not sustainable given the pressures on budget, the current staff resources and the limited capacity within the EHCP service to invest in publicity, marketing, and business support services to revitalise markets as set out within the proposed strategy.
- 69 Entering into contractual agreements/licences with independent operators would enable, where possible, market operators to develop, promote and deliver a variety of markets in a consistent manner and in line with the strategic approach set by the Council which would incorporate a guaranteed minimum level of income.

### **Summary and Next Steps**

- 70 It is proposed to undertake a two stage approach to the development and implementation of the Market Strategy.
- 71 The first stage is to undertake a further consultation exercise to inform the future development of the strategy ensuring that any market offer is delivered in accordance with a wider development and regeneration plan for town centres.
- 72 In addition, it is proposed to undertake further soft market testing in relation to the options available for the management of markets within County Durham during this first phase.
- 73 All existing contracts/licences currently in place have been extended until 30 June 2012 pending the conclusion of this exercise. Due to the nature of consultation on the draft strategy, and the outcome of the soft market testing in relation to management arrangements these may need extending.
- 74 A further report will be presented to Cabinet for their consideration following completion of the consultation and soft market testing exercises. Subject to Cabinet approval it is proposed to commence the second stage of the process which will focus primarily on the key tasks relating to the delivery of the strategy and implementation of any revised management arrangements.
- 75 A project plan outlining key milestones and timescales has been developed to ensure that these proposals are implemented in accordance with any agreed timescales.

### **Recommendations**

- 76 Cabinet consider and agree the proposed draft strategy for the 'Revitalisation of Markets within County Durham for public consultation.
- 77 That a further report be considered on completion of the consultation and soft market testing exercises, seeking approval of the final market strategy and agreement of future management arrangements with relevant timescales for their implementation.

**Background Papers** (Copies available in Member's room)

- Markets Review report
- Mary Portas Review report

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

The base budget target for markets income of £277,000 is ambitious and to date has been unachievable based on financial information available. The cost of staffing for existing market provision is £118,000.

### **Staffing**

There are five FTE employees currently employed for market duties within EHCP. There are currently three vacancies. The current level of staff resources has already placed significant demands on the service and contingency arrangements have been put in place to meet service demands. These arrangements are not sustainable in the longer term.

Transferring the management and operation of the markets may have TUPE implications.

### **Risk**

Early discussions with existing market operators have indicated that there is some interest in undertaking the management of markets in areas across the county. However there is a risk that there is no suitable provider to deliver the proposed market management arrangements in all areas where markets are currently operating. In such cases the council may wish to consider the implications of retaining market management arrangements in house and to consider whether to cease running any market that is deemed to be failing . A risk assessment will be undertaken following the completion of the soft market testing exercise, the outcome of which will be subject to a further report to Cabinet on proposed management arrangements.

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

An Equality & Diversity Impact Assessemnt screening has been carried out and will be reviewed after the consultation period. However, it is not envisaged that the proposed changes to the delivery of a markets across County Durham will create any disproportionate impact on the protected equality groups as the level of provision experienced by customers should not change. However, the need to ensure maintenance of current levels of service provision for the protected groups, in-particular through physical access standards, will be addressed within the licence / contractual agreement to be made with the future provider.

### **Accommodation**

The costs associated with the existing market accommodation are met by EHCP. The outsourcing of the function would pass this responsibility to the operator.

### **Crime and Disorder**

None

## **Human Rights**

None

## **Consultation**

During the review customer and traders surveys were conducted at a number of DCC managed and privately license markets.

Further consultation with users and traders of the markets is proposed prior to the implementation of any proposals. This would be extensive and cover the whole of the County.

Should TUPE apply, the council has a duty to consult with any affected employees. The Council will also follow all statutory and internal procedures in the event of possible redundancies.

## **Procurement**

The implementation of the preferred option 3 to transfer market management arrangements is not considered to be a procurement exercise. All existing contracts currently in place have been extended until 30th June 2012 pending the conclusion of this exercise. It is recommended that this is extended further until 31 December 2012.

## **Disability Issues**

None

## **Legal Implications**

Markets can be created in a number of ways, including by grant, prescription or statute. The different methods of creation may result in differences in the standing and rights attached to each Market.

Any decision to transfer management and day to day operation of the markets provision should ensure that the Council does not lose, compromise or infringe any rights in relation to markets.

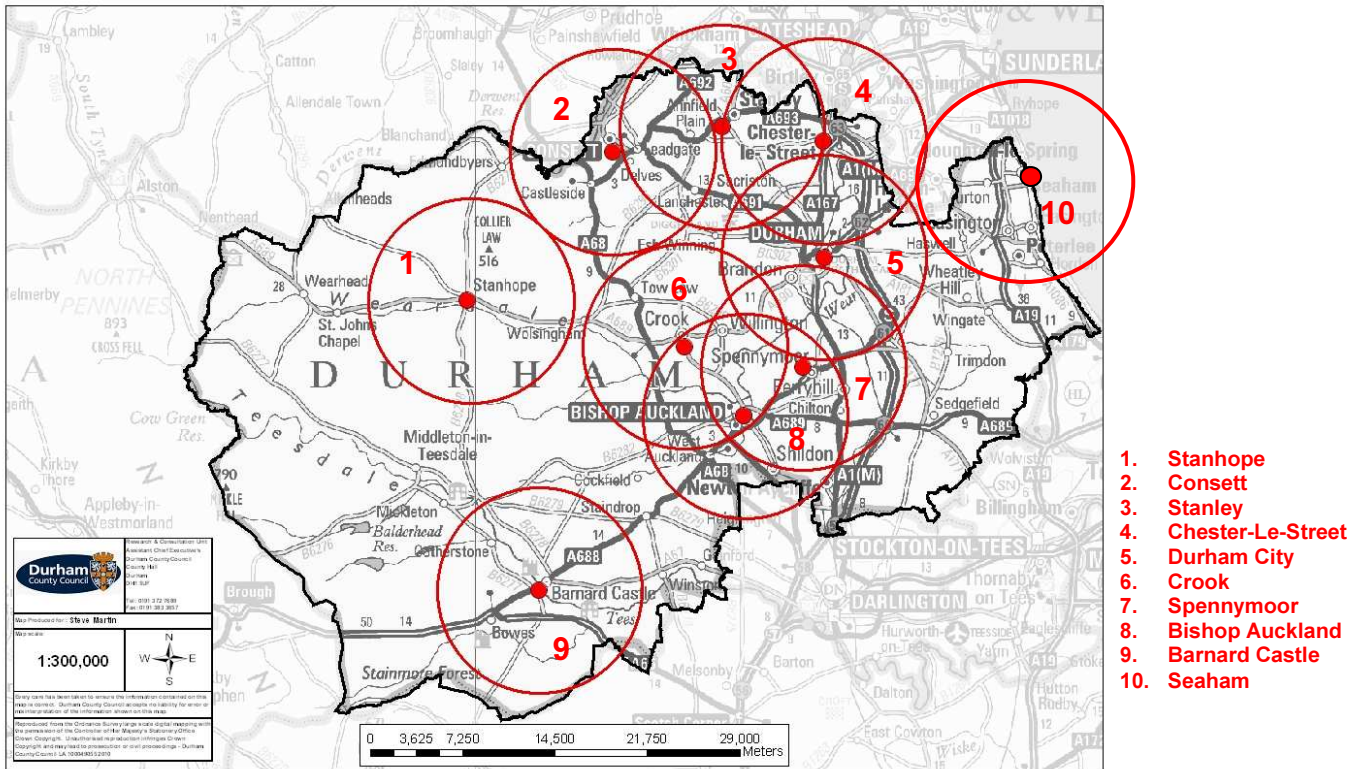
The law surrounding markets is complex and it is anticipated that specialist legal advice will be required in the event of any dispute connected with markets.

## Appendix 2: Demographics

The map shows the locations of the markets across County Durham as well as the population and salary range within a five mile radius of each market.

The market towns of Barnard Castle and Stanhope are well positioned on major routes across the Pennines as well as benefiting from the influx of tourists over the summer months.

Spennymoor in particular is overlapped by the stronger performing markets of Durham City, Crook and Bishop Auckland, all of which operate on the same Saturdays.

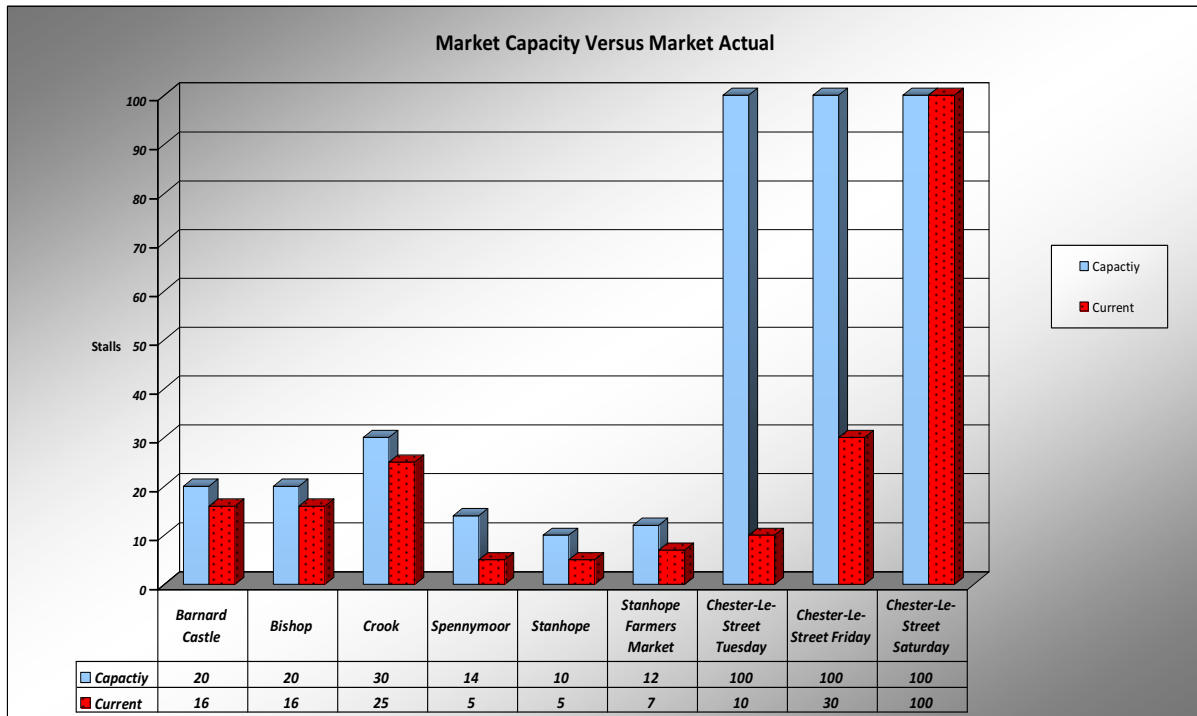


Location	Operator	Day	Operating Times	Stalls	Capacity	Average Occupancy
Barnard Castle	DCC	Wed	9am – 4pm	Trader owned	20	80%
Bishop Auckland	DCC	Thurs Sat	9am – 4pm	Trader owned	20	80%
Chester-le-Street	DCC	Tues Fri Sat	9am – 4pm	Fixed stalls	100	10% 30% 100%
Crook	DCC	Tues Sat	9am – 4pm	Trader owned	30	83%
Durham city	Market Operator	Sat	9am – 4pm	Trader owned	30	50%
Spennymoor	DCC	Sat	9am – 3pm	Trader owned	14	35%
Stanhope (April - Sept)	DCC	Mon	8am – 3pm	Trader owned	10	50%
Stanhope (farmers Market)	DCC	4 <sup>th</sup> Sat of Month	10am – 3pm	DCC Contract	12	43%
Stanley	Market Operator	Thurs	9am – 4pm	Trader owned	60	66%
Consett	Trader Consortium	Fri Sat	10am – 3pm	Trader owned	40	55% 43%

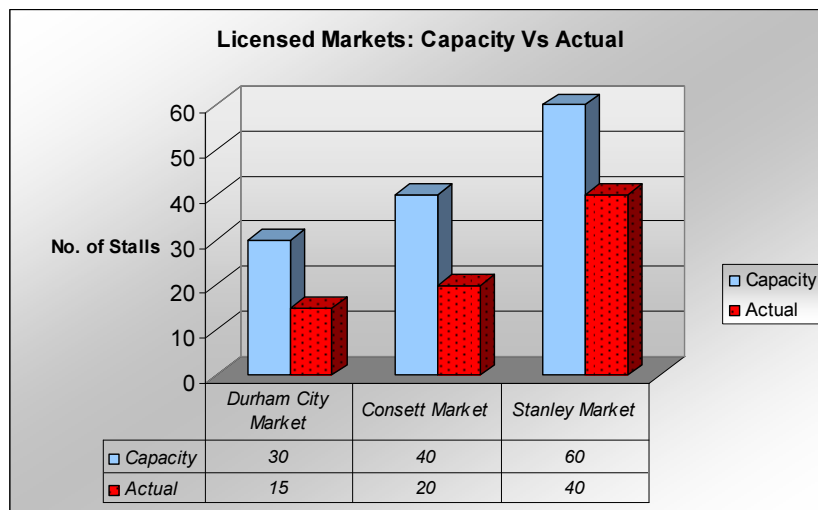
NB: Seaham – Figures not available (newly established market 2011 )



**Table 3: DCC managed, Capacity V Actual Snapshot at February 2011  
Over what time scale (snap shot, February 2011)**



**Table 4: Managed under Licence, Capacity V Actual  
(Snapshot survey at February 2011)**



# Revitalising Markets

## A Strategy for Supporting the Growth and Enhancement of County Durham's Street Markets



## **1. Background and Existing Provision**

- 1.1 Markets are the birthplace of towns and cities across the world and many of the UK's major retailers (Marks and Spencer, Tesco and Morrisons) started life in markets. In 2009, work for the Retail Markets Alliance indicated that the markets industry supports over 100,000 jobs and 45,000 businesses in the UK.
- 1.2 Durham County Council plays a significant role in the governance and management of a range of markets throughout the county's major centres. The council is therefore in a position where it is empowered to make key decisions to shape the future of markets' provision across the county and to determine the contribution that markets can play in supporting the revitalisation and sustainability of our town centres.
- 1.3 Durham County Council currently has an interest in the management and operation of ten markets in major settlements across the county. Further details of the markets, their location and days of operation are provided at Appendix 1, In summary, the operation of markets is not uniform and can be categorised into those markets which are directly controlled and managed by the County Council at Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Crook, Spennymoor and Stanhope (the latter having an additional Farmers' Market once a month) and those which are licensed for operation by private operators and trader consortia at Consett, Durham City, Seaham and Stanley. Seaham is a relatively new market, established in 2011. Other markets operate across the county, but the ten referred to above are those that are under DCC control.
- 1.4 As a clear trend, all of the markets have experienced a steady decline in activity over the past decade. This is probably linked to similar declines in activity on the UK's high streets, characterised by falling expenditure in high street retail outlets, increased property voids, the dominance of superstores, a shift to out-of-centre retail parks and increased volume of purchases over the internet. This has led to a displacement of high street economies which in turn has affected markets.
- 1.5 Within the group of markets under DCC control, performance is mixed, with none of the markets operating at full capacity; indeed many are trading at half capacity or below.
- 1.6 Tables to illustrate trader uptake against total capacity are provided at Appendix 2. It should be noted that the information is based upon a "snapshot" survey and that trading levels vary from week to week.
- 1.7 The ten markets are the responsibility of DCC's Environment, Health and Consumer Protection Department within Neighbourhood Services. In February 2011, the County Council completed a review of market provision in order to highlight risks and opportunities to inform options for future service delivery. The review involved the collection of baseline information on the current market offer and consultation with shoppers, traders and licensed operators.

This work has enabled a picture to be formed of the current characteristics and performance of the individual markets to give a position from which to work. The key characteristics are summarised at Appendix 3 and illustrate that whilst markets (in common with high streets) face a number of threats, there are significant opportunities to work with markets to enhance town centres, economic development, entrepreneurship, tourism, health and diversity and the sustainability of our major centres.

- 1.8 The County Council receives an income stream from the markets under its control. The agreements are, for the most part, inherited from the former District Councils and there are variations in the methods of licence fee calculation. For the DCC managed markets, rents are received directly from stallholders. The Consett, Stanley and Seaham markets involve the licensee paying 50% of gross receipts to DCC (subject to a minimum £700 per week charge in the case of Stanley) with the Durham City licensee paying 50% of operating surplus. Consequently, the arrangements for recovering income are cumbersome and inefficient.
- 1.9 Research into the visitor economy shows that market towns have the ability to draw people into rural areas for day trips and longer stays and to act as service centres for tourists on rural holidays and short breaks. A market in a market town is an integral part of market towns fulfilling both of these functions. Stabilising and growing the market offer in the county's market towns is therefore consistent with delivering on the county's tourism management plan that identifies market towns as critical to the success of a rural visitor economy. Markets also have the ability to promote distinctiveness. Understanding distinctiveness and experiencing it in a practical way is a main benefit that tourists are looking to gain from their leisure decisions and spend
- 1.10 There is no statutory requirement for Durham County Council to provide markets on any particular day at any particular location in the county.
- 1.11 The present position however is that the markets are held on the days that have become established over the years which presents some degree of competition particularly amongst those markets operating on a Saturday.
- 1.12 Whilst there may be no statutory requirement to hold markets, there may be legal considerations as to the Charter status of markets and of the common law practice of prescriptive markets, which may dictate when markets are to be held and their location. In addition, once a statutory market has been established and has gained planning permission, there will be a statutory reason for holding that particular market on that particular day at that particular location. This may be changed, but to do so would be subject to following due legal process including consultation, advertisement and change of planning permission.
- 1.13 As the markets authority, the council is also the primary regulator for the county under Part IIA of the Food Act 1984.

- 1.14 In addition to the various powers available under charter, prescription, custom and practice and local legislation, it is also possible to utilise the provisions of Part III of the Food Act 1984 under which a local authority can:-
- s.50 Establish or acquire a market
  - s.52 Appoint market days and hours
  - s.53 Demand charges
  - s.60 Make byelaws
- 1.15 Responsibility for markets was transferred to the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection Service (EHCP) following LGR in 2009. The existing management arrangements have remained in place since then.
- 1.16 The current management arrangements for markets across County Durham presents a two different management models to market provision, with different operators continuing to operate each market under the terms and conditions contained in their agreements which were inherited following local government reorganisation.
- 1.17 The current sustainability of markets operating across the County, based upon the current management and operational arrangements, is extremely limited and, in order to revitalise markets and get the best market offer for County Durham, the review undertaken in 2011 concluded that the arrangements for market provision would need to change.
- 1.18 The review recommended that the council should develop a strategic approach to improve the performance of markets and take appropriate steps to promote market activity within town centres and maximise opportunities for economic growth.
- 1.19 In the course of preparing this strategy, near neighbour authorities in Cumbria and Northumberland have been consulted, in order to compare market management arrangements and identify potential management solutions.
- 1.20 Market management arrangements for the 12 regular, open markets in Northumberland appear similar to the current regime in County Durham, with 9 markets managed directly by the County Council's Neighbourhood Services division and 3 run under licence by private organisations.
- 1.21 The arrangements in Cumbria are more diverse with 6 district councils holding responsibility within their respective areas. The majority of districts have markets which are under direct council control, however Allerdale Borough Council has contracted out the management of its markets (including regular, weekly markets and one-off events) to a specialist market management company in return for a share of profits which is distributed annually. The borough includes the town of Keswick where the weekly market is exceptionally popular with residents, local retailers and visitors and where there is a significant waiting list of prospective traders.

- 1.22 Markets have been an integral part of town centre economies and, with strategic planning, innovation, quality of offer and integrated management they have the potential to continue to play a significant role.
- 1.23 Taking an approach based around support for town centres and markets is entirely consistent with central government policy, acknowledged best practice and the council's own economic policies and regeneration focus.
- 1.24 Elsewhere, within the region, there are instances of good practice in the operation of markets with notable examples at Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees and Hexham.
- 1.25 The purpose of this strategy document is to establish the broad economic and policy justification for managing County Durham's markets in a more efficient, innovative and structured way in order to better link with wider town centre and tourism initiatives in support of our major centres. In turn, this will secure stronger and more sustainable town centres benefitting retailers, traders, other town centre occupiers, shoppers and residents. It will also point to some suggested next steps towards delivering an integrated approach.

## **2. Our Vision for County Durham's Markets**

- 2.1 It is important to establish what functions our markets should serve, what we want them to do and what we want them to look like, in order to understand how we can best support them.
- 2.2 Supporting the enhancement and growth of markets can be viewed as part of the council's role under the Regeneration Statement of "adopting a 'Whole-Town' approach to creating vibrant and successful towns encompassing the economy, housing, health and the infrastructure to make it work".
- 2.3 The development of this strategy follows on from the Markets Review of 2011 and seeks to establish vibrant, dynamic markets that provide access to quality, affordable food and other goods, have significant economic benefits both for the county and for local market towns, that promote and sustain enterprise and community and that contribute to a positive, inspirational sense of place and belonging.
- 2.4 In purely physical terms, markets can play a significant role in adding to a sense of place and engendering a sense of belonging, identity and common ownership. To be effective, the market needs to be located in a sensible position and offer traders uniformity of quality in pitches but with a degree of flexibility built in. The first element of our vision is that County Durham will seek a structured, weekly cycle of markets, each sensibly located within a major centre and offering a well-planned, efficiently-managed, high quality trading environment to be readily accessible to all and to offer a diverse range of quality/value goods with a complementary mix of proactive traders and the active support of local retail interests and shoppers.

- 2.5 In economic terms, well run, well supported markets have the ability to enhance a town centre's appeal and to offer a significant draw to visitors and (in some instances) tourists. The second element of our vision is that County Durham's markets will, as part of a wider impetus for town centre regeneration and economic development, become noted for their ability to increase footfall and customer spend in our town centres and will be hubs for entrepreneurial activity, test grounds for small businesses, potential locations for new employment generation and the first port of call for buying local produce. The markets will be integral to the community, the benefits they bring will be obvious to all and they will operate in co-operation with local retailers and without protectionism from any quarter. Markets will be well integrated with festivals, events and other types of market (eg Farmers', French/German/other themed, local food, Christmas) and will tie in with town centre regeneration and tourism strategies to maximise footfall, local expenditure retention and job creation potential.

### **Vision**

***Our vision is that County Durham's markets should be well-managed, integrated components of successful town centre economies, offering good quality and good value local produce and speciality goods in support of our communities. Shopping in County Durham's markets will be a pleasurable experience, characterised by high quality, accessible stalls, an excellent mix of well-trained and passionate traders and links to retail stores and town centre events and attractions.***

### **3. The Economic Case for Intervention**

- 3.1 Wider research on markets has produced clear evidence of the contribution they make towards a wide range of economic and social policy goals. This includes benefits in regeneration, economic development, culture and tourism, food and health, community cohesion and the environment.
- 3.2 The ten markets operating across County Durham could make a significant contribution to the vitality of the county's town centres. In addition, they have the potential **to generate significant multiplier effects**, with market customers more likely to spend money in other shops in the town centre for every £1 they spend in the market.
- 3.3 This has the effect of **retaining expenditure in the local town economy**. The recent Portas Review highlighted the fact that spending in the out of town shopping developments and larger supermarkets led to the instant loss of expenditure from the local area, thus having less economic impact than spending on retailers with a localised supply chain.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.4 Markets can also be of **particular importance to deprived communities** and most of the market town locations contain proximate areas of deprivation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Portas Review – An Independent Review into the future of our high streets – page 12 – evidence provided by New Economics Foundation

Markets offer good value for money on a wide range of convenience goods and this has the potential to support higher living standards among lower income groups due to their lower prices. It has been shown that the food prices in markets have been consistently lower than those in supermarkets in recent years.

- 3.5 Markets provide important sources of employment and income generation for significant numbers of people. They also **create venues in which new business can be launched on a test trading basis at lower costs than in other premises**, and therefore have a role to play in promoting entrepreneurship and business start-up.
- 3.6 Retail markets remain an important part of the retail offer in towns and cities and local retailers are generally supportive of markets. Markets also provide an opportunity to **deliver business-led solutions to regeneration problems**. Chester-le-Street market, with its fixed stalls, provides one example where the development of the market place has acted as a catalyst for change and town centre renewal in the vicinity of the market place through public realm improvements and the installation of the “Civic Heart” public art sculpture.
- 3.7 The healthy levels of trading in and around the busy market at Crook illustrate how a **market working in tandem with a wider town centre** area has multiple benefits for traders, local retailers and shoppers alike.
- 3.8 Markets, with their associated food and cultural festival events have the potential to **strengthen County Durham’s cultural offer** and image and, to support economic growth by co-ordinating and promoting cultural events and attractions. They also contribute to the County’s economic identity by:
  - Improving the quality of place in specific sites across the county
  - Increasing positive perceptions of the county
  - Raising the profile of the county
- 3.9 The increased profile for the county’s economic identity has the potential to be reflected in the proportion of the county’s residents and businesses who feel that the market asset base increases local pride, visitors who cite markets as one of the reasons for their visit to the county and the generation of media attention.
- 3.10 There has been a clear growth in speciality markets in recent years, which demonstrates that a variety of **good markets remain popular with customers**. Economic impact studies have been commissioned in relation to Christmas markets in Belfast and Manchester. These showed net additional expenditure of £5.3 million and £22.4 million respectively into the local economy<sup>2</sup>. The fastest growing segment of the markets sector comprises farmers’ and specialist food markets, including the annual food festival in the Durham Dales, hosted at Bishop Auckland’s market place.

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<sup>2</sup> London’s Retail Street Markets – Report by Regeneris for the London Development Agency, June 2010



3.11 They also bring other benefits to the wider community. Markets are important in providing access to cheaper goods, and their presence therefore helps to increase standards of living for some groups. The 2008 review of street markets by the London Assembly identified that a shopping basket of food cost £4.74 from the market compared to a cost of £7.18 to buy the same food from a supermarket.<sup>3</sup> At a retail level, there is great scope for markets to play a role in **ensuring that local communities have access to fresh produce**. They can offer ideal locations for providing information and learning/skills opportunities on a wide range of health issues including healthy eating, and food buying/cooking skills. They can also be used to market and promote healthy eating campaigns such as the 5-a-day and Change 4 Life initiatives.

3.12 In 2006, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published research on the value of markets as spaces for social interaction<sup>4</sup>. This concluded that:

- Markets were important sites of social interaction for all groups in the community, but most significantly for older people, especially women. Markets also represent **important social spaces** for mothers with young children, young people, and families with children, particularly at weekends
- Markets had a **significant social inclusion role**, as places to linger, particularly for older people and young mothers
- The social life of traders played a significant role in creating a vibrant atmosphere in markets, and in forging social bonds and links in the trading community as well as with shoppers
- For markets to function well as social spaces, various factors are significant. Essential attributes include: a large diverse range of products fitting well with local needs and tastes; café or food vans on site or nearby; good access to the site, especially by local transport; and an active and engaged community of traders.

3.13 There are a number of examples of markets contributing to environmental improvement agendas. These include the introduction of effective waste management systems including food packaging. The Local Government Association published a food packaging study which showed **that retail markets produced the lowest weight of waste** and the highest proportion of recyclable waste, compared with supermarket and independent high street retailers.<sup>5</sup>

3.14 In recognising the contribution that markets make to a range of economic, social and cultural factors, this strategy aims to create an environment for success and economic regeneration through:

- Increasing footfall and customer spend
- Attracting new traders and maximising the potential of existing traders
- Improving the local trading environment and opportunities for the surrounding town centres

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<sup>3</sup> Greater London Assembly Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee (2008), London's Street Markets, GLA

<sup>4</sup> Watson, S. et al (2006) Spaces of diversity: markets as sites for social interaction. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The Policy Press

<sup>5</sup> Local Government Association – War on waste – Summary food packaging study: Wave 2, LGA

- 3.15 In line with the emerging national view of markets, the council recognises the mutual benefits that vibrant and dynamic markets can bring to town centres for local businesses and communities particularly in relation to:-
- Providing a sense of place and belonging
  - Local employment and independent retailing
  - Opportunities to promote entrepreneurialism and business start up.
- 3.16 In realising our vision for Durham County markets, the council will ensure that it delivers the very best offer for County Durham, whilst recognising the historic market rights that exist across the county. The need to revitalise markets, in order to provide jobs for local people and meet environmentally sustainable objectives, will be a stimulus for future action. The council recognises the role that markets play in adding value to the economic, social and cultural fabric of the county.
- 3.17 Changes in modern living habits and consumer expectations have had a negative effect on some market towns. The growth of out-of-town shopping centres and supermarkets, out-commuting and increased care use has meant they are under increasing threat from becoming 'dormitory' towns, overly reliant on transport, with a deteriorating sense of community. Equally, the growth of online sales have resulted in considerable retail leakage away from existing town centres, putting a strain on smaller independent retailers and other service providers who find it hard to compete.

This strategy seeks to address the immediate challenges presented by the economic downturn whilst preparing the foundations for future success. It covers a range of short term priorities aimed at addressing the immediate challenge of the economic downturn, medium term priorities aimed at building capacity and resilience within market towns and long term priorities aimed at building strong foundations for a prosperous future.

- 3.18 Key to these priorities is the aim to develop sustainable management solutions which transition emphasis away from regulation and enforcement toward investment and commercial management. The overarching objective is to develop the county's existing market asset base on a sustainable platform which drives up the provision of high quality goods and services and consistency across the county.

#### **4 Key Strategic Aims and Themes**

- 4.1 In formulating this strategy to revitalise the county's markets, several key themes have emerged. It is intended that future actions should address one or more of these key themes in order to secure a coherent and effective approach.

## **Key Theme 1- Supporting Our Town Centres**

A market that is well-positioned, easily accessible, customer facing, sensibly laid out and offering a clean, tidy, well-maintained and uniform image with an appropriate mix of stallholders is an asset to a town centre. It is a key theme that we should strive to achieve such a facility in each of the county's major centres and that markets should form a component of the wider regeneration and economic development agenda to:

- Increase footfall and customer spend in town centres.
- Increase visitor numbers and dwell time in our market towns.
- Attract new traders and offer the opportunity for existing traders to maximise their potential.
- Form an integral part of the town centre retail offer and assist in meeting the challenges posed to the vitality of the high street in a climate of minimal, current economic growth.

## **Key Theme 2 - Place Shaping**

For the longer term, it is essential that markets work with wider town centre interests to sign up to plans of action in support of the “business” of the high street. The Portas Review recognises that town centres comprise a diverse range of interests of landlords, retailers, councils and others and that a lack of cohesion has exacerbated the decline in footfall and retail performance.

As a priority measure, we should seek to encourage markets which (as a first step) follow basic principles of good retailing with good quality, well maintained, accessible and uniform stalls, active frontages and welcoming signage to greet shoppers. There should be a logical mix of quality goods. Shoppers should be able to enter and pass through the market easily and gain ready access to nearby shops. Such basic steps will improve the local trading environment and provide opportunities for the surrounding area.

In the longer term, markets must be viewed as major players in the town centre and involved in town centre improvement proposals.

## **Key Theme 3 - Supporting Micro-Businesses**

There are numerous examples from around the UK where local authorities and private operators have successfully encouraged the development of budding entrepreneurs.

- The national “Make Your Mark” competition, run by Enterprise UK in association with the Retail Markets Alliance offers prizes to entrepreneurs in the form of 6 months free trading, £1,000 to support the business, free marketing, free business starter pack and free NMTF membership including public liability insurance.
- NMTF runs a First Pitch programme to enable starter businesses to test trade on a market stall.

- NMTF is in discussion with a German company to provide specialist support and training to new traders.
- Acton Market is doing similar via a community market model, providing market trader training and support.
- South Derbyshire District Council, Derbyshire County Council, Business Link and Geraud Markets UK have developed a start-up programme, giving free advice, support and business planning plus discounted rents.

Additionally, the Portas Review recommends the use of markets as a step onto the business ladder with proposals for a National Market Day and the removal of unnecessary regulations.

It is recommended that markets be used as a low cost entry point to retailing for fledgling businesses with financial support for creative businesses. Markets offer an opportunity to help establish new businesses and to help engender a culture of customer care. It is recommended that start-up micro businesses who seek to trade through markets in County Durham be encouraged with appropriate financial incentives during their first few months of trading to support their business development.

#### **Key Theme 4 - Supporting Communities**

It is acknowledged, earlier in this strategy document, that County Durham's markets already offer a degree of support to communities via the provision of good value, fresh food in town centres. It is however a driving aim of the strategy that markets do more to support both the business community and some of the county's more deprived communities which, in many cases, are "on the doorstep".

Again, there are successful examples of support for communities across the North. In Wakefield market, Wakefield Council, NHS Wakefield and the Joint Public Health Unit have developed a healthy eating and living demonstration stall. In Bradford, the City Council introduced a "Step Up Market Challenge" to encourage young people to develop business ideas with the winners selling from stalls on the market.

Ideas will emerge, dependent upon the character of each town and the opportunities arising, but potential activities that might receive support include:

- Promotion of healthy eating, healthy lifestyle, exercise and leisure activities.
- Activities to complement specialist markets and town centre events.
- Special events for schools and community groups.
- Initiatives to introduce young people to retailing and customer care.

#### **Key Theme 5 - Supporting Local Produce and Speciality Goods**

Activity under this theme will strive to enhance the distinctiveness of town centres and contribute to a number of objectives.

Generating more local produce and producing more local goods will help to diversify the economy, building on the existing local food sector and helping producers move into higher value added activities, such as food processing.

There are also important opportunities in developing niche sectors, such as the creative and cultural industries and crafts.

The county has already witnessed a degree of success in this area, particularly in Barnard Castle and Stanhope and also in the form of the annual Bishop Auckland Food Festival and the Taste Durham award programme.

As shopping and the food and drink offer become increasingly important parts of the visitor experience, the development of local food and produce will increase the attractiveness of town centres and raise the quality and distinctiveness of restaurants and enhance the appeal of the market.

Potential investment opportunities include:

- Developing a thriving local food sector.
- Encouraging farmers' markets.
- Promoting retail distinctiveness.

### **Key Theme 6 - Marketing and PR**

The markets industry is characterised by a general lack of funding to support marketing and promotion. Similarly, the industry makes sporadic use of websites which are of varying quality, design and maintenance.

Taking a strategic overview of ten markets enables the pooling of potential funding to assist in marketing and promotion. Further advice should be sought in this regard but some examples of effective marketing are:

- Relatively low-cost, local TV advertising by Warrington markets.
- The use of logos to show loyalty to local markets and local produce.
- The use of a small proportion of parking charges on traders to generate a marketing fund at Stockton-on-Tees which is managed by the traders' committee.
- Well-designed, easy to use and informative websites.
- Branding and uniform appearance.

### **Key Theme 7 – Structured, Effective Management**

The current management arrangements involve a split of responsibilities between the council and private operators, a range of differing agreements providing for income to the council and a lack of a consistent, countywide approach to markets' provision.

In September 2010, the Department for Communities and Local Government published a guidance paper on management models for markets.

Whilst the paper points to a range of management structures that work across the UK, the successful models are geared to:

- Being accountable yet cost efficient in their operation and with minimal bureaucracy.
- Being focussed on the core business of promoting and running successful markets incorporating (where possible) economies of scale.
- Having the ability to access capital investment.
- Attracting and retaining market traders and ensuring that they have an increased sense of “ownership” in the operational details.
- Building closer links with local businesses and the wider community.
- Having the ability to share best practice and provide training and support for traders.
- Being integrated with town centre, business, event and tourism marketing and promotion activities.

It is recommended that the preferred, future management regime for the county’s markets adopts these core principles.

Irrespective of the type of market or operator, there is a need for good systems which capture key data without being burdensome and bureaucratic. Stockton-on-Tees invested £2,000 in a Markets’ Management data base system which tracks all rents and other finances, trader contacts, attendance records, trader history and holidays and invoicing procedures to internal audit standard.

### **Key Theme 8 – Engaging Partners**

Irrespective of the type of management model that is in place, Markets 21 (a review of the UK’s retail and wholesale markets, carried out by the Retail Markets Alliance in November 2009) recognised that partnership working is one of the essential components in successful, sustainable markets.

At present, the extent to which the county’s markets are integrated with other key interests and partners is mixed.

This strategy recommends the promotion of enhanced integration between the key players, particularly:

- To establish a forum/town centre board to include market operators, council representatives, trader representatives (NMTF or local group), retailers, businesses, tourism service, voluntary sector, transport operators, police, residents etc.
- To take strategic decisions (under the umbrella of the management regime).
- To co-ordinate marketing, promotions, events, training, access, safety in the context of whole town centre economic development and regeneration, business development and support, tourism and employment.
- Such joint approaches might result in, for example, marketing a town centre incorporating the market, retailers and other visitor attractions and/or actively engaging traders in consultation on physical regeneration proposals affecting a town centre.

## 5 Delivery Strategy

- 5.1 Moving forward, it is clear that the council needs to continue to consider fully the wishes and aspirations of all parties involved in markets, town centres and surrounding communities and to respect the historic market rights that exist across the county. The council also has statutory functions which it needs to continue to discharge effectively.
- 5.2 The existing management arrangements do not permit significant impetus to be given to the enhancement, improvement and development of markets as part of the agenda for town centres. The delivery strategy is based upon the review of the existing management arrangements, culminating in a recommendation to **seek to design and implement a more effective management model (fully reflecting local circumstances and respecting the character of individual centres) in place of all existing, local agreements in order to deliver the following strategic objectives:**
- Affording the council the ability to continue to perform its statutory functions effectively, provide strategic direction and management of markets across the county and, as a minimum, achieve its income targets year on year with an opportunity to reinvest surpluses into markets promotion and development.
  - Providing a structured, efficient and transparent management model which is purpose-designed for County Durham and allows markets to operate at peak performance.
  - Affording the council the opportunity to work with market operators to maximise the performance of markets but, also, to deliver the council's other strategic objectives in terms of wider economic impact, business start ups and growth and support for communities.
- 5.3 Once a management model to meet the council's statutory functions and strategic objectives has been designed, it will be necessary to deliver **a county-wide management service involving an external body or bodies**. This concept needs to be further developed, however there are numerous examples across the UK of successful models which can be adapted to the county's specific needs and aspirations.
- 5.4 The new management model should **enable the council to use its influence and resources to invest in the future of markets, direct strategic policy and implement initiatives, as part of wider town centre regeneration strategies, to maximise the economic effectiveness of markets**. Specific objectives are:
- Increasing footfall and customer spend in our town centres.
  - Achieving a more structured approach to the location, frequency, style, quality and operation of the county's markets.
  - Attracting day visitors and tourists and increasing dwell time.
  - Promoting markets as drivers for improved town centre management and regeneration.
  - Encouraging markets to become involved in business start-ups, entrepreneurial activity and local speciality goods, arts and crafts.
  - Attracting new traders to underpin the sustainability of markets for the future.
  - Encouraging links between street markets and private indoor markets where appropriate eg Durham City.

- Further developing links with local produce, healthy eating and healthy lifestyle promotion.
- Establishing better links with schools and communities.
- Modernising and improving the promotion of markets as part of the branding and image of the county.
- Implementing reduced packaging and recycling initiatives.

5.5 In tandem with a new management model, the council needs to **consider and implement appropriate governance arrangements that will assist in the implementation of strategic objectives, the efficient operation of markets and delivering the agenda for change and improvement.** The arrangements must allow for input from a wide range of parties with interests in our town centres if consensus is to be reached and step changes made. They must also act as a tool for performance management and review.

5.6 The council needs to **keep all interested parties informed and involved in the continuing development of markets as part of the town centres' agenda.**

5.7 In the longer term, the council should **work with all interested parties to utilise markets to help shape our town centre places and to form an integral part of physical regeneration initiatives.**

## 6 Suggested Next Steps

6.1 In the short term, the priority for action is the design and implementation of an effective management model and, if appropriate, the agreement with an external partner or partners to help the council to deliver the wider, strategic objects around revitalising markets. This issue needs to be resolved without delay, as the various local agreements for markets are due to expire in June 2012. It will also require further, detailed consultation on a county-wide basis.

6.2 Once the management model and governance arrangements are operational, the council should seek, as a priority, to co-ordinate efforts of its partners which will have impacts in terms of increasing footfall and customer needs. Potential interventions might, for example, be better promotion and optimising links to other events.

6.3 The arrangements should also agree a priority action of attracting new traders and maximising the potential of existing traders. This will assist in broadening and refreshing the markets' "offer" and help to improve sustainability. Recommended actions might include initial reduced rents (or other incentives) for new traders, test trade opportunities, training and support, incentives to existing traders to introduce new stallholders and offset rents in inclement weather.

6.4 The management of the markets should be co-ordinated so as to allow for the flexibility to support and maximise the potential of large scale and local events

6.5 Finally, and as a further priority action, there should be an impetus towards improving the local trading environment and opportunities for the surrounding town centres. Potential interventions here might be investing in new stalls and reviewing the layout and operation of markets to ensure that they operate in harmony with neighbouring shops and are optimised for shopper access. The council should ensure also that there is a joined-up approach for the operation of markets in the context of other events, initiatives and regeneration strategies.



## Appendix 1

### Schedule of Current Markets

Location	Operator	Market Day	Times	Stalls	Land Asset
Barnard Castle	DCC	Wed	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	DCC Freehold
Bishop Auckland	DCC	Thurs and Sat	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	Adopted Highway
Chester-le-Street	DCC	Tues, Fri and Sat	9am - 4pm	DCC owned. 100 fixed stalls	DCC Freehold
Consett	Trader Consortium	Fri and Sat	10am - 3pm	Trader owned	Adopted Highway
Crook	DCC	Tues and Sat	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	DCC Freehold
Durham City	Durham Market Co.	Sat	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	Adopted Highway
Seaham	Private Operator	Friday	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	Adopted Highway
Spennymoor	DCC	Sat	9am - 3pm	Trader owned	DCC Freehold
Stanhope	DCC	Mon (April – Sept only)	8am - 3pm	Trader owned	DCC Freehold
Stanhope (Farmers' Market)	DCC	4 <sup>th</sup> Sat each month	10am - 3pm	Contracted in by DCC	DCC Freehold
Stanley	Private Operator	Thurs and Sat	9am - 4pm	Trader owned	Adopted Highway

Stalls at Chester-le-Street are fixed, uniform and owned by DCC.

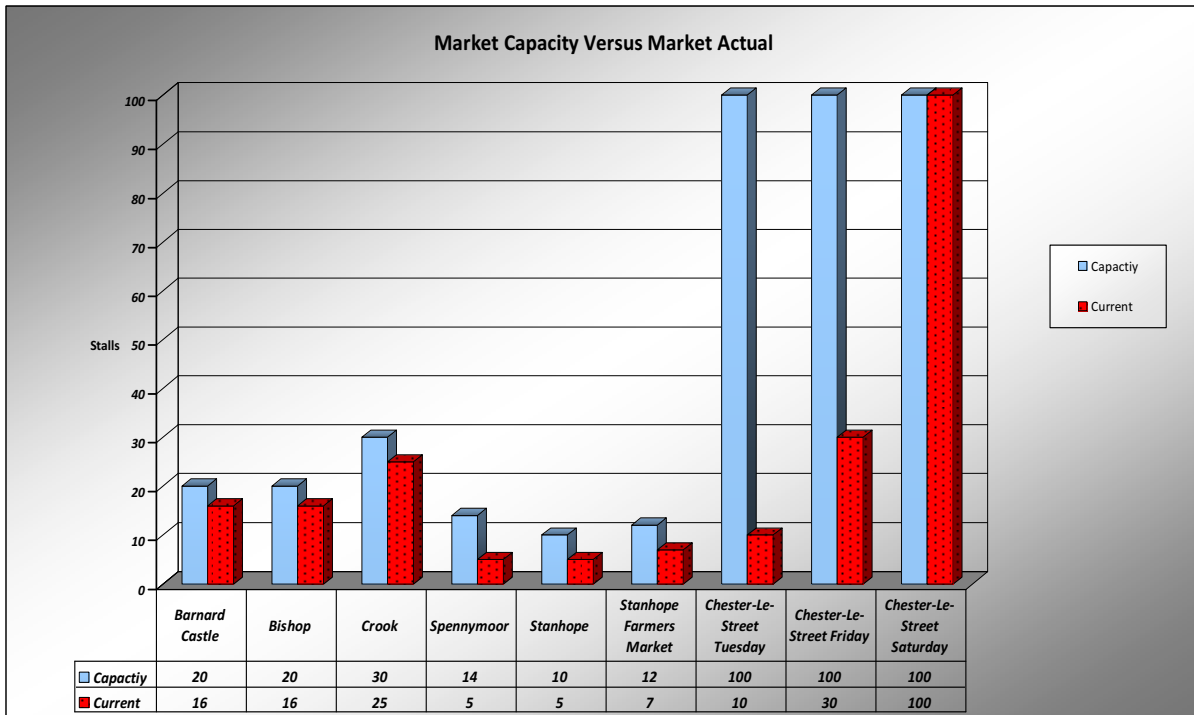
Stalls at Stanhope Farmers' Market are uniform and are hired in by DCC.

Stalls in other locations are owned by traders and vary in size, colour, construction and state of repair.

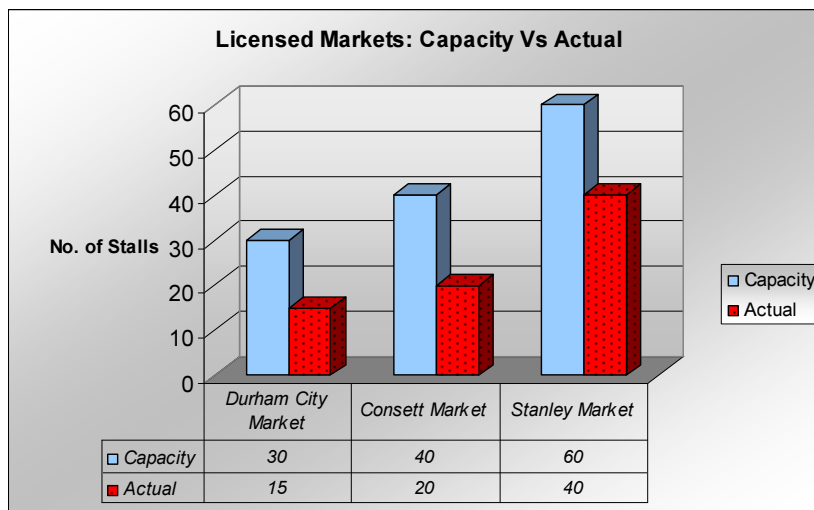
## Appendix 2

The tables below illustrate the capacity of each market and actual take up by traders. The information is gleaned from a snapshot survey in February 2011.

### DCC Controlled Markets



### Markets Managed under Licence



## Appendix 3

### Review of Market Provision Key Characteristics

General	Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<b>General Observations</b>	<p>Markets are established, on recognised sites and have a history in the county.</p> <p>There is a significant degree of trader loyalty.</p> <p>Potential to help create an environment for economic regeneration and to link with tourism.</p> <p>Ability to increase footfall and retail spend.</p> <p>Sense of place.</p> <p>Promotion of business start ups and entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Pressure on markets and town centres from superstores, out-of-town retailing and internet sales.</p> <p>Lack of investment, maintenance and strategic direction.</p> <p>Diminishing trader numbers.</p> <p>Image.</p> <p>Lack of diversity and specialism.</p> <p>Outdated or inadequate management and promotion methods.</p>
<b>General Consultation - Traders</b>	<p>Help from DCC officers.</p> <p>Welcome incentives for new traders.</p> <p>Camaraderie amongst traders.</p>	<p>Weather.</p> <p>Lack of signage/advertising.</p> <p>Lack of investment.</p> <p>No young traders coming through.</p>
<b>General Consultation – Shoppers</b>	<p>Desire for greater food offer, specialist goods and local produce.</p> <p>Demand for top up shopping to avoid fuel costs.</p>	<p>Lack of stalls selling quality products.</p> <p>Lack of volume and hustle &amp; bustle.</p> <p>Poor parking.</p> <p>Market too infrequent.</p>
DCC Managed Markets	Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
Barnard Castle	<p>Well positioned.</p> <p>Draws traders from North Yorks and Cumbria.</p> <p>Thriving Farmers' Market also run – waiting list for stalls.</p> <p>Barnard Castle Vision and town centre regeneration/retail initiatives.</p>	<p>Susceptible to bad weather.</p>
Bishop Auckland	<p>Significant, recent investment in the Market Place and continued drive to support town centre.</p>	<p>Trade reduced by preponderance of £1 shops in the vicinity.</p> <p>Vehicle movements.</p>

<b>DCC Managed Markets</b>	<b>Strengths/Opportunities</b>	<b>Weaknesses/Threats</b>
Chester-le-Street	Saturday “car boot” table top market very popular (although evidence of illegal trading). Recent refurbishment, although fixed stalls not universally popular with traders. Market manager with good relationship with traders. Market tied in with “Shop Watch” scheme.	Midweek markets very poorly attended. No marketing, promotion or allied events. Lack of signage.
Crook	Very popular market with excellent relationship between traders, shoppers and local retailers. Good footfall on market day. Would be enhanced further by publicity and signage.	Vehicles taking up potential trader space. Traders moving on site without permission.
Spennymoor	AAP initiative to support and improve the market.	Location adjacent to Festival Walk. Dwindling desire from traders to keep going – market very small and suffering due to proximity to other centres.
Stanhope	Excellent location in market square. Growing popularity and resistance from local retailers largely overcome.	Only operates in the summer.
Stanhope (Farmers’ Market)	Traders have had the benefit of training via DCC tourism initiative. Well supported by publicity (although now ended). Attracts traders from surrounding counties.	Promotion reduced by vandalism/theft of roadside signs (Market held in grounds of Dales Centre).

<b>Licensed Markets</b>	<b>Strengths/Opportunities</b>	<b>Weaknesses/Threats</b>
Consett	Run by a trader co-operative – excess profits go to good causes. Well run and well publicised. Only County Durham market signed up to the Shoppers’ Charter”. Member of NABMA	Location is poor – windy. No public toilets nearby. Pressure from £1 shops and new superstore.
Durham City	Well run by highly experienced manager of Durham Markets Co.	Adversely effected by out-of-town retailing. Potential conflict of interest with traders in indoor market.
Stanley	Incentives offered to new and existing traders. Traders affiliated to NMTF. Well publicised and marketed.	Susceptible to bad weather.

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**Cabinet**

**30 May 2012**



**Welfare Reform**

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**Report of Corporate Management Team  
Report of Lorraine O' Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive  
and Cllr Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**

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**Purpose of Report**

- 1 To inform Members of the Government's welfare reform agenda and consider the implications for County Durham and the Council.

**Executive Summary**

- 2 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 is one of the largest policy changes to be introduced by the current Government.
- 3 The Act has been designed to deliver £18 billion savings from the welfare budget as announced in the budget and spending review 2010. It does not address the further £10 billion savings expected from welfare spending that was announced in the budget of March 2012.
- 4 One of the aims of welfare reform is to simplify a very complex array of benefits available to people who are unemployed, disabled, unable to work, have childcare responsibilities or who are on low incomes. The complexity of both the current arrangements and the proposed changes makes it very difficult to forecast the implications and outcomes of the Act. This report draws on the stated aims of the Act, the impact assessments prepared by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP); statistical information for Durham and analysis carried out by bodies such as the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) to anticipate potential implications for the county.
- 5 The main changes to welfare as a result of the Act are:
  - a) the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) with effect from October 2013, a single benefit to be paid on a monthly basis. UC replaces Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, and Working Tax Credit;

- b) the Act abolishes both Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) that are currently administered by local authorities on behalf of the DWP. The Act replaces centralised support for CTB with a localised support mechanism, with funding coming from un-ringfenced grants paid directly to local authorities. There will be 10% less Government funding available in the localised scheme which equates to an estimated reduction in grant of £5.5m in 2013/14;
- c) changes to Housing Benefit will require social-sector houses to have a size criterion applied, with any working-age household deemed to be under-occupying their home to have part of their Housing Benefit removed. Most working-age claimants will also no longer be able to have their Housing Benefit paid directly to their landlord;
- d) the Act abolishes the Social Fund from April 2013 which comprises 'last resort' benefits such as Crisis Loans, and replaces it with a non-ring fenced grant which will be paid to local authorities in England. Local authorities will be responsible for distributing this money;
- e) the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is to be replaced for all working-age claimants by a Personal Independence Payment;
- f) the Act empowers the government to put a cap on the total benefits to which an individual or couple is entitled. This cap is expected to be introduced in April 2013, and will be set at a working household's average net earnings – currently expected to be £26,000 a year (a maximum of £500 per week) for lone parents and couples with or without children; and around £18,000 a year (a maximum of £350 per week) for single people without children or whose children for whom they have responsibility do not live with them. The cap will apply to the combined income from out of work benefits, Housing Benefit, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit, Universal Credit from October 2013 and other benefits such as Carer's allowance and Maternity Allowance;
- g) the amount of time that people can receive contribution-based Employment Support Allowance (ESA) will be limited to 365 days for those claimants in a Work Related Activity Group or in the assessment phase;
- h) the 'Youth' provision, enabling disabled young people to qualify for the benefit without paying National Insurance contributions is abolished by the Act.

6 The main findings of this analysis are:

- a) The Act will affect over half of Durham households who will have to reapply for a new benefit or be reassessed. It is possible that the transition to new arrangements will be difficult with many



claimants likely to be confused by the changes or unable to use new online claim processes;

- b) The Institute of Fiscal Studies<sup>1</sup> estimates the impact on household incomes of tax and benefit reforms due to be implemented in 2012-13 amounts to a net takeaway of about £4.1 billion (an average of £160 per household) in that year. This they suggest will rise to about £9.8 billion (£370 per household) in 2013-14. The largest average losses from the 2012-13 reforms as a percentage of income will be among those in the bottom half of the income distribution. Households with children are set to lose the most from the reforms, and pensioner households are the one major demographic group who will gain from them, on average;
- c) The central premise of welfare reform is that people will move into work and therefore offset any loss of income from benefits. If the loss of benefits is not compensated by an increase in earnings, then there would be significantly less money within the local economy. Analysis in this report suggests an overall loss to the local economy of around £150 million in 13/14;
- d) For the first time Council Tax Benefit (and the Social Fund) would be determined locally with the local authority responsible for any increased volume of demand. A 10 percent reduction in (CTB) means a £5.5 million per year loss to the County on top of other public spending restrictions. Local government rather than central government would assume the risks of potential increased costs should there be an increase in benefit take-up. Clearly authorities with a high proportion of people on benefits face higher risks than those serving less deprived areas. This increased risk comes at a time of unprecedented reductions in resources available to local authorities;
- e) Administratively, there are changes required to council services in order for the council to deliver new or changed responsibilities in accordance with the Act. These include changes to housing, homelessness, housing and council tax benefits, social care and welfare advice. The need to develop new systems to administer localised benefits, e.g. CTB and Crisis Loans is likely to result in increased administration costs. The timescale for the introduction of the localisation of council tax benefit scheme, considering that final details are still awaited, is extremely tight, which could lead to delivery difficulties for both software suppliers and local authorities;
- f) The scale of the change will inevitably mean that the public will contact the council, local members, MPs and partner organisations who will need to be aware of the changes and to assist the public wherever possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Tax and benefit reforms due in 2012-13, and the outlook for household incomes. IFS March 2012

## Background

- 7 Welfare reform has been a major policy priority for successive governments. At their heart, the reforms have sought to ensure that work incentives mean a life of employment is always more attractive and viable than seeking support from the state, whilst continuing to provide a safety net for people in need. The previous Government was of the view that the existing welfare system was ‘failing to provide security for those who cannot work’, ‘failing to encourage work for those who can’ and ‘failing to ensure support goes to the right people’.
- 8 The current Government identifies that there are two fundamental problems with the current welfare system: poor work incentives and complexity. As a result they suggest that the current system hinders rather than helps millions of individuals who are in poverty and facing welfare dependency. The key themes in the welfare reform debate have been reducing worklessness, combating poverty, benefit recipients recognising their rights and responsibilities, with certain benefit recipients such as single parents, the disabled and older people encouraged into work rather than remaining on benefits.
- 9 The Government’s stated aim of welfare reform is to make the system of benefits and tax credits systems fairer and simpler; creating the incentives to get more people into work by ensuring ‘work always pays’; protecting the most vulnerable in our society; and delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the taxpayer. A significant driver for reform is that more than £100 billion<sup>2</sup> will be spent in 2014/15 on the main benefits excluding state pension and pension credit and reform is expected to deliver significant reductions in public spending. The largest benefits (excluding state pension and pension credit) are:
- a) Tax credits (£28.5bn)
  - b) Housing Benefit (£23.7bn)
  - c) Child Benefit
  - d) Disability Living Allowance (£13.8bn)
  - e) Employment Support Allowance (£10.9bn)
  - f) Attendance Allowance (£6.3bn)
  - g) Jobseeker’s Allowance (£5.9bn)
  - h) Council Tax Benefit (£4.5bn)
  - i) Income Support (£2.7bn)
  - j) Statutory Maternity Pay (£2.4bn)
  - k) Winter Fuel Payments (£2.1bn).
- 10 The announcements made in the Spending Review 2010 (which also include the announcements introduced in the June budget of the same year) require savings from welfare reform of £18 billion over the current spending review. The Chancellor’s spring budget of this year

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<sup>2</sup> Small changes this parliament; more big welfare cuts next ? IFS 2012

announced that to maintain current spending reduction targets, a further £10 billion would need to be saved through welfare reform. In addition to making savings, the Government's aim is that by simplifying and integrating the existing set of means-tested benefits and tax credits for working-age adults, Universal Credit will make it easier for claimants to claim the benefits to which they are entitled, make the financial gains to work more transparent, and reduce the amount the Government spends on administration and wastes through payments incorrectly paid out due to claimant fraud or to claimant or official error.

- 11 The Institute of Fiscal Studies<sup>3</sup> estimates the impact on household incomes of tax and benefit reforms due to be implemented in 2012-13 amounts to a net takeaway of about £4.1 billion (an average of £160 per household) in that year. This they suggest will rise to about £9.8 billion (£370 per household) in 2013-14 once all revenue from tax liabilities accruing in 2012-13 has been collected and once the full year effects of changes to fuel duties and Child Benefit (August 2012 and January 2013 respectively) are felt. This comes on top of the effect of indirect tax rises (in particular the rise in the main rate of VAT from 17.5% to 20%) in January 2011, totalling about £12.8 billion per year (£480 per household), and a net takeaway of about £3.9 billion (£150 per household) in 2011-12 from tax and benefit reforms introduced during this year. The largest average losses from the 2012-13 reforms as a percentage of income will be among those in the bottom half of the income distribution. Households with children are set to lose the most from the reforms, and pensioner households are the one major demographic group who will gain from them, on average.
- 12 In the current economic climate the policy focus to get people off benefits and into work is even more of a challenge with current economic forecasts indicating slow growth and higher unemployment. The highest rates of unemployment are in the North East (12.0 percent) and Yorkshire and the Humber (10.1 percent) (September-November 2011). Over the last year the greatest rise in the unemployment rate was in the North East (up 2.3 percentage points).<sup>4</sup>
- 13 A significant challenge for County Durham is that we have an average workless household rate of 19.6 percent, which is just below the regional average (20 percent) but significantly higher than the national average (16 percent). This is compounded by the fact that almost half of the resident population in County Durham (45.4 percent) live in relatively deprived areas (IMD 2010). Former district areas of Sedgfield (51.9 percent) and Easington (72.4 percent) have more than half of the population living in the 30 percent most deprived areas of the county. Furthermore, 21,000 children and 27,000 people aged 60+ are living in poverty.
- 14 In this context, with higher levels of unemployment in the North East, the implications of the Act are very dependent on what happens to the local economy. The Centre for Regional Economic and Social

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<sup>3</sup> Tax and benefit reforms due in 2012-13, and the outlook for household incomes. IFS March 2012

<sup>4</sup> House of Commons Research paper 12/04 Jan 2012

Research<sup>5</sup> report that the highly skewed distribution of incapacity claimants across the country means that the older industrial areas of the North, Scotland and Wales, in particular, will be most affected by the reforms. They conclude that the reform's impact on the most prosperous parts of southern England will be negligible.

- 15 The government has published details of how councils can test run the introduction of universal credit. A prospectus<sup>6</sup> for 12 pilot areas to provide face-to-face support for benefit claimants was published jointly last month (April 2012) by the LGA and welfare minister Lord Freud. DWP have stated that no decision would be made on the future role, or future funding, of councils on universal credit until after the pilots had finished and been assessed in September 2013. It should be noted however that this would be just one month ahead of the planned national roll-out of universal credit.

### **The main changes arising from welfare reform**

- 16 The central change is the introduction of Universal Credit (UC), a single benefit to be paid both in and out of work on a monthly basis which was introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Universal Credit replaces Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, and Working Tax Credit. To receive Universal Credit an individual or couple will have to sign a new claimant commitment, which sets out the expectations and requirements placed upon the claimant, as well as outlining the sanctions should they fail to fulfil them. New claims will begin from Oct 2013 with full migration to UC by October 2017. Furthermore the Act empowers the Government to place a cap on the total benefits an individual or couple can receive (£26,000) which is expected to be introduced in April 2013.
- 17 The Act abolishes both Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) that are currently administered by local authorities on behalf of the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). The Government's intention is to localise CTB (previously announced in the October 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review), along with a commitment to reduce spending on support for Council Tax by 10 percent or £5 billion each year. A report<sup>7</sup> on the Council's approach to localisation of Council Tax support scheme has been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 April 2012.
- 18 The reform of housing benefit covers five key changes:
- a) as from October 2013 payments for housing benefit will be made directly to the tenant in both the social and private rented sectors;

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<sup>5</sup> Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, "Incapacity Benefit Reform, The local, regional and national impact". C Beatty and S Fothergill Nov 2011

<sup>6</sup> DWP April 2012

<sup>7</sup> Cabinet report 18<sup>th</sup> April 2012 – Council's Approach to Localisation of Council Tax

- b) in April 2013 a size criterion will be introduced for payment of housing benefit in the social sector which means that those tenants under occupying their homes will have their benefit reduced;
  - c) a number of changes to payment of housing benefit (Local Housing Allowance) in the private rented sector will be introduced resulting in reductions for a number of client groups in particular single people under 35;
  - d) charges for non dependants living in a property will increase and the amount of housing benefit therefore will be reduced;
  - e) The integration of housing benefit into Universal Credit.
- 19 The Act abolishes the Social Fund, to be replaced with a non-ring fenced grant which will be paid to local authorities in England. Local authorities will then decide how to distribute this money, which replaces 'last-resort' lifelines such as Crisis Loans, in line with local circumstances. Similarly, the Act replaces centralised support for Council Tax Benefit with a localised support mechanism, with funding coming from un-ringfenced grants paid directly to local authorities. Local authorities will be responsible for developing their own schemes for this provision.
- 20 The Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is to be replaced for all working-age claimants by a Personal Independence Payment. There will be no automatic transfer from one benefit to the other, so people currently receiving DLA will have to make a fresh claim for the new benefit, and will be re-assessed in line with its new assessment criteria. The details of these criteria are currently being consulted upon.
- 21 There are also important changes to contribution-based Employment Support Allowance. The amount of time claimants in the work-related activity group or assessment phase can claim it will be limited to 365 days. The 'Youth' provision enabling disabled young people to qualify for the benefit without paying National Insurance contributions is abolished by the Act.

### **Government assessment of the impact of the Act**

22. There are more than 40 changes to the welfare system listed in the Treasury Red Book and Spending Review for 2010. Together these identify how the Government expects to reduce the welfare budget by £18 billion by 2015. The Welfare Reform Act comprises the legislative changes that are required to deliver this saving.
23. Much of the consultation<sup>8</sup> and the consequent white paper<sup>9</sup> on reform of the benefits system focuses on the introduction of Universal Credit. However it is important to clarify that whilst very important, Universal Credit is not the only change to the welfare system. Whilst there has

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<sup>8</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> Century Welfare, DWP, July 2012

<sup>9</sup> Universal Credit: Welfare that works, DWP Nov 2012

been much analysis and debate on Universal Credit, it is much more difficult to understand the implications of the wider Act. In its overall impact assessment of the Act<sup>10</sup>, the DWP concludes that a cumulative impact assessment [of the Act] would be likely to obscure the impacts of individual policies rather than aid understanding of those considering the Welfare Reform Bill in parliament and the wider public'. Eighteen separate impact assessments are then provided, each one ignoring, by definition, the impact of all of the others.

24. It might therefore at first glance appear contradictory given the scale of savings to be made that the government has analysed the impact of Universal Credit to be<sup>11</sup>:
  - a) The move to a simpler system will change the level of entitlements for some householders. Transitional protection arrangements will mean that there will be no cash losers as a direct result of the move to Universal Credit where circumstances remain the same;
  - b) In the steady state, once all existing claims have been migrated to Universal Credit, it is estimated that some 2.8 million households will have higher entitlements than they would have done under the current system, while 2 million would be entitled to less. In some cases the notional reduction in entitlement will be offset by the fact that people are taking up their entitlement for the first time;
  - c) Universal Credit will have substantial positive impact on poverty in the steady state. The Department of Work and Pensions estimates that the combined impact of take up and higher entitlement will reduce poverty by around 900,000 individuals, including over 350,000 children and around 550,000 working age adults.
25. The Institute for Fiscal Studies<sup>12</sup> is broadly in agreement with this impact analysis: 'more households will see entitlements rise from the move to Universal Credit *considered in isolation* than will see entitlements fall; in aggregate entitlements will rise by nearly £1.1 billion a year. Low income families will see their entitlement rise by more than high income families, on average, and couples will gain more from the reform, on average, than single adult families especially if there are also children in the family'.
26. The IFS analysis of Universal Credit in isolation concludes that the reform will give rise to both winners and in the long run losers. It also finds that in general the impact on incomes is progressive, with the bottom decile gaining the most as a fraction of income.
27. Because Universal Credit is only one of the many changes to social security benefits and taxes introduced since 2010, the IFS carried out a companion analysis<sup>13</sup> to that of Universal Credit and concluded that 'the changes *altogether* will substantially reduce government spending on

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<sup>10</sup> Welfare Reform 2011 assessment of impacts, DWP June 2011

<sup>11</sup> Welfare Reform Bill Universal Credit, EIA, DWP Nov 2011

<sup>12</sup> Universal Credit: A preliminary analysis of its impact on incomes and work incentives, IFS 2012

<sup>13</sup> Child and working age poverty from 2012 to 2020, IFS, Oct 2011

social security benefits and tax credits and will act to increase relative and absolute measures of income poverty over the next decade’.

28. Considered in isolation, Universal Credit should reduce poverty significantly (by 450,000 children and 600,000 working age adults) but this reduction is more than offset by the poverty-increasing impact of the government’s other changes to personal taxes and state benefits. The most important of these other changes for poverty is that benefits, including the Local Housing Allowance from April 2013, will now be indexed in line with the consumer price index (CPI) measure of inflation, rather than one derived from the retail price index (RPI).
29. The wider analysis which includes Universal Credit and other changes announced but not yet implemented, in late 2011 suggests that the overall impact to changes to personal tax and benefit policy announced since 2010 is to increase absolute child poverty by 200,000 in 2015/16 and 300,000 in 2020/2021 and to increase absolute working age poverty by 300,000 in 2015/2016 and 700,000 in 2020/2021.

### The Government’s Equality Impact Assessments

- 30 Equality impact assessments were undertaken on the Welfare Reform Bill’s provisions carried out by the DWP. In total the DWP carried out 20 equality impact assessments in relation to welfare reform. The assessments are limited in some respects because of the lack of detail on some provisions and the lack of data that was available at the time on all groups covered by the new Public Sector Equality Duty. The Department is currently exploring what information it can collect on the additional protected characteristics of sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.
- 31 The assessments highlight that some provisions will have a disproportionate impact on the protected characteristics, including women, disabled people, certain ethnic minority groups and children in larger families or single parent families. The DWP has provided some justification for this and mitigation of negative impact however this is limited. Mitigation generally includes being helped to find work. The assessments focus more on implementation mechanisms e.g. communication support and reasonable adjustments than on the policy decision and impact of the change. The impact on carers has not been considered and organisations such as Carers UK have raised concerns about this.
- 32 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has published an EIA about localising council tax. Low income pensioners (65+) are to be protected from any reductions in support as they cannot be expected to seek paid employment to increase their income. The greatest impact will therefore be for working aged people. The assessment recognises that 48 percent of CTB recipient households have at least one child or adult who is disabled. As councils should seek to protect customers who receive some form of disability income (such as DLA) this compounds the impact for low income working age groups. There is no further analysis of impact for this group and mitigation includes the degree of control authorities have in

implementing the 10 percent reduction in expenditure and incentivising people to find work.

### **Implications of the Act for County Durham**

- 33 Given the detail of the Act, the main implications are expected to be on:
- a) individuals and families: this will vary according to individual circumstances. There are two types of impact: of change so that people have to re-claim, over time, against new eligibility criteria on assessments, and, more importantly, families finding that their household income has been reduced unless this is replaced by moving into paid employment;
  - b) the local economy: as households have less income there is a cumulative impact on the local economy;
  - c) council services: there are new and changed responsibilities for local authorities. In addition, the implementation of the Act is expected to increase demand in certain services e.g. housing.

#### Impact on individuals and families

- 34 To analyse the impact of the Act on individuals and families, the numbers of people currently claiming the main types of benefit to be subsumed within Universal Credit (UC) were sought. These are presented in the tables below at county and parliamentary constituency level.
- 35 This analysis suggests that over half of Durham households (around 119,600 in total) will be affected by UC changes <sup>14</sup>.
- 36 In order to provide some context for UC affected benefits and tax credits the total amount claimed by Durham residents has been estimated using latest data. Overall, UC benefits and Tax Credits accounts for around £659.6 million per year. This equates to an average of £5,500 per year per family.
- 37 Other key changes, outside of UC have also been quantified. Changes to Disability Living Allowance could reduce the total amount claimed by a fifth, around £31 million overall for Durham. Latest data indicates that around £156.7 million is claimed in total through DLA, £88 million of which is claimed by working age people.

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<sup>14</sup> Reasonable assumptions have been made that remove the double counting which arises from the fact that households may claim more than one type of benefit.



<b>Selected Benefits subject to reform</b>	<b>Estimated Number of claims</b>	<b>Estimated amount claimed (£million)</b>
<b>Universal Credit</b>		
<b>Tax Credits (families<sup>15</sup>)</b>	<b>53,200</b>	<b>221.3</b>
<b>Out-of-work benefits<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>56,690</b>	<b>223.4</b>
<i>of which;</i>		
<i>JSA (ib)</i>	11,700	40.3
<i>ESA (ir)</i>	4,300	19.1
<i>Income Support</i>	16,500	69.5
<i>Incapacity benefits/SDA</i>	24,100	94.5
<b>Housing Benefit<sup>17</sup></b>	<b>47,600</b>	<b>214.9</b>
<b><i>Total Universal Credit Claims<sup>18</sup></i></b>	<b>157,470<sup>19</sup></b>	<b>659.6</b>
<b><i>Estimated Households affected by UC</i></b>	<b>119,600</b>	<b>-</b>
<b><u>Other Key Impacts</u></b>		
<b>Disability Living Allowance;</b>	40,200	156.7
<i>of which working age</i>	23,130	88.0
<b>Localisation of Council Tax Benefits</b>	62,700	55
<b><i>Total Other Key Impacts</i></b>	<b>55,100</b>	<b>211.7</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>212,600</b>	<b>871.3</b>

38 Within County Durham the impacts are not evenly distributed. In terms of UC Easington has the highest rate of claims of all six Parliamentary Constituencies with around 357 claims per 1000 people. City of Durham has almost half that rate with 190 claims per 1000 people. The distribution of impacts from the localisation of Council Tax Benefits and changes to DLA show a similar pattern. Easington has both the highest number of CTB claimants (12,280) and the highest DLA claimant rate (10.6% of all residents). Conversely, City of Durham has the lowest number of CTB claimants (7,910) and the lowest rate DLA claimant rate (5.0% of all residents).

<sup>15</sup> Tax Credits are claimed by individuals, or jointly by couples, whether or not they have children described as families in data releases. Child and Working Tax Credits Statistics: Geographic analyses: April 2012 (latest monetary finalised award average from 2009-2010 finalised award report May. 2011). The national ratio of beneficiaries was established and used for local authority level to get an accurate proportion of the amount of people claiming and not just family count that was only available at local level.

<sup>16</sup> These benefits include means tested DWP benefits subject to Welfare Reform. Out-of-work contribution based benefits such as JSA (contribution based) will continue unchanged.

<sup>17</sup> Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit recipients by Region and Local Authority: January 2012 (National average used for monetary value).

<sup>18</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

<sup>19</sup> Includes double counting i.e. individuals are likely to claim more than one of these certain benefits.

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Population (ONS2010)</b>	<b>Universal Credit claims</b>	<b>Council Tax Benefit (CTB) claim</b>	<b>Disability Living Allowance Claims</b>
Bishop Auckland	85,732	28,580	11,860	7,120
City of Durham	97,925	20,010	7,910	4,940
Easington	83,398	32,260	12,280	8,800
North Durham	84,883	27,080	10,980	6,350
North West Durham	89,750	25,800	10,950	6,700
Sedgefield	82,586	25,330	10,390	6,860
<b>Total<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>524,274</b>	<b>159,060</b>	<b>64,370</b>	<b>40,770</b>

39 *For people not able to work*

- a) County Durham has around 24,000 people claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB) with a claimant rate of 7 percent working age population rate. These claimant rates are higher than the rate for the North East and England.
- b) Currently IB claimants are being reassessed with an aim for all to be reassessed by 2014. The reassessment involves a tougher test which is expected to result in around 50% of claimants being moved off IB and designated fit for work. This will mean a drop in income of about £40 a week for claimants no longer eligible for IB. As well as the immediate hardship to claimants, this change will lead to an increased demand for advice services related to appeals;
- c) From April 2012 'contribution based' Employment Support Allowance (ESA) (for those who have paid National Insurance) stops after one year and contribution-based ESA for young people will cease. This will result in an income drop by up to £94.25 a week. Currently 4,300 residents in County Durham receive 'contribution-based ESA' of which 1,300 have been claiming for more than one year;<sup>21</sup>
- d) IB migration to ESA will involve the retesting of people claiming IB, Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) and Income Support (IS) on the basis of a disability. The DWP estimates that 20 percent will lose entitlement to ESA. This will lead to increased financial pressures being placed on those affected by the loss of this benefit.

<sup>20</sup> Parliamentary Constituencies include areas in Darlington UA so total figures will not match County totals.

<sup>21</sup> ONS Feb 2011 figure includes claimant counts of both income based ESA and contribution and income based ESA payment type, which can be explained by joint claims.

40 *For people out of work*

- a) The implementation of UC and related welfare to work measures will impact on around 56,500 people in County Durham currently receiving out-of-work benefits. This figure comprises 32,500 out-of-work benefit claimants from income based Jobseeker's Allowance (11,700); income-related Employment Support Allowance (4,300); Income Support (16,500); and a further 24,000 Incapacity Benefit claimants waiting to be transferred to ESA or other DWP benefits;
- b) Almost 12,000 people in County Durham are in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) and may experience a variety of increased sanctions and hardship payments, (that is payments of JSA(IB) made to certain people who do not qualify for JSA under normal rules and would suffer hardship if JSA is not paid), which are being introduced for failure to participate in mandatory work activity schemes. Young people aged 18-24 are most likely to be affected by these changes. They will also be impacted by proposed changes to the Social Fund (SF), when Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans for general living expenses are devolved to councils.
- c) In 2009/10, there were some 3,040 Community Care Grant awards totalling £1.23 million. In 2005/6 (last figures available from DWP) 2,990 Crisis Loans (for general living expenses) were made totalling £174,600. The changes to the Social Fund could lead to more people turning to 'loan sharks' due to lack of available grants or loans. It should be noted that the Government is planning to reduce the overall budget for these grants and loans prior to transferring to councils.

41 *For people in work, receiving Tax Credits*

- a) For people in work receiving Working Tax Credits, the overall message is that most people in receipt of this benefit will receive less, with an average reduction of £1,000 per year for families. In County Durham there are 47,100 families receiving Tax Credits.
- b) In particular the following changes apply:
  - Baby element has been withdrawn - £545 a year;
  - Higher limit £50,000 reduced to £40,000;
  - Extra support for under 3-year olds cancelled - £208 a year;
  - Help with child care costs cut - up to £1,560 per year less;
  - Couples must work more hours to get Working Tax Credits.
- c) Whilst the obvious target group for welfare reform is those in receipt of out of work benefits, consideration must also be given to those in employment, where tax credits and child benefit will reduce for many low to middle income families. In most cases families may be able to adjust household budgets to absorb the

impact of a reduced income. However, with personal debt levels at a record high and inflation at currently 3.5 percent (March 2012) there is a risk for some families that this erosion of income will significantly reduce their ability to afford their housing costs, or continue to service both secured and non secured debt. The Council's Housing Solutions Service for example, have noted a change in the demographic of its service user group to include those in full time employment facing homelessness due to increased personal debt and mortgage arrears. It is therefore likely that a similar pattern will continue over the coming months.

- d) Reforms such as the abolition of the baby element of the Child Tax Credit and the reduction in the generosity of the childcare component of the Working Tax Credit particularly affects families with younger children, and cuts to Local Housing Allowance only affect those in the private rented sector.

#### 42 *For people in receipt of Housing Benefit*

- a) The integration of Housing Benefit (HB) into Universal Credit (UC), the end of direct payments to social housing providers and the other proposed reductions in housing benefit will lead to higher arrears and increased rent collection costs. Proposed caps to HB could lead to increased demand for smaller, cheaper properties. Changes to HB will see an average claimant in County Durham potentially face:
- tighter restrictions on help with private rent;
  - a 25 percent increase in the 'non-dependent contribution';
  - restrictions for single under 25 year-olds extended to under 35 year-olds (April 2012);
  - HB limits to family size will be extended to social housing from April 2013;
- b) This will mean that those people affected by the changes to HB and UC are faced with the following choices:
- stay in their current accommodation and find the money to pay. This will be difficult as a number of people will not only be affected by a reduction in their HB but could lose council tax benefit and a reduction in personal benefits;
  - stay and don't pay which will result in high rent arrears, evictions, increased homelessness, impact on health and well being, increased demands on debt advice and other council services;
  - move, but as outlined elsewhere in this report, there is a mismatch of supply of one bedroom properties to meet anticipated demand;
  - take in a lodger.

#### 43 *For children and families*

- a) Clearly, most of the benefit changes outlined in this paper will impact indirectly on children. In addition there are also changes

to the benefits targeted specifically at children. These include a freeze on Child Benefit, which will impact on the poorest families as well as the benefit being withdrawn altogether from higher rate tax payers from 2013. From December 2011, lone parents will receive no Income Support (IS) once their youngest child reaches five years of age. The Government has also cancelled the following children's benefits:

- £190 Pregnancy Grant (and Maternity Grant) will now only be applied to the first child;
  - Child Trust Fund;
  - Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) (up to £30 per week) to be replaced by smaller bursaries;
- b) The new system is expected to be particularly beneficial to lone parents, including those who wish to work a small number of hours as the Government will now pay support for childcare for those working under 16 hours per week. Evidence suggests that most lone parents looking for work want to fit this in with their children's schooling so are looking predominantly for work that is part-time and preferably within school hours;
- c) Overall, low-income households with children, particularly non-working lone parent households, lose more as a percentage of income on average from tax and benefit changes to be introduced over this period than pensioners, those of working age without children and better off households with children.

#### 44 *For disabled people*

- a) From April 2013 to March 2016 everyone aged 16 to 64 receiving DLA will be reassessed to see whether they are entitled to the new Personal Independence Payment. People entitled to Personal Independence Payment will have their claims transferred over and their DLA will stop. Those not found to be entitled to Personal Independence Payment will be informed and their DLA will stop. They may be able to claim other benefits. There are no current plans to replace DLA with Personal Independence Payment for children aged under 16 and people over the age of 65 who are already receiving DLA.
- b) The biggest impact on disabled people is the introduction of a more restrictive test of DLA from 2013. Approximately 23,130 people of working age receive Disability Living Allowance in County Durham. This could mean 20 percent (about 4,600) of people losing their entitlement as well as related benefits such as extra IS and Carers Allowances and non-dependent deductions on HB and CTB. This could result in greater financial hardship, less independence and reduced mobility for those losing the benefit.
- c) The average payment of DLA in County Durham is £70.77 per week. Reductions in this payment could have significant impacts on the Council, e.g. people will have less income to

contribute to care costs. There is also likely to be a significant increase in appeals and demand for related advice services.

- d) According to the Government's Equality Impact Assessment, Universal Credit will improve financial incentives to work for disabled people to approximately the same degree as for non-disabled households. The Government suggest that households with a disabled person are substantially less likely to see a change in their entitlement compared to non disabled households, 54 percent compared to 71 percent.

45 *For older people*

- a) Older people will be significantly impacted by changes to the retirement ages for men and women. Older claimants (but below state pension age) are more likely to be under-occupying accommodation once their children have left home;
- b) The Government wants to ensure that low income pensioners ,who would struggle to pay Council tax without additional support ,and whom the Government does not expect to work to increase their income ,will continue to receive the same level of support against their council tax bills.

Impact on the local economy

- 46 Economic development and regeneration is the most important priority for the Council. Proposals in welfare reform are likely to mean that there is less money in the local economy. Taking the IFS estimates of a total 'takeaway' per household of £680 and ignoring that Durham is likely to have a greater than average household takeaway, the net impact to the local economy could be as high as £151 million by 13/14 with most of this impact yet to be felt as the key changes have not yet been implemented.
- 47 The success of the UC element of the welfare reform and the mitigation of the adverse impacts on women, disabled people and so on, depends on the creation of employment opportunities and their take-up by benefit claimants. It will be important that residents are supported into sustainable employment and for the economy to generate employment opportunities. Working age people will need quality jobs as part of a move towards a higher skilled, higher paid economy. As people are encouraged to move off benefits, there is likely to be an increase in demand for entry level employment and employment related support, with a need to focus on workforce development and progression routes.
- 48 Nationally there has been a reduction in flexible funding provision such as Single Programme Funding, Working Neighbourhood Funding and other Area Based Grants. This has had a direct impact within County Durham, resulting in a number of initiatives to support employability being withdrawn. The current offer of the Work Programme will not totally replace this previous level of provision.

## Impact on the Council

- 49 The Council will need to develop new systems to administer localised benefits, i.e. CTB and Crisis Loans. Cabinet have considered a report that deals with the introduction of the local council tax support scheme (LCTSS).
- 50 The Social Fund (Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans) is often described as the ultimate safety net in the social security system. The two elements being abolished have helped the neediest people deal with emergencies or traumatic life events, such as a family member being unexpectedly taken into hospital, homelessness or escaping a violent relationship. Claimants include victims of domestic abuse, receiving money to buy furniture and white goods to set up new homes, or clothes for their children, after being forced to flee their partners with few or no possessions. Other beneficiaries include young people leaving children's homes or foster care, and those with chronic health conditions or disabilities who need aids or adaptations to stay in their own homes. The fund is not ring fenced at the moment with a number of charities calling for it to continue in its current form when administered by local authorities.
- 51 LCTSS and changes to SF are both expected to result in increased administration costs. There is likely to be an increase in demand for debt advice and representation services as a consequence of financial hardship.
- 52 There is the possibility that collection rates of Council Tax will fall. The Council will need to consider critical policy choices, for example, future eligibility criteria for CTB. This will involve balancing the priorities of tackling inequalities and supporting people most in need, with what is affordable. There are major finance risks associated with the CTB e.g. which year will be used as the baseline, problems that may arise with collection and if demand increases in the future, the Council will be directly responsible.
- 53 Furthermore, by splitting the administration of Housing and Council Tax Benefit complexity will be built into the system, in contradiction of the simplification aims of Universal Credit. From 2013 onwards the number of HB clients being paid by the Council will reduce as more people move into UC. The Council will have to manage this change.
- 54 By having a set amount of funding, pressure and risk on Council budgets will increase if demand is greater than originally thought and the Government is predicting an increase in demand as it becomes easier to claim.
- 55 Amalgamation of several benefits into Universal Credit will simplify administration and understanding in the longer term. However, the transition to new arrangements will be difficult with many claimants confused by the changes or unable to use new online claim processes. This could lead to people not claiming their full entitlement and also increased demand for advice and support. Communicating the changes

to local people will be of paramount importance. This will require the Council working in partnership with DWP and Jobcentre Plus to agree a communication plan, with back up support to assist claimants to understand and be clear about what they are entitled to within the new arrangements.

- 56 The introduction of the 'size criterion' seeks to put 'under-occupying' social housing tenants on an equal footing with those in the private sector in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA). One of the key implications placing pressure on the need for one bedroom accommodation is the under occupancy issue in the social sector and the shared room rate<sup>22</sup> changes in the private rented sector. The total number of people in under occupied properties in the county was 8392 in November 2011. This equates to 17.5 percent of the stock that is under occupied. The total number of people, estimated to be affected by the shared room rate is approximately 986. This breaks down by area as: Chester-le-Street 52; Derwentside 204; Durham City 64; Easington 269; Sedgefield 177; Wear Valley / Teesdale 220. This means:
- a) future development programmes may need to change as there are currently no plans to build one bedroom properties. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have confirmed that they are currently reluctant to fund new build on this type of property. In any event there would be a time delay between the externally stimulated demand for one bed properties and new build. Furthermore, if this materialised there would be a competing pressure on for example investment in our Decent Homes standard;
  - b) Asset Management Strategies currently in place for housing providers are recommending demolition/disposal of one bedroom outdated properties. These properties currently are low demand but with the changes to housing benefits there is likely to be an increase in demand for one bedroom properties. The direction is also contrary to our housing strategy of providing decent homes and increasing choice;
  - c) although the Council can offer priority in letting policies for those people affected by the changes, the Council simply does not have the one bedroom accommodation to move them into. The total stock for one beds in the social sector is under 25 percent. Furthermore there is a likely impact on the Council's Housing Solutions front line service due to people's inability to find or afford a home. Coupled with the lack of one bed social stock and restrictions to LHA in the private rented sector, affordable housing options for people will be limited. Linked with this is the potential increase in homelessness, which will place pressure on the existing temporary accommodation, costing about £40 per night. The Council budget is likely to come under pressure by this potential increase and there is great concern that suitable,

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<sup>22</sup> Medium rent for accommodation where a person has shared use of a kitchen and or bathroom



affordable housing options for some people affected by welfare reform are not available in the County so services would therefore struggle to offer a suitable solution;

- d) the Housing provisions element of welfare reform means that the Council may need to reconsider its housing strategy in order to respond to demand. Whilst there is a lack of one bedroom properties in the County there is even less shared housing. The Shared Room Rate will limit all people single, under 35 and renting privately to the cost of a shared property. This would be in the range of £45-55 per week.

### **Developing the Council's response to welfare reform**

57 The implications summarised above make the delivery of council services and the Council's priorities more important than ever. In particular, the focus of the council on improving the local economy needs to remain the highest priority. In addition, the council should seek to help more people into work.

58 Welfare reform will bring major change for the Council and its communities at a time when the Council is required to make significant savings of approximately £171.8 million up to 2016/17. In light of these challenges the following early actions have been identified:

- a) Introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2013: a separate report on this subject has already been considered by Cabinet (April 2012). Project management arrangements are in place to develop this scheme;
- b) Reform of Housing Benefit (inclusion in Universal Credit): A Housing Welfare Reform group has been established to consider the actions required for County Durham. The group works jointly with housing providers who are developing their own action plans in response to welfare reform. The aim of the group is to co-ordinate communication and training, share ideas and best practice, support housing providers in responding to welfare reform, monitor the impact and assist with establishing the wider economic case. The work of the group also involves communication with private landlords to establish their intentions in relation to the changes. Housing Providers are currently contacting people affected by the changes and general feedback is that people don't want to move. All housing staff have been trained as enquiries are being received. A mapping exercise is now complete which identifies those areas worst affected so that resources can be targeted effectively;
- c) Responding to community need: Work has begun to scope a brief that will enable the council to be more joined up in our response to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. This is intended to bring together the Council's approach to child poverty, financial inclusion, work with credit unions, providing a level of support for those people and families who end up in severe financial hardship, family focused interventions,

regeneration initiatives, employment strategies and approaches, and providing the most appropriate, advice, guidance and support for people (face to face services);

- d) Helping more people into work: The ongoing effects of the economic downturn, including reductions to public spending continue to impact on the availability of jobs for local residents. However, the Council's focus on the balance between preparing people for employment, strengthening employer engagement, and providing ongoing support for clients who are in work remains crucial to the challenge welfare reform will bring. Responses such as the Durham Apprenticeship Programme and implementing the 'Youth Contract' (launched April 2012) aimed at bringing forward new job opportunities to be filled, primarily, by 18-24 year olds, will be of paramount importance. Ongoing work with Job Centre Plus to help and advise customers to achieve their employment potential using the 'Get Britain Working Measures'. The council has secured £1.5 million from the current ESF Families with Multiple Barriers programme. This will deliver a joined up programme aimed at engaging residents and assisting with their progression into work.
- e) Regional collaboration through ANEC: the Council is working with other authorities, facilitated by ANEC to share approaches to welfare reform.
- f) Equality Impact Assessments: Equality impact assessments have been planned for all project activity beginning with, for example, the localisation of council tax support scheme.

## **Conclusion**

- 59 The Government's welfare reform agenda proposes major change to get people into work and off benefits. It is hugely complex and likely to have significant impact on individuals, families, the local economy and Council services.

## **Recommendations**

- 60 It is recommended that:
- a) further analysis of the Government's equality impact assessment is conducted in order to better understand the winners and losers in County Durham to better support a more targeted approach to respond to community needs; and in support of the development of the localisation of council tax support scheme;
  - b) the potential for collaboration with other local authorities in the North East, via ANEC, is explored;
  - c) work to identify how the Council can best support local communities is completed;

- d) project management arrangements for introducing the housing and localised council tax support scheme elements of welfare reform are completed;
- e) the Council's approach to job and wealth creation as part of the altogether wealthier priority is continued;
- f) a communications plan is developed to communicate the change welfare reform will bring for local communities, Members, partners, staff and MPs;
- g) arrangements are put in place to deal with the immediate requirements of customers at Council's customer service points with appropriate staff training;
- h) the council continues to analyse and monitor the impact of Welfare Reform on the communities of County Durham.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

### **Finance**

A 10 percent reduction in Council Tax Benefit (CTB) means a £5.5 million per year loss to the County on top of other public spending restrictions. Costs of implementation of welfare reform for systems and administration are not yet known, nor is the level of Government support for new localised services. The allocation to support the implementation of the Local Council Tax support scheme (LCTSS) and the Social Fund (SF) is not known at the present time. There are risks associated with the likely increase in costs from the anticipated increased take-up.

### **Staffing**

All staff involved in delivering frontline service will need to have a thorough understanding of welfare reform. Training and development for staff will be necessary.

When housing benefit function is transferred from the Council to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) there could be significant implications for staff in the Housing Benefit Service. The legal view at this stage from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is that the transfer of undertakings protection of employment (TUPE) will not apply.

### **Risk**

A number of risks associated with implementation of welfare reform will need to be identified, for example the development and financing of a LCTSS and SF scheme.

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

The Council will need to undertake an EIA of the changes required to meet the statutory requirements that welfare reform will introduce. Developing eligibility criteria for communities/individuals to access the Social Fund and the LCTSS are examples.

### **Accommodation**

None at this stage.

### **Crime and Disorder**

Increased levels of unemployment and possible reductions in benefits could lead to an increase in crime and disorder.

### **Human Rights**

None at this stage.

### **Consultation**

The Council will need to consult with the public, partners and other stakeholders on any future proposals it will be taking forward within the context of welfare reform.

### **Procurement**

None.

**Disability Discrimination Act**

In line with EIA above. There are specific proposals related to the Disability Living Allowance that will need to be considered as part of the EIA.

**Legal Implications**

Subject to legislation and associated regulations.

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**Cabinet**

**30 May 2012**

**Durham Tourism Management Plan  
2012-2016**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Ian Thompson Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic  
Development**

**Councillor Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and  
Economic Development**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To seek endorsement from Durham County Council for the Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-16.

**Background**

- 2 Durham has had a Tourism Management Plan since 2006. It was compiled by Visit County Durham in collaboration with the county's tourism industry and a range of partners, including the county council and the district councils, and became the blue print for development of the visitor economy in the county. The plan was based on a series of studies that provided intelligence about the county's product, its customers and its competitive position in England and the UK as well as significant input from across the county. It clearly described what all organisations, businesses and individuals in the county with an interest in the success of the visitor economy needed to focus on for future success.
- 3 The plan has been refreshed annually since 2006 in the light of new intelligence including visitor surveys in 2008 and 2010, annual economic impact surveys, a major customer segmentation study in 2007, a major study into the image and identity of the county to external audiences and benchmarking at a national level through Destination Performance UK.
- 4 The Durham Tourism Management plan is developed and monitored by the board of Visit County Durham. It has also been the subject of several presentations and discussions at the County Council's Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee.
- 5 In November 2011 Visit County Durham embarked on a programme of work designed to track progress against the original objectives of the Durham Tourism Management Plan, test the existing objectives and the approach to each to see if they were still valid and to discover if any new priorities had emerged since 2006.

- 6 The consultation took the form of an industry conference in November 2011 that was attended by 60 delegates, a series of presentations and discussions to relevant organisations and forums (14 separate events in total including meetings of the three AAPs that prioritise tourism) and a conference on rural tourism in March 2012 attended by 80 delegates as part of English Tourism Week.
- 7 The plan will be refreshed annually to take account of new and completed projects. In particular section 8, summary of specific actions, is designed to be a fluid and changing part of the plan.
- 8 In order to support delivery of the plan by the County Council, a Tourism Working Group will be established which will meet quarterly. Appropriate representation from across the County Council will be invited to join this group which it is hoped will assist in the co-ordination of activity to ensure a primary focus on the delivery of the key actions outlined in the DTMap.

### **Recommendations**

- 9 It is recommended that Durham County Council endorse the refreshed Durham Tourism Management Plan and adopt it as the plan for developing the county's visitor economy.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 10 The plan is based on marketing intelligence and benchmarking and has a very clear visitor focus.
- 11 The plan has been widely consulted on and sets out in a clear and focused way what the county needs to do to ensure continued success in developing its visitor economy.
- 12 Durham's approach to developing its visitor economy using this plan has been held up nationally, by Visit England, as an example of good practice and is one of several reasons why Durham has been selected as a primary destination by Visit England and anticipates future investment from the national level.

### **Background Papers**

Survey's and studies that are mentioned above are available from Visit County Durham.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. Durham County Council supports a strategic tourism team and invests around £0.8m a year in revenue expenditure on this team whose aim is to maximise tourism potential in County Durham. The delivery of the Tourism Management Plan actions is largely based on a range of private, voluntary and public sector partners working together and can include both financial and non-financial contributions. Private sector leverage is key to this and the County Council's main role is to act as a co-ordinating body to maximise inward investment from partners into Durham. Where direct financial support is proposed by the County Council itself to specific projects in the Plan, the appropriate financial approval will be obtained in line with the Councils budget framework before commitments are made.

### **Staffing**

Relevant staff will be invited to join the Tourism Working Group to be established in order to better support and co-ordinate activity within DCC to develop the visitor economy.

### **Risk**

None

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

None

### **Accommodation**

None

### **Crime and Disorder**

None

### **Human Rights**

None

### **Consultation**

The plan was heavily influenced by visitor market intelligence. It also went through a comprehensive consultation process with the following stakeholders:

- Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee
- Durham Attractions
- Visit County Durham Board
- Durham Hotels Association
- Durham Natural Environment Partnership
- County Durham Economic Partnership Rural Working Group
- County Durham Economic Partnership Business and Enterprise Working Group
- North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Discover Durham Travel Trade Attractions Group

- Durham County Council Strategic Investments Team
- Durham County Council Planners
- Visit County Durham staff
- Teesdale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Weardale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Durham City Area Action Partnership
- Durham Heritage Coast
- Durham University

**Procurement**

None

**Disability issues**

None

**Legal Implications**

None

# *This is* durham

Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-2016

Final Draft

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## 1. Context and background

The Durham Tourism Management Plan (DTMaP) is:

- the destination's plan which converts county, regional and national market research and strategies into a county based plan to grow the county's visitor economy.
- for all organisations and individuals in County Durham, and, where relevant, national bodies to help them understand what is being done, what needs to be done and how they can contribute to our success.
- managed by Visit County Durham, the organisation that coordinates the development of the visitor economy and manages and markets the destination.

## 2. The visitor economy vision for County Durham

'County Durham will offer a visitor experience that matches its outstanding natural landscapes and internationally famous built heritage. The visitor economy will support long term social, economic and environmental sustainability right across the county and be recognised by the county's residents as important to the quality of their lives.'

More specifically the vision for County Durham outlines that:

- by 2015 Durham will offer a visitor experience that matches or exceeds the best offered by England's premiere county destinations.
- the county will fulfil its potential as one of the North of England's lead destinations, attracting visitors to the region from across the UK and from target overseas markets.
- by 2020 the county's visitor economy will account for 17% of the county's economy.

## 3. The value of the visitor economy

### County Durham

- The visitor economy is currently worth over £659m to County Durham.
- 1.51 million overnight tourists visited County Durham in 2010, spending almost 4.2 million nights in the area.
- More than 16.1 million day visits were made in the area.
- Tourism supports 10,682\* full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in County Durham of which 8,572 are directly employed in the visitor economy.

*\*Currently under review in light of the conference and meetings study.*

### North East England

- In 2010 the North East attracted 8.6 million overnight visitors, an additional 100,000 on the previous year. Additionally 73 million day visits were made to the region.
- These visitors brought in £3.9 billion to the regional economy.
- These visitors support 63,273 FTE jobs in the region (4.5% of regional jobs) while the visitor economy contributes 5.9% to regional GVA (ONS).
- It is estimated that more than 10,000 businesses are supported by the visitor economy including over 3,000 accommodation businesses and 6,000 pubs, restaurants and cafes.
- Hotel occupancy stood at 69% in 2011 compared to 56% in 2003, while self-catering unit occupancy stood at 47% in 2011 compared to 43% (2003).

## England

- Taking the direct and indirect impact of tourism together, the tourism sector was worth £96.7bn in 2009, equivalent to around 8.2% of UK Gross Domestic Product.
- 2.2 million jobs are supported by tourism.
- In 2009, UK residents took 96.4m overnight trips spending £16.2b in the UK
- 25.5 million international visitors visited the UK in 2010, spending £14.5 billion. The top five inbound markets are USA, Germany, France, Irish Republic and Spain.
- England room occupancy rates in serviced accommodation stood at 66% in 2011. However, hotels have consistently higher occupancy rates than B&B's (69% and 49% in 2011 respectively).
- Visits to attractions increased by 3% from 2009 to 2010, with the strongest growth in visits to museums and galleries, and historic properties.

## 4. Durham's visitor economy priorities

As a destination, Durham focuses on agreed priorities and on the methods of delivery which can achieve the best results for the county. These priorities are a result of extensive visitor, market and product research and intelligence and are endorsed by:

- The Durham Tourism Management Plan (DTMaP) Committee made up of private and public sector visitor economy stakeholders from across the county.
- The Visit County Durham Board made up of private and public sector visitor economy stakeholders from across the county.
- The tourism industry conference.
- A range of visitor economy partners.

The following 8 priorities and methods of delivery have been identified and agreed as the most important areas of destination development:

- (1) Optimise the potential of Durham City** to attract visitors to the county, particularly staying visitors, by making it a viable 48 hour stay. Specifically through trying to attract and prompt investment in new and existing visitor attractions that will have national profile and recognition. The visitor offer needs more breadth and depth and improved quality in terms of both its leisure and business tourism product. The new Destination Development Plan for Durham City contains detailed actions to achieve this objective.
- (2) Increase spend by implementing a step change in the quality of the visitor experience post arrival**, so that the county attracts and satisfies the needs of higher spending visitors and that Durham competes nationally as a quality destination. Case studies show that improving quality, both physically and in terms of service, increases visitor spend and contributes to the profitability of tourism businesses. This can be achieved by aligning Durham with national policy in relation to quality of product and focusing on actions that improve customer service in visitor-facing occupations.
- (3) Develop local distinctiveness** by using the destination brand name 'Durham', its sub brands - Durham City, Vale of Durham, Durham Coast and the Durham Dales and its brand themes – history and innovation, people, location and connectivity. Visitor research shows that local distinctiveness plays a role in differentiating a

destination from its competitors and makes a significant contribution to a positive visitor experience.

- (4) Tackle seasonality by focusing on two areas of development: events and business tourism.** Specifically to invest in events that have potential for regional or national significance and which can be scheduled in the shoulder or off season and to invest in the conferencing and meetings sector to increase visits in the shoulder season and mid-week. Seasonality can prevent employers from investing in their staff and their products and this can impact negatively on the visitor experience.
- (5) Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally** by developing and marketing product with national resonance. Specifically to grow events and attractions which have national pulling power i.e. Lumiere, Durham Cathedral, Beamish Museum and Durham County Cricket Club. The lead attractors can spearhead other attractors in the roll out of the destination brand nationally to stimulate more first time staying visitors. Durham currently has a large proportion of repeat visitors from the local area.
- (6) Extend stay by optimising the potential of market town and town centres** to draw visitors into rural areas. Visitor research shows that Durham's towns hold significant appeal for visitors and can perform the dual role of attracting people out of the urban centre and providing a service centre for people on rural and coastal holidays. This can be delivered through the implementation of destination development plans for Barnard Castle, Stanhope, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street and Seaham.
- (7) Manage and maintain the public realm** taking into account the needs of visitors as well as residents in the county. "Easy win" elements in post arrival visitor satisfaction levels include robust cleaning regimes, appropriate signage and suitable toilet provision. This will help visitors to enjoy their whole experience and prevent public realm becoming the weak link in Durham's visitor offer. Durham County Council Neighbourhood Services policies are in place on these issues, but need to be translated into specific scheduled actions and activities.
- 8) Increase the contribution of Durham's rural areas to the overall value of the county visitor economy.** Through an audit of rural tourism assets to ascertain their scope, quality and potential economic value and projects to animate rural areas, so there is more to see and do. County Durham has the raw materials of a good rural tourism product, but it needs to be better understood by partners in the county, so it can be developed and then confidently marketed.

## 5. Areas of work which contribute to achieving our priorities

- Businesses improving their performance
- Providing visitors with information about the destination throughout the visitor journey
- Marketing the destination to existing and potential visitors
- Developing the product
- Ensuring that visitors have a good experience
- Developing the tourism and hospitality workforce

The priorities and areas of work are underpinned with:

- Partnership working wherever possible
- Research and market intelligence about the destination to help decision making
- Evaluating the performance of the visitor economy.

### Wise Growth

Underpinning all the objectives are the principles of sustainable tourism, particularly in a rural county where the natural landscapes and an historic city are central to our visitor offer. Sustainable tourism, now rechristened 'wise growth', uses a framework known as VERB, which ensures that development is balanced between the needs of the Visitor, the Environment, Residents and Businesses and delivers benefits for all.

## 6. County Durham's offer in 2012

- **Attractions:** There are approximately 70 visitor attractions in the county. The most visited are **Durham Cathedral (more than 600,000 visitors and worshippers in 2011)** and **Beamish (497,891 in 2011/12)**. Other attractions with significant visitor numbers over 20,000 in 2011 include:
  - Hardwick Park 477,000\* (\*Includes a high % of residents)
  - Locomotion 217,682
  - Hamsterley Forest 178,506
  - World Heritage Visitor Centre 169,000
  - Durham County Cricket Club 136,024
  - Adventure Valley 116,982
  - The Bowes Museum 114,891
  - High Force 50,594
  - Tweddle Farm 50,195
  - DLI 39,907
  - Raby Castle 27,120
  - Botanic Gardens 25,161
  - Barnard Castle 22,950
- **Natural assets:** County Durham has an abundance of natural assets. Key areas include the Durham Dales which incorporates part of the North Pennines (designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), the Durham Heritage Coast and a range of estates, parts of which are open to visitors, including Raby Estates which owns and operates High Force and other assets in the west. The Church Commissioners and Durham County Council own and operate recreational areas and parkland including the Auckland Castle Deer Park and Hardwick Park. County Durham also hosts a considerable Forestry Commission property in Hamsterley Forest. County Durham's reservoirs are another hidden gem with considerable visitor potential, including Derwent, Tunstall and Balderhead reservoirs.



- **Accommodation:** There are approximately 650 accommodation businesses with over 15,000 bed spaces\* (this includes seasonal university accommodation). This currently equates to approximately the following breakdown by type:  
Inspected and graded (282 Properties) Camping & Caravan Site 11, Campus 2, Guest Accommodation 75, Hostel 8, Hotel 26, Self-Catering 160.  
Not inspected (213 properties known) Camping & Caravan Site 5, Campus 2, Guest Accommodation 75, Hostel 9, Hotel 22, Self-Catering 100.  
*\*A survey of all County Durham's accommodation stock is currently underway and should be completed in Summer 2012. The study will audit Durham's assets, quality issues, identify gaps and make recommendations on market demand.*

- **History and heritage:** As a destination, County Durham has an impressive range and depth of Christian and industrial heritage. From Saints to Prince Bishops, Romans to Monks to mining, rail and 20<sup>th</sup> century history, Durham has many historic assets and layers. Durham also has a wide variety of historically significant churches including Escomb Saxon Church, St Mary the Virgin at Seaham, High House Chapel in Ireshopeburn, Ankers House St Mary & St Cuthbert in Chester-le-Street and Newbiggin Methodist Chapel.

- **Activity providers:** There are currently 34 activity providers across the county who provide tours, outdoor activities and a range of visitor services. The most current list is as follows:

Real Birder Tours	Wild North Discovery
Specialist Cycles	Hamsterley Forest Cycling
Wood N Wheels Cycle Hire	Explore Britain
Hury Valley Trout Fishery	Selset Reservoir Trout Fishery
Balderhead Reservoir Trout Fishery	Derwent Reservoir Trout Fishery
Sharpley Springs Fishery	South Causey Activities
Durham Climbing Centre	Wearsdale Off Road
Beamish Wild Ropes Activity Centre	Supreme Adventure Sports
Undersiege Paintball	Skydive Academy
Top Gear Indoor Karting	Fury Sports
Weardale Outdoor Centre	Massive Attack Paintballing
North of England Trike Tours	6 Blue Badge Guides
3 Green Badge Guides	Guided Tours NE England
Chrysalis Heritage	C4 Miles Holidays

- **Food and beverage:** There are several hundred visitor-facing food and drink businesses in the county. The offer is wide and varied in terms of scale, type and quality. 43 food and drink businesses have 'TasteDurham' accreditation which is a national standard assessment. These establishments have achieved one of two grades: quality assured or highest quality assured with some also acknowledged for their local produce.
- **Sports:** County Durham is home to Durham County Cricket Club which operates out of the Emirates International Durham Cricket Stadium and hosts international test cricket, county cricket, international and one-day events. Sedgefield Racecourse operates around 22 days a year. National cycling events such as the Halford's Road Race, the Big Bike Ride and the etape triathlon are recent additions to the sporting calendar. The county also offers around nine golf courses with mixed levels of access for visitors. Durham Regatta is one of the largest in the UK and is now in its 178<sup>th</sup> year.

- **Events and festivals:** The county has a growing programme of annual events that have regional pull complimented with a developing programme of signature events which now command national reputations. The annual programme comprises: 'Streets of' Festivals, Durham Brass Festival, the Regatta, the Book Festival, the Christmas Fair and the Bishop Auckland Food Festival. Signature events began in 2009 with Lumiere in Durham City, which was expanded in 2011 and the Durham Mystery Plays came in 2010. The British Library loan of the Lindisfarne Gospels will be the county's signature event for 2013. Key headline events have established an economic impact track record and robust case to justify the investment they require.
- **Retail centres:** Primary tourism retail centres are Durham City and Barnard Castle with additional sizeable centres in Bishop Auckland and Chester-le-Street. Durham City currently offers a range of national brands, but lacks a critical mass of independent headline stores and distinctive independent retailers as identified by the recent retail distinctiveness study. Barnard Castle is the next largest retail centre which has a good proportion of independent stores and antique shops. The county also has Dalton Park, a substantial and expanding out-of-town designer discount retail outlet in Murton. The retail offer has also been prioritised as an element of the destination development plans for Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Stanhope, Chester-le-Street, Seaham and Durham City.
- **Conference and meetings facilities:** The county's meeting facilities are mainly located in larger hotels. Durham University provides a range of venues taking meetings of between 15 and 400. In addition the Emirates International Durham Cricket Stadium, Gala Theatre, the Durham Centre and NetPark all have varying sizes of meetings facilities without attached accommodation.
- **Leisure walking and cycling:** There are a number of designated and branded walking and cycling trails, including the W2W through the Durham Dales, the award-winning Coast to Coast and the North Sea Cycle Route as well as the Durham Heritage Coast footpath, an impressive network of railway paths and a number routes across the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- **Key themes and experiences to take to market:** Durham is a vibrant, green, historical and cultural destination. With a World Heritage Site at its core as well as its nationally and internationally recognised fine landscapes, Durham has positioned itself as a destination of 'Historic, Green and Natural', 'Peace and Tranquillity', 'Hidden Gems', and 'Outdoor and Active'.
- **Durham's image and identity:** Durham is positioned and promoted as a visitor destination using the place brand '*This is Durham*'. This clear and cohesive destination brand, allows Durham to be consistent with all visitor facing marketing. Visitors will be presented with a tone of voice, fonts and imagery which optimise and reflect the true nature of Durham.
- **Durham as a regional tourism base?** Geographically, Durham City and County is ideally placed in the south of the region for north-bound visitors to use it as their launching point to enjoy both the county and region.

## 7. Gaps and challenges in the County Durham visitor offer.

Below is a list of gaps in the County Durham product. Not all of these gaps will be development priorities, but where they relate to our priorities, they are worth considering by organisations and individuals operating in Durham:

- **A critical mass of headline nationally recognised attractions in Durham City.** Leading premier league cities such as York, Bath, Oxford and Chester have more than one nationally recognised attraction and it is the critical mass of several headline attractions which will allow the city to graduate to the elite UK city breaks league.  
Relates to priority 1
- **Gardens, parks and public spaces:** In proportion to the size of the County Durham lacks or fails to exploit its gardens, parks, riverbanks and public spaces for the visitor economy. There has already been some considerable progress in this area at Hardwick Park, Chester-le-Street Riverside and the planned developments at Wharton Park. However, there are number of gardens and parks which are not reaching their true potential as both a visitor economy and residential assets. Durham also has the potential and raw materials to succeed as a green city destinations.  
Relates to priorities 1, 6 and 7.
- **Art galleries:** Despite considerable assets, many of which are in storage, art galleries are also at a premium. Durham City centre lacks a regionally or nationally significant gallery. Galleries are a mainstay attractor of leading destinations. Recognised gallery brands such as the Tate Modern (which have developed galleries beyond the capital) and the National Portrait Gallery (who have previously expressed interest) would help to grow a critical mass of attractions to establish Durham as a leading short break destination.  
Relates to priorities 1, 3 and 7
- **Family attractions:** Durham is gradually building its portfolio of family attractions - Beamish, Hall Hill Farm, Killhope, Adventure Valley, Bowes Museum, Beamish Wild, Locomotion and Diggerland, but the majority of the county's attractions are generally not perceived as family-focused and Durham is not currently viewed as a leading family destination.  
Relates to priorities 1 and 6
- **Key market and coastal towns:** Key towns have themselves identified challenges with products and facilities as outlined within the five market town Destination Development Plans for Stanhope, Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Seaham and Chester-le-Street. These are long term strategic plans which focus the towns to improving the visitor experience.  
Relates to priorities 2, 6 and 7
- **Quality 4-5 star hotels, boutiques hotels and good quality bed and breakfast provision:** Visitors require a range of accommodation and it is at this end of the accommodation scale that the greater economic impacts (stay, spend and employment) are achieved. Quality of bed and breakfast provision is sometimes patchy and the 2012 study should provide and insight into the scale and nature of this issue. High end B&Bs seem to be at a premium in the county.  
Relates to priority 1

- **A distinctive city retail offer:** A distinctive retail offer which motivates visitors to come to Durham for the same reason they choose Chester, York, Bath or Oxford. Like many cities and market towns around the country, there is a proliferation of the “clone high street” with chains and charity shops strangling the growth of independent and local outlets. Visitors are motivated by both the scale and range of the retail offer, but also by distinctive independent retailers which they can’t find at home and which they can recognise as consistent with belonging to Durham. Distinctive retail destinations can only evolve on the back of signature retail stores and it will be difficult for Durham to move forward without the arrival of a signature department store e.g. Fenwicks, John Lewis or Debenhams. A retail distinctiveness study has already been completed.  
Relates to priorities 1, 3 and 6
- **The Durham City conference and meetings market:** Durham City currently lacks a coordinated critical mass of quality conference assets and facilities in Durham City. Durham’s first detailed meetings and conference audit will be completed in Spring 2012. It will define the scope and potential of this high value, non-seasonal market.  
Relates to priorities 2, 3 and 4
- **Rural attraction products:** The county has a number of attractions which interpret and exploit the increasing demand for outdoor tourism – Weardale Outdoor Centre offers nature orientation and bush craft over 400 acres and the North Pennines coordinate a wide range of interpretive nature trails. Hamsterley Forest also offers a range of activities through the Forestry Commission. There are 25 rural tourism products and tours currently operating (see section 6). However the actual rural product is often raw, jaded or underdeveloped. The rural tourism assets are patchy and there is little understanding of the range, depth and economic value of rural tourism. There is a need for an audit of assets to ascertain scope, quality and economic potential of the county rural tourism portfolio. The county needs a better understanding of what it currently offers, what it doesn’t and what it needs to do before it can take the theme to market with confidence. If the rural offer can ‘raise its game’, market and entrepreneurial forces will pick up the baton, once they feel the basics are in place. There is an appetite for operators to expand into Durham from surrounding counties, if the county can ‘raise its game’.  
Relates to priority 8
- **Day extending:** The county often lacks products which encourage day extenders to stay longer and spend more. Product linkage and sustainable extended open times could address this. The offer can be sometimes disjointed for the visitors. Linked themed walks, joint ticketing or increasing organic business to business cross sector partnership working and signposting could help (i.e. attraction-restaurant or B&B-bar).  
Relates to priorities 2 and 6
- **Walking and cycling:** Durham County and City are blessed with a network of trails, but many of these require investment to bring them up to a standard which visitors expect i.e. Flass Vale. More could perhaps be made of Durham’s impressive former railway walks and routes.  
Relates to priorities 2 and 8

- **Evening economy and entertainment:** The county has a number of good entertainment venues. However in comparison to other heritage cities (Bath, York and Chester) and rural destinations (Yorkshire, Cumbria, Cheshire and Lincolnshire) the products are small in number. This limits both visitor day extending and evening economy potential. Durham required visitor economy products which allow the development of a tourism evening economy – events, evening guided walks/ghost walks, theatres, distinctive restaurants, early evening shopping and bars. This will translate into more overnight stays.  
*Relates to priorities 1 and 6*
- **National Trust and English Heritage properties:** Proportionate to the size of the county, Durham has only a limited number of these properties which can add again to the county's national profile. The county has three properties owned and operated by English Heritage.  
*Relates to priorities 5 and 6*
- **Quality restaurants:** Durham needs to increase the number of restaurants participating in quality schemes, particularly the Taste Durham quality restaurant scheme. This will ensure that the bar is raised on quality, service and local sourcing. Again, this should improve the day extending and staying overnight performance of the visitor economy.  
*Relates to priorities 2 and 6*
- **Nature tourism/species** – Durham has a wide range of species and nature assets. Black grouse, blue gentian, bats, rare butterflies, hay meadows and pastures, wooded tributary valleys and heather moorlands are just some of the things which are special about the county. This will also add to Durham's distinctiveness as a destination.  
*Relates to priorities 3 and 8*
- **A patchwork product** - Durham is currently a patchwork of incredible assets, neglected gems and confused ownership, responsibilities and funding arrangements. The component parts are still component parts rather than a holistic visitor and resident-facing coordinated whole. There are pockets of funded initiatives doing excellent work (North Pennines AONB, Durham Heritage Coast etc) but these are punctuated with assets requiring support and development (i.e. Wharton Park, Flass Vale, Castle Eden Dene) as well as underutilised assets (i.e. Tunstall Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir).  
*Relates to priorities 3 and 8*
- **Maximising the post arrival value of headline events** – Durham is gradually establishing itself as an event destination. Headline events can deliver business to tackle seasonality and bring new and overnight visitors with the potential to repeat and proliferate word of mouth marketing. However, major league events like Lumiere create high visitor expectations. To maximise these tactical opportunities, events need to also be optimised as an opportunity to showcase the destination as it is throughout the year. Other things to do, need to be evident or developed, if repeat staying visits are to be achieved. The destination needs to guarantee a high quality visitor experience. Retailers and restaurants need to take a proactive role in offering a rounded and welcoming visitor experience through extended openings and connectivity to the events. The public realm needs to be spotless to ensure that it isn't the weak link in the visitor experience.  
*Relates to priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*

- **Transport** – Connectivity continues to be a challenge. The Durham City offer is disparate and confusing for visitors. Existing services need to be engineered and branded to link assets and provide a welcoming visitor-facing service. Crook Hall, DLI and the Oriental Museum all suffer from locations which fall just beyond the main city honeypot. Equally, beyond the city, local services could be managed and coordinated to maximise sustainability and viability through offering routes and brands which appeal to both residents and visitors alike. The Hadrian’s Wall bus is often held up as an example of good practice in this area.  
Relates to priorities 1, 2, 6 and 8
- **Spending opportunities** – where possible new and existing developments should incorporate products which can be self-sustaining financially, be that a visitor centre, car parks or attractions. This can deliver viability in the long term, ensure responsiveness to market forces and trends and contribute to the overall economic impact of the visitor economy.  
Relates to priorities 1, 6 and 8
- **The visitor welcome, customer service and professionalism** – Visitor expectations and competition are increasing all the time. Durham and the North East are known for friendliness and openness. However, visitors expect more and visitor management, like any other consumer service or product, is a skill. Visitor economy skills and training opportunities should be pursued to ensure Durham can compete with industry standards. There is a correlation between offering good service and profitability and one weak link in the chain (perhaps a taxi driver having a bad day) can undermine the whole visitor experience.  
Relates to priorities 1, 2 and 8
- **Rural shows:** Durham has a range of county, (mainly agricultural) shows, mainly in the Durham Dales. Some attract sizeable audiences predominantly from within the county or within the immediate region. If their appeal could be broadened and their theme more populist and distinctive to Durham i.e. local produce, there may be some potential in this area. It may require cooperation, joint working and branding before they can realistically attract visitors from beyond the North East, but the Great Yorkshire Show is an example of how rural county shows can command a place on the national visitor calendar.  
Relates to priorities 6 and 8

## 8. Summary of key specific actions for the destination 2012-2016\*

Action	Priority	Delivery/Output	Lead/Champion	Support or stakeholders	Timeline
Implement the findings of the County Durham Accommodation survey.	1, 2, 3 & 5	Gaps and quality issues addressed and informing business support agencies, DCC planners and inward investment policies. Shaping DTMaP (IEP) as policy.	Private sector and Durham County Council (Regeneration & Development Team/Planners)	Hotels Association, B&Bs and all accommodation providers. VCD, Area Action Partnerships (AAPs), County Durham Economic Partnership Business & Enterprise Working Group.	2012-2016
Implement the findings of the Durham City Conference and Meetings Study.	1, 2, 4 & 6	Actions picked up by conference/meetings producers, business support agencies, DCC planning and inward investment policies and guiding. Embedded into DTMaP/IEP as policy.	Durham County Council. (Regeneration & Development Team/Planners). Durham University	VCD, AAPs, CDEP Business & Enterprise Group. Existing providers considering expansion. Potential investors.	2012-2016
Implement the findings of a rural tourism audit and activities appraisal as precursor to a rural tourism action plan.	8	Actions picked by rural tourism products. Key issues embedded into business support agencies, DCC planning and inward investment policies. Adopted as policy in DTMaP/IEP.	CDEP Rural Working Group and Natural Environment Strategy Group.	AAPs, VCD. Existing providers considering expansion. Potential investors.	2012-2013
Deliver and implement a visitor industry skills and training plan.	1, 2, 3 & 6	County-wide industry standards identified. Recruitment and adopted by 35% of registered visitor products by 2016.	Further Education Sector	Attractions, accommodation providers, restaurants, retailers. VCD, CDEP Business & Enterprise Working Group.	2012-2016
Participate in a Visit England pathfinder on Wise Growth implementation with 3 other destinations.	1, 2 & 6	To be agreed	Visit County Durham	CDEP Rural Working Group and Natural Environment Strategy Group.	2012-2013

Adoption of the Durham destination brand “This is Durham” by the industry and broadening the brand role out in place-marketing.	3 & 5	Increase industry use of the “This is Durham” brand identity in marketing channels from 50 partners to 150 by 2016 (tba).	Attractions, accommodation providers, retailers, restaurants and partners.	VCD.	2012-2016
Secure major National Trust Property and improve English Heritage activity.	5 & 6	Durham’s opens first National Trust property. English Heritage increases their activities.	DCC RED.		2013
Destination Development Plans phase 1 delivery and update/delivery on phase 2 as appropriate.	2 & 6	Phase 1 DDP action plans completed. Phase 2 action plans identified and delivered.	AAPs/DDP town steering groups.		2012-2016
Signature store attracted to the City.	1 & 5	Signature store (i.e. Fenwicks, Debenhams) opens by 2015.	DCC RED.		2015
Visitor economy established as a robust and valuable option on DCC property portfolio capital developments.	1, 3, 6 & 7	Visitor economy projects adopted and considered at same level as of economic potential as other sectors i.e. manufacturing, housing.	DCC RED.	DCC Durham County Council. (Regeneration & Development Team/Planners). Other key land and property owners such as Durham University, Durham Cathedral, private estates (i.e. Raby, Lambton).	2012-2013
Neighbourhood Service Plan commitment and adoption of visitor economy service levels on cleaning litter, signage & toilets.	1, 2, 5 7 & 8	A service plan which includes specific visitor economy actions, scheduling and targets for litter cleaning, signage & toilets.	DCC Neighbourhood Services.	DCC Neighbourhood Services, VCD.	2012

\*The Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee to guide on the implementation of the above.



## 9. County Durham's target visitor markets – Discoverers and Traditionals

By focusing on these groups of people who like our product and are already visiting in some numbers we are most likely to grow our visitors numbers and the value of our visitor economy. Visit County Durham uses a lifestyle visitor segmentation model used by Visit England. Wherever possible County Durham should seek to develop its product and gear marketing towards these two groups.

### Discoverers

- Independent individualists.
- Unlikely to be worried about what others might think.
- Little influenced by style/brand unless it represents their personal values.
- Value technology, new products, services and experiences.
- Function far out rates style as a purchase driver.
- High spenders on what they want, but intolerant of substitutes.
- Enjoy intellectual challenges but 'arts and culture' negatively perceived.
- Value good service – which means enabling them to do what they want.

12% of the GB population	47% between 25 and 44
26% over 55	High internet access
29% have children at home	55% married; 26% single
54% ABC1	70% took a holiday in last 3 years
85% car ownership	45% have a mortgage

### Traditionals

- Relatively self-reliant and independent.
- More likely to hold traditional values.
- Unlikely to justify spending on expensive alternatives.
- Brand is not a key purchase driver but the preferences they do have will tend to value more traditional established brands.
- Functionality is far more important than style and individuality.
- Value, and will pay for, good service, which for them means recognition and individual attention.
- Live life at a relaxed pace. Enjoy intellectual challenges, arts and culture.

10% of the GB population	Older profile; 73% over 45
53% over 55	57% with internet access
21% with children at home	51% married or living as married;
28% widowed/sep/divorced	43% C1C2; 36% DE
41% retired/31% work full time	58% overseas holiday (3 years)

Durham also attracts a very high percentage of Functionals, who need to be encouraged to stay longer and spend more. Functionals are:

- 
- Very price driven and value functionality strongly over style.
- Have very traditional values.
- Not prepared to pay for fashion, style or 'individuality'.
- Not early adopters of new ideas but are interested in new experiences, and happy to try things new to them.
- Enjoy intellectual challenges, traditional 'arts and culture'.
- Very resistant to spending.
- Expect good service rather than something they pay extra for.

9% of the GB population	63% over 45 years
50% married	27% separated or widowed
48% working full time	25% retired
Average income (£20K-£30K)	High frequency of internet usage

## 10. The DTMaP Investment Evaluation Process (IEP)

An integral part of the Durham Tourism Management Plan, the Durham Tourism Management Plan **Investment Evaluation Process** shapes and supports new and existing tourism projects, particularly capital projects. It enables proposers at a very early stage to understand how to ensure that their proposal is appropriate to the development of County Durham as a visitor destination and how they can shape and evolve their proposal to maximise support from a variety of agencies.

### How it helps shape development and activity

Using a set of criteria in two easy to navigate forms, the DTMaP process identifies issues that proposers need to think about when developing their ideas. By using the criteria, proposers are forewarned of the criteria most support agencies and funding bodies relate to and are able to focus on the key issues relating to tourism development. Visit County Durham staff will assist the proposer to access supporting evidence and materials and support proposers through a two stage process.

#### DTMaP Criteria

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| - Strategic Fit                        | - Evidence of Need           |
| - Return on Investment/Value for Money | - Viability                  |
| - Deliverability                       | - Appropriateness of Funding |
| - Evaluation and Monitoring            | - Sustainability             |
| - Measures of Success (VICE)           | - Quality                    |
| - Contingency Plans                    |                              |

Once the project proposer completes the first two stages, Visit County Durham will suggest a positioning level for the project to the DTMaP Committee. The committee will then agree a level for the project as it is presented in its current format. These levels are graded as:

**Level 1** - Project has great potential, meets the criteria and will enhance the tourism product within the county.

**Level 2** -Project has some potential, meets some of the weighted criteria and some of the other criteria. Requires further work to become a level 1 project.

**Level 3** -Does not meet the weighted criteria and other criteria, requires further work to become a level 2 or redirection to another sector.

At this stage, depending on the level agreed, there are several potential benefits

- On completion of the DTMaP process, most proposers should be in a stronger position to progress projects which are more customer and market focused, more viable and sustainable and which fit strategically with county and regional plans.
- Essentially, the DTMaP process allows project developers to a) assess their strategic fit, b) access project development guidance, and c) benefit from informed signposting to a variety of support agencies.

## **11. Partners and consultees involved in the development of the 2012-2016 Durham Tourism Management Plan**

- Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee
- Durham Attractions
- Visit County Durham Board
- Durham Hotels Association
- Durham Natural Environment Partnership
- County Durham Economic Partnership Rural Working Group
- County Durham Economic Partnership Business and Enterprise Working Group
- North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Discover Durham Travel Trade Attractions Group
- Durham County Council Strategic Investments Team
- Durham County Council Planners
- Visit County Durham staff
- Teesdale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Weardale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Durham City Area Action Partnership
- Durham Heritage Coast
- Durham University

## 12. The story so far - DTMaP delivery by the destination between 2007-2011

Priorities	Progress
<p><b>ONE</b> Optimise the potential of Durham City to attract visitors to the county and the North East, particularly staying visitors, by making it a viable 48 hour stay. Specifically by investing in new visitor attractions that will have a national profile and recognition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two headline attraction feasibility studies completed.</li> <li>- Retail distinctiveness study completed.</li> <li>- The Wolfson Gallery.</li> <li>- Heart of the City developments i.e. Market Square.</li> <li>- Opening of the World Heritage Site Visitor Centre.</li> <li>- New Destination Development Plan for Durham City</li> <li>- The opening of the Radisson Blu. Interest from other groups.</li> <li>- Review of Millennium Place.</li> <li>- Durham Cathedral development plans.</li> <li>- The emergence of Crook Hall.</li> <li>- In 2010, the readers of Condé Nast's Traveller magazine voted Durham City the 'Best city in the UK'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>TWO</b> Increase spend by implementing a step change in the quality of the visitor experience post arrival so that the county attracts and satisfies the needs of higher spending visitors and that Durham competes nationally as a quality destination. Specifically by aligning Durham with national policy in relation to quality and focusing on actions that improve customer service in visitor-facing occupations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase accommodation providers in national quality scheme.</li> <li>- Increase in the number of attractions in national scheme.</li> <li>- Taste Durham quality restaurant scheme launched in 2008 now has 60 participants.</li> <li>- Know Your Durham Coast Scheme –81 Workshop participants total, 38 Ambassadors, Bronze Certificate awards 68 including Ambassador's, Silver 8 and Gold 2.</li> <li>- Know Your North Pennines Scheme – 59 individuals and 41 businesses benefited from a total of 196 training days.</li> </ul>
<p><b>THREE</b> Develop local distinctiveness in line with the image and identity of the county utilising the destination name 'Durham' and its brand themes – history and innovation, people and location, and connectivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launch and roll out of Durham's first destination brand,</li> <li>- Four distinctive Durham areas consistent with the new brand are now promoted to visitors; these are Durham Dales, Vale of Durham, Durham City and Durham Coast.</li> <li>- Five market towns now have a Destination Development Plan process which outlines their unique selling points.</li> </ul>

<p><b>FOUR</b> Tackle seasonality by focusing on two areas of development: events and business tourism. Specifically to invest in events that have potential for regional or national significance and can be sited in the shoulder or off season and invest in conferencing facilities to increase visits in the shoulder season/mid-week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signature Events: Lumiere 2009 and 2011, Mystery Plays. Lindisfarne Gospels 2013, The Ashes 2013.</li> <li>- International Cricket at Chester-le-St.</li> <li>- Annual programme of events developed.</li> <li>- City feasibility for conference and meetings market underway.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FIVE</b> Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally by developing products with national resonance. Specifically to grow events which have national pulling power.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lumiere 2009 &amp; 2011 and the Lindisfarne Gospels 2013.</li> <li>- Two feasibility studies on headline attractions delivered.</li> <li>- The North Pennines AONB, became the first area in Britain to be awarded the status of European Geopark. European and Global Geoparks are supported by UNESCO.</li> <li>- Auckland Castle has been recognised as an attraction of potential national significance and talks are currently being held with the National Trust, the Church Commissioners and other parties.</li> <li>- Durham Heritage Coast - UK Landscape Award Winners 2010 and Special Mention by the Council of Europe for the European Landscape Awards 2011.</li> <li>- Durham Cathedral was voted "Britain's Favourite Building" in a survey of the best and worst of British architecture. It won more than 51% of votes cast by BBC Radio 4's listeners.</li> <li>- 2<sup>nd</sup> in the "Best UK City" Guardian 2011 Travel Awards.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SIX</b> <i>Extend stay by optimising the potential of town centres</i> to draw visitors into rural areas and provide service centres to visitors staying in rural locations. Specifically develop destination development plans and ensure their implementation for Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Durham City, Seaham and Stanhope.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Destination Development Plans delivered for Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Stanhope, Seaham and Chester-le-Street</li> </ul>
<p><b>SEVEN</b> Manage and maintain the public realm taking into account the needs of visitors and county residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working with local Area Action Partnership, Destination Development Plan towns &amp; LEADER partners across Durham.</li> <li>- Regeneration Statement/County Durham Plan.</li> </ul>

## Notes

**Cabinet**

**30 May 2012**

**Visit County Durham Business and  
Operational Plan 1 April 2011 – 31 March  
2014**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic  
Development**

**Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration  
and Economic Development**

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**Introduction**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the updated Visit County Durham Business and Operational Plan 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2014.

**Background**

- 2 Visit County Durham (VCD) is the tourism management agency for County Durham working on behalf of businesses and public agencies. It came into being on 1 April 2006 and was the subject of a report to Cabinet in 2010 regarding changes to structural arrangements following the removal of funding from One North East for tourism activity.
- 3 The structural arrangements involved Durham County Council transferring the staff from Visit County Durham to its employment to retain their expertise in developing the tourist economy. The Council also aligned budget to this team. The company, Visit County Durham, provides essential links with the private sector and through the Board, sets the strategic direction for the visitor economy.
- 4 With strategic responsibility for tourism, Visit County Durham performs the functions of destination management and marketing in the county to grow the visitor economy using the eight priorities/objectives contained in the Durham Tourism Management Plan (DTMaP). These objectives are:
  - a. Manage and maintain the public realm for visitors;
  - b. Optimise the potential of Durham City making it a viable 48 hour stay;
  - c. Increase spend by implementing a step change in the quality of the visitor experience;
  - d. Develop local distinctiveness in line with the destination brand;

- e. Tackle seasonality by focusing on events and business tourism;
  - f. Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally;
  - g. Extend length of stay by optimising the potential for the county's market towns and town centres;
  - h. Increase the contribution of Durham's rural areas to the overall value of the county's visitor economy.
- 5 Underpinning all the objectives are the principles of sustainable tourism, particularly in a rural county where the natural landscapes and an historic city are central to our visitor offer. Sustainable tourism, now rechristened 'wise growth', uses a framework known as VERB, which ensures that development is balanced between the needs of the **V**isitor, the **E**nvironment, **R**esidents and **B**usinesses and delivers benefits for all.
- 6 The strategic framework in which Visit County Durham operates is set at the national level by the Government's Tourism Policy, issued in March 2011 and is complemented by Visit England's strategy for England published in 2010 that sets out four objectives to guide activity at the national, regional and sub-regional levels:
- a. To increase England's share of global visitor markets;
  - b. To offer compelling destinations of distinction;
  - c. To champion a successful, thriving tourism industry; and
  - d. To facilitate greater engagement between the visitor and the experience.
- 7 Although the national strategy has yet to be translated into priorities for the North East of England by the new Local Enterprise Partnership for the purposes of the Visit County Durham Business plan it is assumed that regional priorities for the visitor economy established by One North East will be adopted by the new LEP, which identifies two regional objectives:
- a. To improve visitor yield; and
  - b. To reduce seasonal and spatial disparities in visitor arrivals and receipts.
- 8 The Visit County Durham business plan was presented to the VCD Board on 10th April 2012 and formally agreed.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

- 8 It is recommended that Cabinet endorse Visit County Durham's Business and Operational Plan for the period 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2014.

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**Contact: Melanie Sensicle Tel: 03000 261219**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance –**

As part of its commitment to developing the tourist economy, Durham County Council has employed and retains staff originally employed by the company, Visit County Durham. It has aligned a budget to this team for the development of the visitor economy. Some limited funds are grant funded to the company under the terms of a grant agreement to cover its independent functions. The terms of this grant involve compliance with a number of objectives which are closely monitored by Durham County Council.

### **Staffing –**

There are no staffing implications from this report

### **Risk –**

Any identified risk to be included in a Risk Register with the impact and mitigation noted.

### **Equality and Diversity –**

N/A

### **Accommodation –**

N/A

### **Crime and Disorder –**

N/A

### **Human Rights –**

N/A

### **Consultation –**

Consultations will be undertaken as and when required through the appropriate channels.

### **Procurement –**

Key projects as identified and subject to DCC protocols.

### **Disability Issues –**

N/A

### **Legal Implications –**

This report outlines the legal relationship between the company, Visit County Durham and the County Council.

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# Visit County Durham

Business and Operational Plan 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2014

**February 2012**

Melanie Sensicle  
Chief Executive  
February 2012

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## 1. Context

The vision for County Durham as a visitor destination is:

By 2015 Durham will offer a visitor experience that matches or exceeds the best offered by England's premiere county destinations.

The county will fulfil its potential as one of North East England's lead destinations, attracting visitors to the region from across the UK and from target overseas markets.

By 2020 the county's visitor economy will comprise 17% of the county's economy making a significant contribution to improved economic performance.

Achieving this vision at a time of reducing investment and significant change will be challenging. However County Durham has been bucking regional and national trends in recent years and in 2010 was the fastest growing destination in the North East in terms of volume and value so there is room for optimism.

In order to achieve this vision, the county's visitor economy is developed using The Durham Tourism Management plan (DTMaP) that contains 8 priorities/objectives:

- 1 Optimise the potential of Durham City making it a viable 48-hour stay;
- 2 Increase spend by implementing a step change in quality of the visitor experience;
- 3 Develop local distinctiveness in line with the destination brand;
- 4 Tackle seasonality by focusing on events and business tourism;
- 5 Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally;
- 6 Extend length of stay by optimising the potential the county's market towns and town centres;
- 7 Manage and maintain the public realm for visitors;
- 8 Increase the contribution of Durham's rural areas to the overall value of the county's visitor economy

Underpinning all the objectives are the principles of sustainable tourism, particularly in a rural county where the natural landscapes are a major asset and our heritage city is a national attractor. Both are central to our visitor offer. Sustainable tourism, or 'wise growth', uses a framework known as VERB, which ensures that development is balanced between the needs of the Visitor, the Environment, Residents and Businesses and delivers benefits for all.

The strategic framework in which Visit County Durham operates is detailed in Appendix 1.

***From April 2012, Visit County Durham will become responsible for place marketing, promoting County Durham as a place in which to live, work, invest, study and to visit. A place marketing framework and associated action plan will be created through 2012***

## 2. Purpose

Visit County Durham plays a central role in helping to achieve the vision for the county's visitor economy by contributing to the Durham Tourism Management Plan's eight objectives. Our purpose can be summed up as:

To create wealth by providing support and opportunity to everyone working in the county's visitor economy.

### 3. Role, approach and functions

Visit County Durham's role is to provide a focus for development of the county's visitor economy, supporting a very wide range of individuals and organisations to contribute to achieving the priorities in the Durham Tourism Management Plan. We carry out activity that can be broadly termed destination management.

Our approach is to be visitor-focused at all times. What the visitor to the county understands, needs and expects from a visit must be clearly understood and acted upon in order to attract people to visit and ensure we provide the best possible visitor experience. Our visitor focus has been translated into the mantra 'it's all about our visitors'.

We undertake seven core functions and for each act as either as a 'facilitator', bringing people and organisations together to make things happen; or as a 'deliverer', undertaking activity directly and running projects.

Our seven core functions are:

1. Strategic Direction - to provide effective leadership for the sector and manage the framework for visitor economy development
2. Research, market intelligence and performance evaluation – to take an objective, evidence-based and visitor-focused approach to the development of the visitor economy
3. Representation and communications – to represent the county regionally and nationally and in particular the interests of the tourism industry
4. Stakeholder relations and networks – to work in partnership with the full range of public and private organisations that impact on the visitor economy and facilitate joint working within and between the sectors that make up the visitor economy
5. Business engagement and support – to provide support, advice and networking opportunities for businesses to help them improve their performance
6. Destination marketing and visitor information management – to communicate the county's offer to potential visitors and ensure that visitor's information needs are met
7. Product development – to support and deliver initiatives that will improve the visitor experience

A summary of how we apply these functions to the Durham Tourism Management Plan objectives is provided below.

*Objective 1: Optimise the potential of Durham City making it a viable 48-hour stay*

Significant capital development is required to deliver on this priority from both the public and private sector. The visitor offer needs more breadth and depth in terms of both its leisure and business tourism product as well as an improved quality of existing product. Visit County Durham's contribution is to support, and where necessary initiate, visitor oriented regeneration projects including new visitor attractions, meetings facilities and major festivals and events as well as support partners who own and manage product to develop and improve the offer.

*Objective 2: Increase spend by implementing a step change in quality of the visitor experience*

Case studies show that improving quality, both physically and in terms of service, increases visitor spend and contributes to the profitability of tourism businesses. Visit County Durham's contribution to improving quality across the county is to lead on all tourism specific quality initiatives and support partners that are delivering quality improvement in visitor related sectors such as retail and food and drink. Provision of good quality information post arrival through a range of traditional channels and interactive technologies will make a major contribution to this priority - our contribution to improving service is to support partners to deliver visitor welcome activity.

*Objective 3: Develop local distinctiveness in line with the destination brand*

Visitor research shows that local distinctiveness plays a role in differentiating a destination from its competitors and makes a significant contribution to a positive visitor experience. Visit County Durham's contribution to this objective is brand development and management, creating and supporting brand champions throughout the county, developing the brand tool kit and promoting its use, growing the county's on-brand image bank and ensuring that we promote the brand through all our destination marketing work. The place brand and the four visitor-focused geographical areas (Dales, Vale, City and Coast) are central to achieving this objective.

*Objective 4: Tackle seasonality by focusing on events and business tourism*

As a principally rural destination, Durham faces the challenge of seasonality, particularly in the Dales where the influence of the university-driven VFR market is less apparent. Seasonality can prevent employers from investing in their staff and product which impacts negatively on the visitor experience. Solutions include planning the county's events calendar to stretch the tourist season into the shoulder and off seasons and supporting the growth of business tourism which fills the gaps that leisure tourism leaves. Visit County Durham's contribution is to play an active part in the planning and delivery of events, utilising festivals and events in the planning and delivery of destination marketing and supporting the county's venues to grow our share of the meetings market. We also aim to grow product for the meetings market.

*Objective 5: Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally*

Durham is becoming better known in the UK and the city in particular is more often placed in the top ten UK heritage destinations than previously. However, there is still work to do to put Durham into the list of 'must visit' destinations for the majority of UK residents and our visitor profile remains dominated by a large percentage of repeat visitors from the local area. To increase the economic contribution of visitors in a sustainable way we must grow our national profile to attract more first time staying visitors. Visit County Durham's contribution is two-fold: to deliver destination pre-arrival marketing for the county including supporting Visit England in national marketing activity; and help develop new products, both events and infrastructure, that have national recognition and pulling power.

*Objective 6: Extend length of stay by optimising the potential of the county's market towns and town centres*

Visitor research shows that market towns hold significant appeal for visitors and can perform the dual role of attracting people out of urban centres and providing a service centre for people on rural holidays. Visit County Durham's contribution is to provide the visitor-focused content for town development plans, support towns, especially market towns that have visitor specific action plans and deliver those elements of the action plans where we are best placed to do so. We will also support wider place making developments to ensure that where appropriate they take the visitor into account. [this may change in line with changes to the Durham Tourism Management Plan]

#### *Objective 7: Manage and maintain the public realm for visitors*

This function is delivered principally by the county's unitary authority, Durham County Council and by landscape management partnerships. At a more local level public realm is a concern of town council's, parish council's, community groups and area action partnerships. Visit County Durham's contribution is to support the authority and other partners by providing market intelligence so that the needs of the visitor can influence public sector planning and investment and ensure that the needs of the visitor are clearly articulated and understood by members and officers and taken into consideration across the range of policies, strategies and functions that impact on the visitor economy.

#### *Objective 8: Increase the contribution of Durham's rural areas to the overall value of the county visitor economy*

Ninety percent of Durham is rural (as defined by DEFRA) and, in common with other rural areas of England, tourism plays a vital role in creating jobs and sustaining rural communities. Research shows that both the Durham Dales and the Durham Heritage Coast benefit less from tourism than the city or the vale (the county's central corridor). Yet both are major assets for the county and offer opportunities to people seeking rural short breaks, places to walk and cycle and locations for main holidays. Visit County Durham's contribution to this priority is to ensure that the evidence base for rural development is as robust as in urban areas (which often easier to quantify and analyse), to support the landscape management partnerships to develop visitor-friendly policies, strategies and action plan and to play an active part in a range of rural-focused groups that are seeking to sustain rural communities.

## **4. Activity**

Visit County Durham's action plan describes more precisely what we will do in 2012-13 to contribute to the delivery of the Durham Tourism Management Plan. These are presented as a table, Appendix 2. Each action relates to one of our 7 core functions.

## **5. Company structure**

Visit County Durham is a third sector organisation that operates as a partnership. The context in which we work is provided in Appendix 1.

### **Leadership**

Visit County Durham's CEO provides leadership for the organisation's activities and directs people, partnerships and resources accordingly. She also leads within Durham County Council on the visitor economy, represents the interests of tourism in related county-focused partnerships and supports the Board.

The Visit County Durham Board complements the CEO by providing strategic direction, and, critically, ensuring the organisation is responding to the needs of our visitors and stakeholders. The Board brings with it a level of objectivity and independence.

Developing and managing the county's tourism management plan is a key role for Visit County Durham and one that is endorsed and valued by our partners and stakeholders. The Durham Tourism Management Plan is managed by the Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee which comprises private sector directors of the company, co-opted members with specialist skills and knowledge, senior officers from Durham County Council and the development staff of Visit County Durham. It is chaired by Visit County Durham's CEO.

### **Executive**

The team is 21 strong and divided into five divisions (see Appendix 3 for staff structure).

The destination marketing function is embedded in the place marketing team.

### **Visit County Durham Board**

Visit County Durham's board consists of 10 directors comprising a private sector chair, Visit County Durham's chief executive, 6 private sector non-executive directors (one of whom is vice chair) and 2 public sector non-executive directors. All private sector non-executive directors are selected according to Nolan principles based on their experience, expertise and skills relevant to the work of Visit County Durham. The two public sector non-executives are appointed as of right and are the County Council's cabinet portfolio holder for Economic Development and Regeneration and the Corporate Director for Regeneration.

The board meets 5 times each year with additional, extraordinary meetings as required. Directors are also members of the Board's Audit/Remuneration/Nominations/Durham Tourism Management Plan committees.

The company seeks to comply with the UK Combined Code of Corporate Governance as well as the principles set out by the Nolan Committee. All board members are expected to assist in such compliance.

## **6. The Partnership**

Visit County Durham adopts a partnership approach to all of its functions. Since its inception in 2006 Visit County Durham has established or joined coalitions of organisations and individuals from the private and public sectors who agree to work together for a common aim or a set of compatible aims, and who share resources and responsibilities and agree to work in a co-operative and mutually supportive fashion. A complete list of all the groups, forums, organisations that Visit County Durham staff are members of is provided as Appendix 4.

### **SUB REGIONAL**

#### **County Durham Economic Partnership**

Visit County Durham is a member of the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) which comprises over 50 public, private and voluntary sector organisations involved in the economic development and regeneration of the County. Through membership of the partnership Visit County Durham seeks to influence economic strategy and policy, promoting the opportunity for economic success that the visitor economy presents and supporting partner organisations to contribute to the development of the county's tourism offer.

Visit County Durham staff are members of all but two of the Economic Partnership's working groups and focus our staff resources on three in particular: the Business and Enterprise Working Group and the Place Shaping Working Group and the Rural Working Group.

As a partnership itself, Visit County Durham performs the function of a 'Working Group' of the Economic Partnership. We endeavour to assist our partners to recognise the potential of tourism within their own context, and in turn stimulate collective leadership to maximise its future potential. (See Appendix 5 for Visit County Durham's position within the Economic Partnership structure.)

The County Durham Economic Partnership is one of five thematic partnerships that work towards achieving the objectives of the County Durham Partnership. It's remit is wealth creation.



## **Cultural Partnership**

The CEO of Visit County Durham is a member of the county's Cultural Partnership Board. Two private sector directors are also members of this board in their capacity as leaders of their own organisations. The CEO also provides the link between the Cultural Partnership Board and the Economic Partnership Board.

The Cultural Partnership comprises a board of 10 led by an independent chair that in turn supports a wider forum of many of the county's cultural organisations. The county's cultural programme is an important component of the visitor offer.

Visit County Durham convenes, chairs and facilitates the county's events forum, circa 70 members, who are also members of the Cultural Partnership.

## **Durham County Council**

Durham County Council, following central government cuts, employed the staff originally employed by Visit County Durham. The Council has aligned a budget to develop the County's visitor economy. The pool of specialist expertise ensures that staff with relevant knowledge, skills and expertise in developing the visitor economy, continues to exist.

The company provides essential links with the private sector and, through the Board, sets the strategic direction for the visitor economy. This arrangement ensures that the approach to the county's visitor economy is a true public/private partnership. The company's CEO is a member of the council's economic development management team. (See Appendix 6 which shows Visit County's Durham's position within Durham County Council's structure).

Senior county council officers are members of the Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee and both the Corporate Director for Regeneration and Economic Development and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development are company Board Members.

Support for elected members is provided by the Chief Executive principally through the Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee but also in a number of subject specific areas and ad hoc briefings and meetings.

## **Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)**

Area Action Partnerships act as a conduit between local communities and Durham County Council in the delivery of services to enable local people to make decisions about their area and lead on local action through their associated locality budgets. There are 14 partnerships, each with a Board made up of elected members from organisations such as the county council, town and parish councils, health, police and fire brigade, community and voluntary groups, and the public. In addition, each AAP has a number of working groups that focus on tighter geographical areas or specific areas of interest. Visit County Durham works with the AAPs that have identified tourism as a local priority (three in total) attending meetings and providing support to the AAP in the form of information, advice and market intelligence.

## **Destination Management Partners**

Five County Durham towns have, with the help of Visit County Durham, produced Destination Development Plans, to help realise their potential as visitor destinations. A sixth for Durham City will be published in spring 2012. The plans are implemented directly or provide visitor economy content for broader town plans. The county's Area Action Partnerships and development partnerships such as the Barnard Castle Vision, as well as dedicated tourism leadership groups coordinate, deliver and monitor the plans. Visit County Durham is a major

partner for each leadership group though we are not members. We participate in meetings and deliver activity where we are best placed to do so.

The development of the city's peninsula is under the remit of the World Heritage Site Management Committee and its two principal institutions, Durham Cathedral and Durham University. Visit County Durham's Chief Executive is a member of the committee and Visit County Durham leads on the strand of the WHS management plan concerned with audience development.

Rural and coastal development and conservation is handled through a range of organisations from the Durham Heritage Coast Partnership and the North Pennines AONB to the Leader+ partnership groups. Visit County Durham has close working relationships with the county's landscape management partnerships. We are members of each and attend their main meetings. We are a delivery partner for the Heritage Coast partnership on visitor economy development. We are also on the LAGs (Leader Action Groups) for both East and West Durham Leader + acting as advisors on the visitor economy and commenting on tourism projects that are submitted to the programme for funding. In many instances we act as a mentor to project proposers, helping to shape their projects where they are tourism related.

## **BUSINESS NETWORKS**

### **The Durham Business Service and the business support network**

Business Durham is a new service from Durham County Council that brings together a range of functions into a single unit that will lead on inward investment, business support to companies from start-up to high growth whilst complying with State Aid rules and managing business space owned by the authority. Visit County Durham supports the Durham business service through its place marketing function (see page 1). Visit County Durham, in particular development and industry services staff, team engages with the wider business support network, including the North East Chamber of Commerce and the Enterprise Agencies, principally through the Business and Enterprise Working Group (see page 7). Our purpose in working with the business support network is to ensure that the needs of tourism businesses are considered by the network and that tourism businesses know about and can access the support that business support organisations provide.

### **Industry Sector Groups**

VCD encourages joint working in the tourism business community and has established five industry sector groups to work together on a range of business improvement initiatives as well as to take a collaborative approach to developing and marketing the county. The following networks have been established and are facilitated and chaired by Visit County Durham:

- Durham Attractions Group
- Durham Events forum
- Durham Marketing Group

The following networks are supported by Visit County Durham either as investing members or as advisors:

- Durham Hotels Association
- Discover Durham

## **THE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

It is difficult to be precise about the size of the tourism industry in the county. It depends on which sectors are included in the tally. The core tourism business sector comprises the following:

- 650 accommodation providers
- 70 visitor attractions
- 20 activity providers

In addition there are approximately 250 visitor facing eating and drinking establishments, 47 transport providers, a significant number of evening economy businesses (bars, pubs, clubs, theatres) and a very wide range of event providers – from those staging nationally important festivals to community based carnivals. All Visit County Durham staff help to engage with the tourism industry and to manage our relationships with tourism businesses. Our industry services team takes the lead.

### **Tourism Associations**

Durham has five established tourism associations:

- The Weardale Visitors Network is the only established visitor-focused network that comprises mainly tourism businesses. They meet monthly.
- The Upper Teesdale Tourism Association is a new network for 2011.
- Teesdale Marketing is a private sector association that has an interest in tourism and delivers tourism projects for the dale, though its membership is much broader than just tourism businesses.
- Middleton Plus is similar in composition and purpose to Teesdale Marketing.
- Destination Seaham is a new grouping of people and businesses dedicated to driving delivery of the town's destination development plan.

Visit County Durham provides information and support, attends meetings and helps to link existing and new projects together through the associations.

### **Visitor Information Network**

In 2011-12 Visit County Durham established a new network in the county focused on delivering quality information to visitors so that people are encouraged to stay longer and spend more in our economy.

The network will launch in April 2012 and comprises 14 level 1 information partners and 14 level 2 partners plus the existing Visit County Durham contact centre. The 28 partners in the network range from private sector businesses such as Dalton Park and community facilities including the NeST in Barnard Castle to tourism associations such as Middleton Plus and university owned facilities such as the World Heritage Site Visitor Centre.

## **REGIONAL**

### **Northern Tourism Alliance**

This Alliance has emerged as a new grouping of destinations in the North East that are seeking to work collaboratively to the benefit of the North East visitor economy and of the individual organisations that comprise its membership.

The membership is currently: Visit County Durham, Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, Northumberland Tourism, Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd and the North East Hoteliers

Association. Representatives from Tees Valley and South Tyneside Council also attend regular meetings.

The Alliance has ambitions to work together on procurement and delivery of projects where economies of scale can be achieved, in particular research and marketing intelligence and to share information around ICT infrastructure and platforms. In addition the Alliance has identified that joint planning of marketing activity is desirable to ensure best use of resources and clarity of message about the region for the consumer.

The Alliance is liaising with the emerging Local Enterprise Partnership on its potential role as the tourism and hospitality sector board for the North East. The Alliance also meets with other northern destinations (Marketing Cheshire, York Tourism etc) twice a year to share information and to deliver coherent messages to Visit England about the needs of northern destinations.

### Local Enterprise Partnership

To be completed when information is available

## 7. Outputs and performance measures

Monitoring and performance measurement at every level is an integral activity of the company that takes place day-to-day supplemented with quarterly and end of year evaluation of specific functions.

The company uses a performance management framework that sets targets and monitors progress towards them quarterly. Provisionally these targets are:

Income	£70,000
Leverage (private sector)	£120,000
Quality of product	tbc when national policy agreed
Value of media work	£3m
No's of visitors to thisisdurham.com and micro sites	500,000
Businesses supported	150
Number of business activity engaged	70% of core businesses
Satisfaction level	80% satisfied (of businesses activity engaged)

Progress against the framework is monitored throughout the year by the company's management team and is reported to the Chair quarterly and the full Board every six months.

Visit County Durham also reports on progress to the Economic Partnership four times a year through Board meetings and in any formal reporting to the County Durham Partnership.

Durham County Council requires that Visit County Durham reports quarterly progress against KPIs written into its Economic Development service plan which in turn feeds into the Regeneration and Economic Development service group plan and the council plan. A number of activities and measures that appear in this business plan have been identified as relevant to the County Council's service plans and are identified internally as the responsibility of the Head of Economic Development and Housing, but to be discharged by the Chief Executive of Visit County Durham:

- Number of businesses engaged in Visit County Durham's work
- Number of tourism businesses in line with national policy on quality

- Development and delivery of signature events
- Delivery of the Bishop Auckland Food Festival
- Establish a framework for marketing the county to key audiences
- Manage the Economic Impact study for tourism
- Consult on, update and communicate the Durham Tourism Management Plan.

The Economic Development Service Plan also asks for footfall in Durham City visitor attractions to be monitored and reported.

Additional responsibilities of the Head of Economic Development and Housing which relate to the work of Visit County Durham are activities aligned under the 5 objectives of the Regeneration Statement (Thriving Durham City, Vibrant and successful towns, Competitive and successful people, Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities and A top location for business). For example:

- Encouraging and supporting existing visitor attractions and new visitor attractions (particularly a family attraction)
- Delivery of the North Pennines Food project
- Refurbishment of the Durham Dales Centre
- Creation of a pedestrian suspension footbridge to create an iconic tourism attraction (Barnard Castle)

Visit County Durham’s financial performance is monitored by the audit committee and the company undergoes a full independent audit of its financial processes each year. The finance manager for Durham County Council’s Economic Development division also monitors financial performance on a monthly basis and by the Head of Economic Development and Housing quarterly.

The progress of the destination towards the priorities in the Durham Tourism Management Plan is monitored through the annual programme of evaluation that includes monthly occupancy returns and quarterly footfall counts at 14 visitor attractions. These two data sets are essential for the annual evaluation of the volume and value of tourism in the county. This assessment includes a report for the whole county, plus separate reports for the Dales, Vale, City and Coast. Additional measures include quality of product.

The Durham Tourism Management Plan committee monitors the destination’s progress towards the priorities of the Durham Tourism Management Plan approximately six times a year. This is then reported widely through an annual tourism forum usually held each autumn.

## 8. Risk register [to be completed by audit committee]

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Durham County Council reduces budget aligned to the development of the visitor economy	Activity and staffing reduced	Work with Durham County Council on their medium term financial plan Identify areas where costs can be reduced Transfer activity to another organisation

## 9. Finance

Visit County Durham performs a public service within a collaborative structure. It is reliant on public sector grants to deliver the majority of its work.

The Visit County Durham team is employed by Durham County Council. A small amount of activity delivered by VCD Ltd is paid for through grant to cover relevant activity. This is done under the conditions of a grant agreement and in accordance with the County Council's contract procedure rules. This activity is match funded with contributions from tourism businesses which is also processed through the company.

The company generates income in two ways:

- Utilising our relationship with tourism businesses to generate financial support that contributes to the delivery of activity. This activity is principally marketing activity. Money is pooled and decisions on how to spend it are done in partnership with the tourism industry.
- Earning income through management fees and commissionable services.

In 2012-13 the income target from the private sector is £70,000. This represents private sector contributions towards the production of the post arrival Pocket Guide and tactical destination marketing activity and earned income from accommodation bookings and ticket sales. Earning income through hosting projects will continue to be a component of our income generation strategy.

In 2012-13 Visit County Durham will continue to reshape our functions and in particular the new visitor services functions. At the same time, we will be asked to find savings of £30,000 (tbc) from our core budget to help meet the requirements of the County Council's medium term financial plan. We will also continue to use an allocation of performance reward grant to meet our obligations as a member of the County Durham Cultural Partnership (cultural marketing, support for festivals and events and partnership communications) and plan how to spend £130,000 from the same source to deliver a place marketing framework and associated tools.

Visit County Durham seeks to use its resources to lever funding and in kind support from a range of partners. Between 2012 – 2015 we have the opportunity to lever into the county circa £450,000 of Regional Growth Fund money from Visit England's successful bid for £20m for domestic marketing in England. This will require us to identify and evidence £225,000 of match funding, cash and in-kind, from the private sector.

## 10. Budget for 2012/13

The core funding from Durham County Council for 2012-13 is £856,966

## Appendix 1

The strategic framework in which Visit County Durham operates is set at the national level by the Government's Tourism Policy document issued in March 2011. The approach described to development and support for the visitor economy can be summed up as:

- Removal of red tape across government that holds tourism back
- Supporting the industry to embrace technology
- Improving access to the country from overseas by simplifying visas
- Using significant events such as the Olympics and Diamond Jubilee to profile the UK overseas
- Lengthening the season by moving bank holidays
- Defining destinations based on what the customer understands
- Spreading tourism out of the capital by creating alternative destinations
- Supporting skills development through apprenticeships and courses.

This policy is complemented by Visit England's strategy for England published in 2010 that sets out four objectives to guide activity at the national, regional and sub regional levels, designed to improve England's competitive position domestically and internationally:

- 1 To increase England's share of global visitor markets** – this involves a national marketing strategy, optimising the opportunity of 2012, creating plans for major events and business growth.
- 2 To offer compelling destinations of distinction** – this involves benchmarking, identifying best practice, improving quality and customer satisfaction.
- 3 To champion a successful, thriving tourism industry** – this involves research and intelligence, action plans for seaside resorts and rural areas, a sustainable tourism action plan and implementing the national skill strategy as well as supporting industry effectiveness through engagement and communication.
- 4 To facilitate greater engagement between the visitor and the experience** – this involves modernising visitor information provision, developing e-tourism, developing action plans for transport and infrastructure and focusing on visitor welcome including accessibility.

Durham has been identified by Visit England as one of 15 priority destinations in England which means that where they are able to, Visit England will provide additional investment and support to the county. Durham is included in the priority destination grouping because of its potential to grow and make a significant contribution to the government's ambition, which is:

- for the value of domestic tourism in the UK to increase by 5%
- to rebalance the UK tourism trade deficit of £14 billion per annum.

The national strategy has yet to be translated into priorities for the North East of England by the new Local Enterprise Partnership. For the purposes of this plan it is assumed that regional priorities for the visitor economy established by One North East will be adopted by the new LEP. The One North East Visitor Economy Strategy identifies two regional objectives:

**1 To improve visitor yield:** to significantly improve the region's average earnings per visitor

**2 To reduce seasonal and spatial disparities** in visitor arrivals and receipts.

County Durham prioritises the visitor economy in its Regeneration Statement (June 2010). The focus is on developing the city as an attractor for the whole county, taking a whole town approach to development, business growth in priority sectors, of which tourism is one, and development of the cultural programme which provides product for the visitor offer and platforms for promotion.

County Durham's visitor economy specific plan, designed to contribute to the national and sub national objectives is the Durham Tourism Management Plan (DTMaP) which contains 8 priorities/objectives:

1. Manage and maintain the public realm for visitors;
2. Optimise the potential of Durham City making it a viable 48-hour stay;
3. Increase spend by implementing a step change in quality of the visitor experience;
4. Develop local distinctiveness in line with the destination brand;
5. Tackle seasonality by focusing on events and business tourism;
6. Grow the profile of the county regionally and nationally; and
7. Extend length of stay by optimising the potential the county's market towns and town centres
8. Increase the contribution of Durham's rural areas to the overall value of the county's visitor economy

Underpinning all of these objectives are the principles of sustainable tourism, particularly in a rural county where the natural landscapes and an historic city are central to our visitor offer. Sustainable tourism, now rechristened 'wise growth', uses a framework known as VERB, which ensures that development is balanced between the needs of the **V**isitor, the **E**nvironment, **R**esidents and **B**usinesses and delivers benefits for all.

Progress towards achieving the county's 8 priorities/objectives using wise growth will ensure that the county achieves its vision for the visitor economy, which is:

By 2015 Durham will offer a visitor experience that matches or exceeds the best offered by England's premiere county destinations.

The county will fulfil its potential as one of North East England's lead destinations, attracting visitors to the region from across the UK and from target overseas markets.

By 2020 the county's visitor economy will comprise 17% of the county's economy making a significant contribution to improved economic performance.



## Appendix 2 Actions

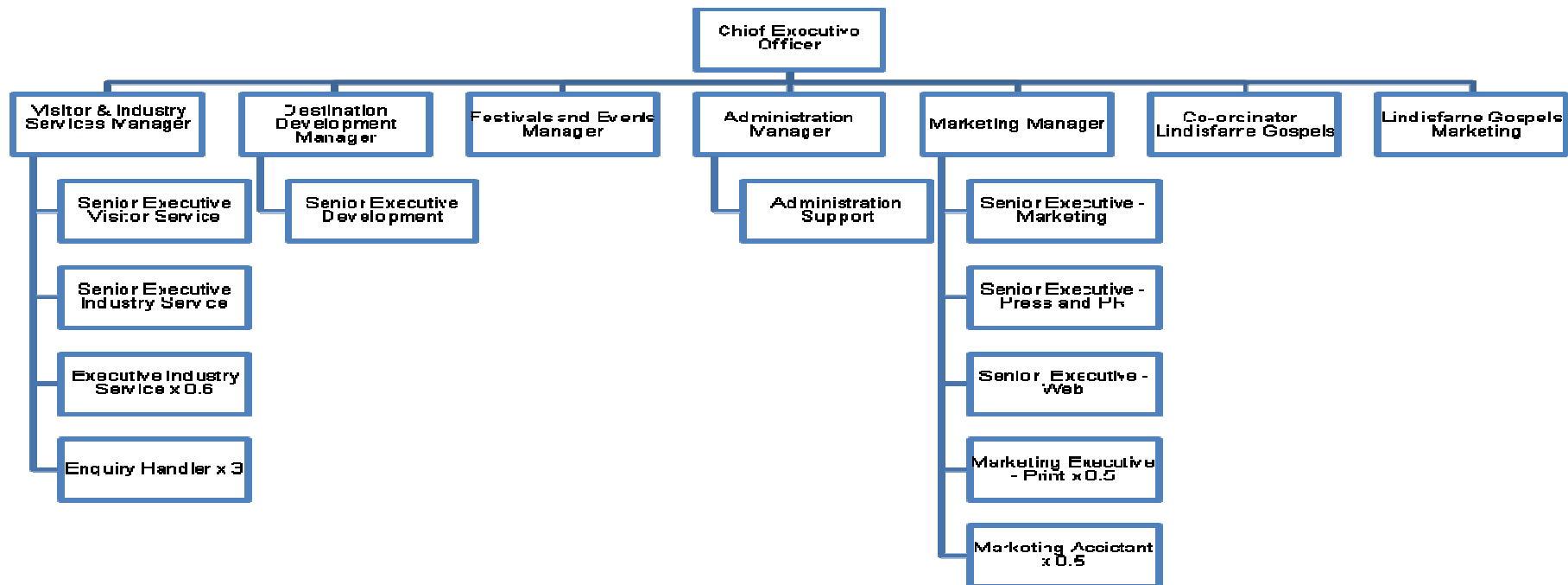
Action	Description	Core Function	Target Completion
Visit England domestic marketing	Deliver in partnership 2012/13 domestic marketing campaigns using regional growth fund money	Strategic Direction and Destination Marketing	March 13
Durham Tourism Management Plan (DTMaP)	New 2012-16 plan published and communicated	Strategic Direction	March 13
World Heritage Site Management Plan	Lead role on audience development for the WHS committee	Strategic Direction	On going
2011 Economic impact study	Management of EIA 2011 for the county's visitor economy and communication of results.	Research & Intelligence	May 2012
Occupancy survey	Implementation of new system for monitoring and measuring occupancy in all accommodation sectors	Research & Intelligence	Dec 2012
Attraction footfall monitoring	Monitor footfall in visitor attractions	Research & Intelligence	July, Oct 2012 Jan, Mar 2013
Segmentation	Follow up study to evaluate progress towards changing Durham's visitor profile	Strategic Direction, Research and Intelligence	Oct 2012
Brand building (moved to place marketing plan)			On going
Destination DMS	Implement new contract with New Mind	Crosscutting	Mar 13
Evaluation	Evaluation of performance against KPIs	Research & Intelligence	March 13 July 12
Printed communications for industry	Printed newsletter (x3)	Business Engagement & Support	Ongoing
On-line communications for industry	Weekly e-bulletin  Update of corporate site with forward calendar of events and marketing opportunities for industry	Business Engagement & Support	Ongoing
Events forum	Quarterly meeting facilitated for events organisers	Business Engagement & Support	Ongoing
Durham Attractions Group	Chairing and facilitating visitor attractions group to work in partnership	Strategic Direction and Business Engagement & Support	Ongoing
Cross sectoral marketing group	Chair and facilitation of new group to act as advisors and partners to Visit	Strategic Direction and Business Engagement &	Ongoing

Action	Description	Core Function	Target Completion
	County Durham	Support	
Discover Durham	Participation in Discover Durham travel trade and groups consortium	Marketing & Information	Ongoing
Destination fact sheets	Fact sheets about tourism for public sector partners, journalists etc	Research & Intelligence	June 12
Engagement packs for tourism businesses	Information pack on a range of topics to support tourism businesses	Business Engagement & Support	May 12
Business engagement campaigns	Regular campaigns on main issues for destination aimed at tourism businesses	Business Engagement & Support	Ongoing
Industry conferences	Industry conferences on topics of importance to tourism businesses	Business Engagement & Support	Nov 12/Mar 13
Industry updates/planning sessions	Series of events to update tourism businesses and plan main activity	Business Engagement & Support	April/Oct 12, Jan 13
Networking events for tourism businesses	Smaller events for tourism cluster – social or networking oriented	Business Engagement & Support	Aug 12 and Dec 12
Business improvement initiative	Activity to help businesses improve an aspect of their operations eg on-line booking and ticketing	Business Engagement & Support and Product Development	Sept 12
Contact Centre booking and sales services	New services established and developed	Marketing & Information	March 13
Whatsonnortheast.com	New acquisition, regional database for promotion of arts and culture	Company activity	June 12
Visitor information network development	County-wide network of 28 information partners, 18 information boards and distribution service	Strategic Direction and Marketing & Information, Business Engagement & Support	March 13
Business reports	Individual reports to businesses detailing joint work between them and VCD	Business Engagement & Support	May 12
Post-arrival print	Pocket guide, maps, eating out guide and events guides	Marketing & Information	Jan 13 Sept 12  March 13 May/Sept 12/Jan13
Information management for Destine	Update of existing records and collection and inputting of new records onto regional DMS	Marketing & Information	To annual information and collection plan
National PR	London based PR capacity to	Marketing & Information	April 12/March 13

Action	Description	Core Function	Target Completion
	generate increased national coverage for Durham		
Press work	Hosting press trips to the destination and handling media relations for the destination	Marketing & Information	ongoing
On-line destination marketing	Activity to promote the destination to consumers nationally through development and optimisation of thisdurham.com and to meetings planner and buyers via meetindurham.com  Social media networks	Marketing & Information	Sept 12  March 2013 Sept 12  Ongoing  March 13
Cultural marketing support	Activity to promote Durham's cultural offer to visitors and residents (See also post arrival print)	Marketing & Information	May 12
CRM	Development of relationship management with individual consumers/visitors to Durham	Marketing & Information	March 13  Monthly
Campaigns	Destination campaigns aimed at raising awareness of destination strength and deliver business to industry	Marketing & Information	Sept-Nov 12
VIP pass	VIP pass to 25 + visitor attractions in Durham for journalists and travel trade	Marketing & Information	March 13
Taste Durham	Quality accreditation scheme for food and drink establishments	Product Development	November 12
Taste Durham	Celebration event and associated promotion of scheme	Product Development	Jan 13
Know Your Durham Coast	Skills and visitor welcome project with Durham Heritage Coast Partnership	Product Development	March 13
This is Durham welcome programme	Industry wide programme to improve customer service in partnership with Bishop Auckland College	Product Development	March 13
Conference facilities	Feasibility study on new/expanded conference facilities for Durham City	Product Development	On going
Bishop Auckland Food Festival 2012	Co delivery of large outdoor event	Product Development	April 12
Bishop Auckland Food Festival 2013	Development and planning of large outdoor event	Product Development	

Action	Description	Core Function	Target Completion
Streets of Durham	August bank holiday city centre event	Product Development	August 12
Lindisfarne Gospels	Destination Development work strand for 2013 event on World Heritage Site	Product Development	March 13 July 12
Income generation	Growth of income from activity and projects	Crosscutting	March 13
Team building	Plan of action to build capacity and cohesion of new team	n/a	June 12
ICT	Transfer of VCD ICT support from contacted company to DCC ICT department	n/a	1 April 2012
Audit	Account and funding audit for 2010-11 Single programme end of project close down	n/a	July 12

Staff Structure



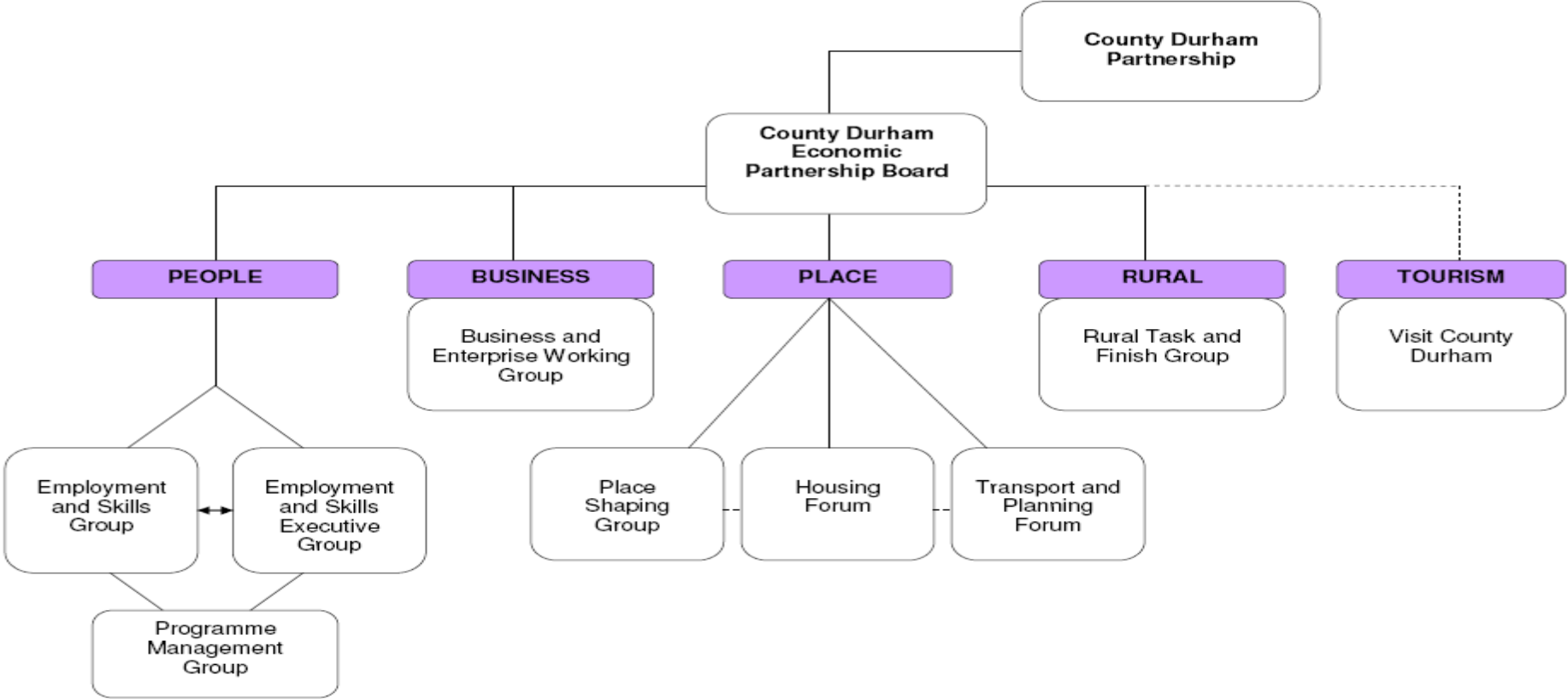
## Visit County Durham

Business Plan Appendix 4

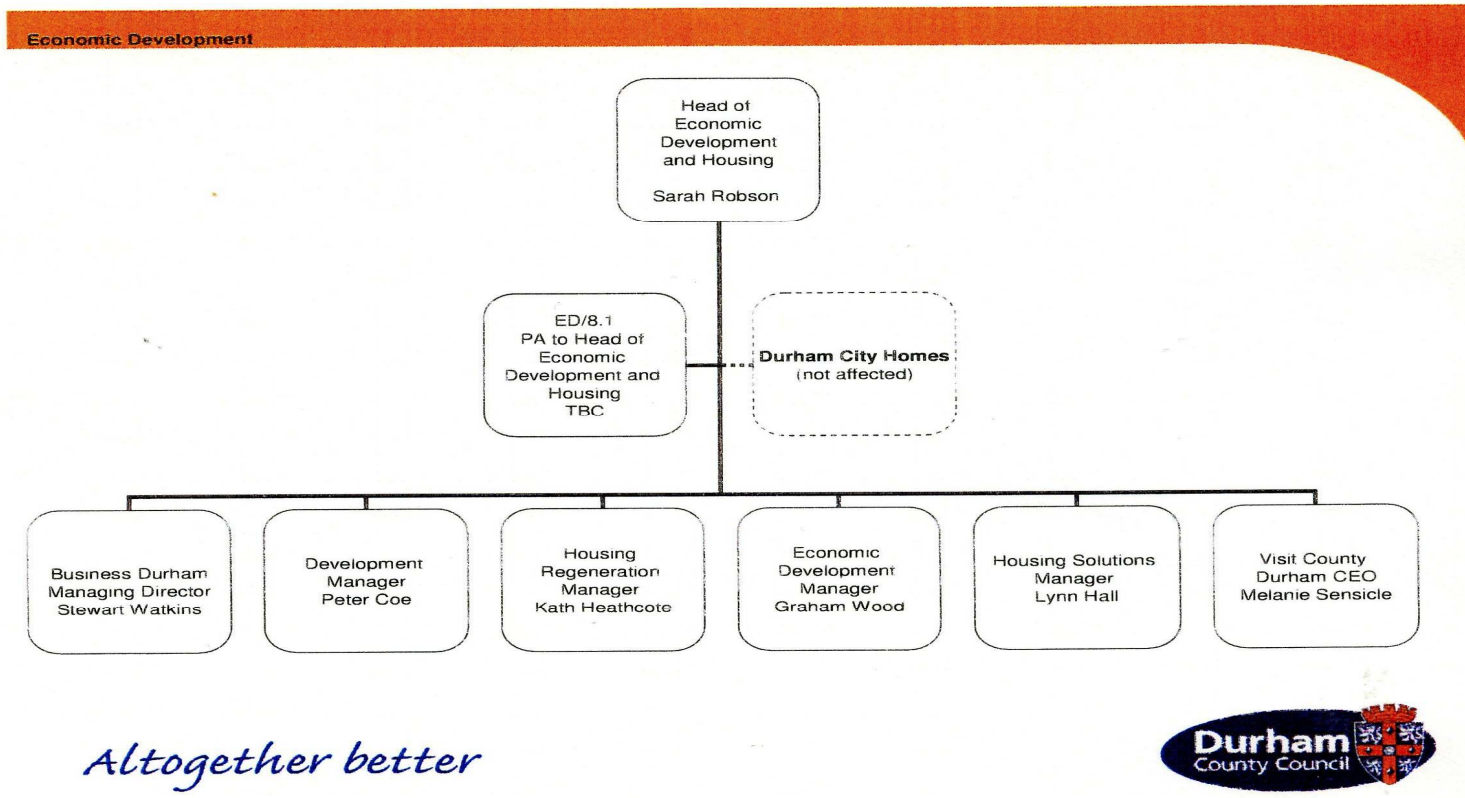
### VCD Representation

Business and Enterprise Working Group - CDEP	Middleton Plus
Chester le Street Destination Development Leadership Group	Millennium Place Strategy Planning Groups Attractions and Visitors Working Group Property and Operations Working Group Strategic Project Team
Churches, Heritage and the Visitor Experience	Natural Environment Strategy Group
County Durham Economic Partnership	North Pennines AONB Partnership
County Durham Cultural Partnership	Northern Destinations Forum
Destination Performance UK - City 2 Group	Northern Tourism Alliance
Destination Performance UK - Counties Group	Place Shaping Working Group - CDEP
Discover Durham	Rural Working Group - CDEP
Durham Attractions Group (chair)	Seaham Destination Development Leadership Group (Destination Seaham Group)
Durham City Area Action Partnership	Stanhope Destination Development Plan
Durham County Council Civic Pride Riverside Project	Stanhope Parish Council
Durham County Council Corporate Events Working Group	Sustainable Tourism Working Group
Durham Events Forum (chair)	Teesdale Area Action Partnership (tourism group)
Durham Hotels Association	TNNE Research
Durham Marketing Group (chair)	Upper Teesdale Tourism Network
Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee	Visit England Destinations Forum
LEADER - Local Action Group Members	Visitor Information Network (chair)
Lindisfarne Gospels Board	Weardale Area Action Partnership (tourism group) - Tourism Task Group
Lindisfarne Gospels Project Delivery Group	Weardale Visitor Network
Lindisfarne Gospels Destination Development Working Group (chair)	Working Group Chairs - CDEP
Love Food Working Partners Group	World Heritage Site Management Committee

### County Durham Economic Partnership Structure



Business Plan Appendix 6





**Cabinet**

**30 May 2012**



**The National Planning Policy Framework and the Impact on the County Durham Plan**

**Report of Corporate Management Team  
 Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development  
 Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Member for Regeneration**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report summarises the key elements of the newly published final National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It also identifies the specific impacts on the County Durham Plan including changes to its structure and a new timetable, which will be set out in a revised Local Development Scheme. In addition, it sets out how the Council intends to deal with development proposals at this time of national change to planning policy

**National Planning Policy Framework**

2. The NPPF represents a fundamental reassessment of both the overall direction and the detail of the planning system in England, intended to support economic recovery and play a key role in delivering the government’s localism agenda. The NPPF is the outcome of a review of planning policy, designed to consolidate policy statements, circulars and guidance documents into a single concise Framework (a reduction of over a thousand pages of guidance to around 50). The NPPF has been the subject of significant and prolonged public debate following consultation on a draft in the autumn of last year.

**Key Elements of the Framework**

3. The overriding message from the Framework is that planning authorities should plan positively for new development, and that ‘planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth’.
4. At the heart of the new system is a new ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’. This requires local plans to meet development needs and for development proposals that accord with the local plan to be approved without delay. The NPPF retains the presumption in favour of sustainable development that applies where local plan is absent, silent or out of date. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would ‘significantly and demonstrably’ outweigh the benefits. However, the final policy omits the reference from the draft version which proposed that decision takers should be required to assume that the default answer to development proposal is

'yes', except where this would compromise key sustainable development principles.

5. The government has also sought to define sustainable development more clearly, following widespread criticism that the draft NPPF was too vague in this area and left the definition too far open to interpretation. The document now refers explicitly to the five principles of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy as well as the UN Brundtland definition previously used.
6. The final NPPF also omits the reference from the draft version that required significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth. It now stresses that the economic, social and environmental roles are 'mutually dependent' and should be 'sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system'. As a result, the final framework provides a better balance of economic, environmental and social needs.
7. The final NPPF also sets out some key policy changes from the draft. These include 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside', whether specifically designated or not, amongst 12 core planning principles which should 'underpin both plan-making and decision-taking'.
8. Also, unlike the draft, the final NPPF includes an explicit reference to 'brownfield' land, encouraging 'the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value'. It should be noted however that this does not appear to represent a 'brownfield first' policy, given that it is not accompanied by a sequential test requiring brownfield land should be used before greenfield.
9. The NPPF strengthens the protection of town centres following concerns that the earlier draft might lead to a dilution of the sequential test which requires proposals for out of centre development to demonstrate that there is no suitable alternative site centrally. The document states that planning authorities 'should require' applications for 'main town centre uses' to be in town centres. (The draft NPPF said authorities should only 'prefer' such applications 'where practical'). In instances where no suitable town centre site is available, the NPPF says out-of-centre sites 'that are well connected to the town centre' are to be preferred. The draft NPPF also removed offices from the uses planning authorities should prefer for town centre locations, referring only to retail and leisure uses. However, the final document emphasises the importance of the sequential test and includes office development in the 'main town centre uses' it would apply to. Significantly for rural economies, the NPPF also makes clear that 'small-scale' rural offices and developments are exempt from the town centre first policy.

## **Development Management**

10. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to approach decision taking in a positive way and to support the delivery of sustainable development, seeking to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible, attaching significant weight to the benefits of economic and housing growth,

and influencing development proposals to achieve quality outcomes. It also places emphasis on early engagement and pre-application discussions.

11. Local Planning Authorities are also advised to consider using Local Development Orders to relax planning controls for particular areas or categories of development and to take a proactive approach to the use of neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

12. Whilst establishing a presumption in favour of sustainable development, the NPPF also re-states the primacy of locally-led development plans. The Localism Act introduces rights for communities to prepare 'Neighbourhood Plans'. Together, Local plans and Neighbourhood Plans will form the Development Plan for an area. Some potential ambiguities do however remain on the relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's Local Plan and these will need to be clarified as a programme for preparing neighbourhood plans is developed.

### **Evidence base**

13. A new duty has been introduced to co-operate with neighbouring authorities on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. The duty, in part, fills the vacuum caused by the abolition of the regional tier of government and represents a new 'test of soundness' to be applied when plans are submitted for Examination in Public. Arrangements have therefore been put in place to ensure regular and structured dialogue with neighbouring authorities, particularly in terms of housing market research where several authorities are known to be undertaking new research.
14. One of the overriding requirements of the NPPF is for local authorities to plan for additional housing supply. To achieve this, the NPPF requires planning authorities to identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements, plus an additional buffer of five per cent to 'ensure choice and competition in the market for land'. The draft NPPF had proposed a blanket requirement for all local authorities to identify an additional 20 per cent of housing land. The County Council's response to the consultation on the draft requested that this automatic requirement should be dropped, on the basis that such a requirement to 'over-programme' in the supply of housing land would introduce the risk, over the longer term, of 'cherry picking' of the best sites at the expense of those that may be more strategically important. The final document omits this blanket requirement but states that councils that have a record of 'persistent under delivery on housing' must earmark a five-year supply plus 20 per cent. The NPPF justifies this on the basis that it will provide a 'realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply' as well as to ensure choice and competition for land. On the basis of evidence over time, County Durham has shown relatively strong performance in housing delivery and would not therefore expect the need to identify an additional 20 per cent above a rolling five-year supply.

15. The final NPPF also relaxes the stance on windfall sites (unforeseen housing sites), allowing local authorities to include such sites in their five-year supplies if there is compelling evidence that such sites 'consistently become available' and will be a 'reliable source of supply'. (The draft document had said that windfall sites could not be used unless there was 'compelling evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified'.)

### **Transitional Arrangements**

16. The NPPF came into force immediately upon its publication. The NPPF, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development it sets out, applies to decisions on proposals with immediate effect in areas where no adopted local plan is in place. However, some transitional arrangements, albeit limited, are set out in Annex 1 of the Framework.
17. For the next 12 months, local authorities and inspectors can continue to give full weight to 'relevant' policies adopted since 2004 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, even where there is a 'limited degree of conflict' with the NPPF. In County Durham all of our Local Plans and Mineral and Waste Plans were prepared under the previous Act, so none are covered by this 12 month 'window'. However, the arrangements also allow 'due weight' to be given to relevant policies in existing plans beyond this 12-month period, depending on their degree of consistency with the framework. This will inevitably be subject to interpretation. Given that the NPPF is now in force, as a matter of some urgency, we are now undertaking an exercise to determine which 'saved' local plan policies are consistent with the NPPF and can therefore continue to be used in decision making until the County Durham Plan is adopted.
18. The annex also states that decision-makers may also give weight to emerging local plan policies, according to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF.

### **Resources**

19. It is clear that continuing resource pressures on councils may limit their capacity to move quickly in bringing forward local plans. This was accepted in the Government's own Impact Assessment which accompanied the draft NPPF. There are also concerns about how evidence gathering and data collection, essential for monitoring to support the decision making process, will be funded from limited and declining resources.

### **Conclusions on the NPPF**

20. The NPPF represents a profound shift in the way that the planning system works and presents some real challenges for all those involved in designing and planning new development. The controversial nature of key proposals and in particular, the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' has generated significant public debate nationally. Whilst the broad concept of a

slimmer National Planning Policy Framework and the scope to develop a more locally relevant policy context for County Durham is welcomed, with the Framework now in place, to some extent there remains some uncertainty about how the proposals will work in practice over the short and longer term.

### **Impact on the County Durham Plan**

21. Development of the County Durham Plan is well advanced and its primary focus is to support the development of the local economy and an 'Altogether Wealthier Durham'. On the face of it, the Plan's focus on promoting economic development is therefore consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable growth and overcoming barriers to investment. However, the Plan seeks to achieve this by directing development to particular locations and bringing together employment, housing and services to create sustainable communities.
22. The NPPF states that each local authority should produce a Local Plan for its area which can be reviewed in whole or in part. Additional planning documents should only be used where justified. This is clearly different from the current Local Development Framework system with its suite of documents with an overarching Core Strategy. It does however, reiterate that planning should be genuinely 'plan led' when determining planning applications.
23. The inclusion of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, particularly in the absence of a comprehensive up to date development plan, could be a threat to the Council's ambition for a clear coherent development strategy as outlined in the Regeneration Statement and the emerging County Durham Plan. A Core Strategy on its own would only provide part of the answer as the biggest emerging challenge is coming from developers promoting speculative housing sites on the back of the NPPF. Therefore the best way to ensure that new housing supports the development strategy is to accelerate the preparation of the housing allocations.

### **Scope of the Local Plan**

24. Given the Government's views of plan making were clear in the draft NPPF we have already taken steps to convert our Core Strategy into a Local Plan by adding the following elements:
  - Development Management Policies;
  - Employment Allocations;
  - Retail Allocations; and
  - Housing Allocations.
25. There are two areas of work which it is proposed should be in separate planning documents. These are Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations and Minerals and Waste Allocations. Because of their controversial nature it is likely that their inclusion in a single Local Plan could unacceptably delay its preparation. In both cases there is no short term need for new sites, new Gypsy and Traveller proposals can be assessed against a new criteria based

policy in the Local Plan and there is sufficient minerals and waste sites to meet need for a number of years.

### **Timescales**

26. Rather than discard all of the progress made to date and return to the beginning of plan preparation it is proposed that the next formal consultation stage will still be a Preferred Options document. It is considered that the additional areas of work required can be progressed straight to Preferred Options without having to have a formal issues and options stage.
27. Following the consultation on the Submission Draft minor amendments can be made before the Plan is formally submitted for consideration at an Examination in Public. The Gypsy and Traveller and Minerals and Waste documents would be progressed following adoption of the Local Plan.
28. The revised timescales result in the Preferred Options going to Cabinet in July and out for consultation in September 2012, primarily as a result of the work required for the housing allocations. In order to give sufficient time to consider the responses to the Preferred Options, which will likely include significant numbers of representations on proposed housing sites, both from developers wanting their sites including and from nearby residents, the Submission Draft of the Plan will go to Cabinet in May/June 2012 followed by publication and consultation. This will also ensure the document is not affected by the local elections.
29. Following consideration of the consultation responses following Publication and the making of any changes, the Plan will be formally submitted in the autumn of 2013 with the Public Examination to follow in spring 2014 and finally Adoption in July 2014.
30. The Gypsy and Traveller and the Minerals and Waste Allocations would go out to preferred options at the same time as Publication of the Local Plan. Publication would follow Adoption of the Local Plan with Examinations to following in May 2015 and Adoption, September 2015.

### **Dealing with Development Proposals in the Changing National Planning Policy Climate**

31. As set out at paragraph 20, above, there is some uncertainty on how the proposals in the NPPF will work in practice over the short term. In particular we are faced with a situation, when considering development proposals, where Members will be taking decisions with reference to policies in Local Plans ranging from 8 to 16 years since adoption whilst also having regard to the new NPPF. At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where our Local Plans are out of date the Council is expected to grant permission for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole or, where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. In order to

create some consistency in dealing with such situations in the period when the County Durham Plan is in preparation, a paper setting out a recommended Council approach has been prepared – ‘Assessing Development Proposals in a changing National Planning System – Council Policy Position Statement’.

32. The County Durham Plan is at an early stage but at the same time, the Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy and Regeneration Statement set out that we are committed to raising the economic performance of the County. As such the Council needs to react to the development pressure we are coming under in the light of the changes to national planning policy in a way that does not jeopardise the evolution of the County Durham Plan, but at the same time allows some proposals, where Local Plans are out of date, to come forward now to help to deliver the Council’s growth agenda. Delivery of appropriate sites now, brings a number of benefits, notably in supporting the local economy by increasing economic activity and by delivering new housing (including affordable housing) at a time of economic difficulty.
33. The County Durham Plan is subject to public consultation and an Examination in Public which will resolve areas of disagreement. As such, care will be needed to ensure that decisions made ahead of the completion of the Plan do not prejudice the transparency of the Plan making process. Indeed, the starting point for assessing proposals remains Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004, with the need to treat the Development Plan as the primary consideration. The Position Statement seeks to provide for a consistent approach to handling development proposals. It is not the intention that it constitutes an interim policy but rather that it enables consistency for the benefit of Members, Officers and Developers with reference to existing policy and the emerging policies and aspiration of the Council.
34. As set out earlier in this report an exercise is underway to assess the relevance of existing saved Local Plan policies in the light of the publication of the NPPF. That exercise will help to inform decisions but in the case of proposals that do not comply to existing policy but accord with the guidance in the NPPF the following factors will be assessed to see if this justifies approval:
  - a. Does the proposal meet the objectives of the emerging County Durham Plan and does it comply with the emerging spatial strategy?
  - b. Does the proposal deliver current needs or contribute to improved facilities in the locality?
  - c. Is there Community support
  - d. Is the proposal sustainable
35. It is intended that these factors can provide a consistent approach in this period of change.
36. The Council has taken legal advice on this issue and has been advised that as the Position Statement is an attempt to introduce consistency in decision making, it should be endorsed by Members as decision makers. In order

therefore to enable the Position Statement to be used Member sign off is required.

37. It should be noted that as the County Durham Plan progresses through the stages of preparation it has more weight in relation to determining planning applications. As a consequence the Position Statement will have less weight.

### **Recommendation**

38. Members are asked to:
1. Note the key elements of the National Planning Policy Framework; and
  2. Agree the timescales and scope of the County Durham Plan as outlined in the report; and
  3. Endorse the Council Policy Position Statement as outlined in this report.

### **Background papers;**

National Planning Policy Framework

Assessing Development Proposals in a changing National Planning system - Council Policy Position Statement

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**Contact: Mike Allum Tel: 03000261906**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance –**

Some savings will be made as a result of having a single Local Plan with fewer Examinations in Public.

### **Staffing –**

The Planning Policy Team's work programme will be amended as a result of the changes to the timetable.

### **Risk –**

The content of the NPPF could impact on our proposed strategy for the future of County Durham. However the strategy as outlined in past iterations of the County Durham Plan and the Regeneration Statement does broadly accord with the approach of the NPPF.

### **Equality and Diversity –**

Equality and Diversity is an integral part of policy development in the County Durham Plan.

### **Accommodation –**

None.

### **Crime and Disorder –**

None.

### **Human Rights –**

None.

### **Consultation –**

The timings of the proposed consultation periods will change as a result of the amended Local Plan timetable.

### **Procurement –**

None.

### **Disability Discrimination Act –**

None.

### **Legal Implications –**

The amended timetable reflects the requirements of the relevant regulations. The endorsement of the 'Assessing Development Proposals in a changing National Planning system - Council Policy Position Statement' has been requested as a consequence of legal advice.

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# **Assessing Development Proposals in a changing National Planning system**

## **Council Policy Position Statement**

**May 2012**  
(Cabinet Version)

**Planning Services  
Regeneration and Economic Development**



# **Assessing Development Proposals in a changing National Planning system**

## **Council Policy Position Statement**

### **1.0 Context and Introduction**

1.1 The Government is introducing major changes to the planning system with streamlined national guidance, the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies, the replacement of Local Development Frameworks with Local Plans and the introduction of statutory Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared by local communities. Many of these changes come through the recently introduced Localism Act. The publication, however, of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by the Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2012, and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is introduced has major implications for the Council. We are expected to: “where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, grant permission unless: any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole, or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted”.

1.2 The NPPF is an important material consideration for planning decisions and this creates a dilemma for the Council, as the County Durham Plan is at a stage in production when the detailed approach to the allocation of land for development has yet to be set out and our Local Plans are between 8 and 16 years old. At the same time, the Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy and the Regeneration Statement set out that we are committed to raising the economic performance of the County by looking to focus development on the key towns that can deliver the development we need to achieve that growth.

1.3 The Council therefore needs to react to the development pressure we are coming under in the light of the national changes in a way that doesn’t jeopardise the evolution of the County Durham Plan, but at the same time allows some proposals, where Local Plans are absent, silent, or out of date to come forward now to help to deliver the Council’s growth agenda. Delivery of appropriate sites now brings a number of benefits, notably in supporting the local economy by increasing economic activity and by delivering new housing (including affordable housing) at a time of economic difficulty.

1.4 The County Durham Plan is subject to public consultation and an examination to resolve areas of disagreement. As such care will be needed to ensure that decisions made ahead of the completion of the Plan do not prejudice the transparency of the Plan making process. Indeed, the starting point for assessing proposals remains Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004, with the need to treat the Development Plan as the primary consideration.

1.5 This Position Statement seeks to provide for a consistent approach to handling development proposals. It is not the intention that it constitutes an interim policy but rather that it enables consistency for the benefit of Members, Officers and Developers with reference to existing policy and the emerging policies and aspiration of the Government and the Council.

## **2.0 The National Planning Policy Framework and Localism**

2.1 At the heart of the NPPF is “the presumption in favour of sustainable development” – “which should be seen as the golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking”, with local planning authorities expected “to plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. The Council is ahead of the game in that context as the emerging County Durham Plan focuses on the importance of delivering economic progress. In terms of pursuing sustainable development the NPPF sets five positive improvements to be sought, including “but not limited to”:

- making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;
- moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature;
- replacing poor design with better design;
- improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and
- widening the choice of high quality homes.

2.2. In addition to the NPPF, the planning system is evolving through the Localism agenda, with the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan system for plan making. It is for the County Council to make the strategic decisions but neighbourhoods (Parishes) need to have their say and input during the process if Localism is to have buy in from the neighbourhood level. The approval of major proposals ahead of that engagement could undermine the Localism agenda. This is a matter that needs to be considered in dealing with development proposals and most notably through the level of community engagement accompanying a proposal.

2.3 The approach to delivery of “a wide choice of high quality homes” set out in the NPPF is particularly relevant to this paper as residential development will form the bulk of sites under consideration. It states that “Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites”. The Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) provided the evidence on this matter with supply variable between the former District Council areas, upon which the calculation is still made, with some having a five year supply and others not. When the supply does exist the Council has to take a view on the appropriateness of a site but where it doesn’t, it is expected to look favourably on planning applications subject to achieving sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

## **3.0 Assessing Development Proposals**

3.1 On the basis that we would deal favourably with development proposals that accord with current Local Plan policies, unless other material considerations weigh against them, the matters that we need to assess in considering other proposals are:

1. What is the status of the Local Plan (including RSS), i.e. is it silent or indeterminate, or is it out of date?
2. What constitutes sustainable development if the Local Plan is considered out of date?

3. Does approval now achieve the emerging objectives of the County Durham Plan or would approval now prejudice the delivery of the County Durham Plan?
4. Is there a five year housing supply demonstrated in the SHLAA?
5. Would demonstrable harm arise as a consequence of approval?

These points are examined below:

***What is the status of the Local Plan(s)/Regional Spatial Strategy?***

3.2 Although the Government is in the process of abolishing Regional Spatial Strategies, legal advice requires that it should still be considered. The key Policy is Policy 4, which although intended to guide allocations, is equally relevant to site decisions:

***RSS POLICY 4: THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT***

*Local Development Frameworks should adopt a sequential approach to the identification of land for development to give priority to previously developed land and buildings in the most sustainable locations. All sites should be in locations that avoid areas at the highest risk from flooding, having particular regard to the vulnerability of the proposed development to flooding. Locations should be selected in the following priority order:*

- a. Suitable previously-developed sites and buildings within urban areas, particularly around public transport nodes;*
- b. Other suitable locations within urban areas not identified as land to be protected for nature or heritage conservation or recreational purposes;*
- c. Suitable sites in locations adjoining urban areas, particularly those that involve the use of previously-developed land and buildings; and*
- d. Suitable sites in settlements outside urban areas, particularly those that involve the use of previously-developed land and buildings.*

*For the purposes of this policy, urban areas are defined as the Conurbations, Main Settlements, Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres, as defined in this RSS, and Secondary Settlements identified in Local Development Frameworks as providing a significant opportunity in terms of previously developed land and buildings.*

*All sites should be in locations that are, or will be, well related to homes, jobs and services by all modes of transport, particularly public transport, walking and cycling.*

It should be noted that since Policy 4 was prepared other considerations, notably site viability in the current economic climate, may outweigh the sequential test otherwise new development will continue to stagnate.

3.3 The status of saved Local Plan policy is less clear, bearing in mind that the County's seven Local Plans range in age from 8 to 16 years old. Nevertheless, saved allocations will be respected, provided that other material considerations do not weigh against them, although alternative uses can be considered if appropriate. An important point to bear in mind is that it is not necessarily the age of a plan policy that is key but whether it is still consistent in terms of the NPPF. The Council's Planning Policy Team will provide advice on the status of Local Plan policy in relation to a proposal. Should it be concluded that a relevant existing Local Plan policy isn't in place the decision on the appropriateness of the proposal will be guided by the following advice:

***Does the proposal constitute sustainable development?***

3.4 Bearing in mind the advice in NPPF, this is a key matter. The NPPF objectives for delivering sustainable communities include “widening the choice of high quality homes”. In the Core planning principles set out in the NPPF one requirement is to deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. As a part of the means of delivering on this, work is well under way on the County Durham Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Further, the Council’s IDP baseline information is well advanced. It would normally be unusual for developers to provide funds for infrastructure beyond that defined in current planning policy in advance of the Council defining its Community Infrastructure Levy. Nevertheless, in the case of consideration of these sites it will negotiate with developers on a site by site basis to seek to agree Section 106 contributions, where a requirement is defined in the developing IDP to help to deliver the infrastructure improvements necessitated by the development. All such negotiations will be carried out in accord with the three tests for Planning Obligations set out at paragraph 204 of the NPPF.

3.5 Whether a site is sustainable or not will not depend solely on infrastructure, so it does not always follow that such contributions can make a site sustainable and therefore acceptable. There may be cases, however, when they do and this will be assessed during negotiations.

3.6 It will be for developers to demonstrate how their proposals achieves the aims of the NPPF set out above, but the Council could look favourably on proposals that offer benefits to meet the aims of the NPPF and the emerging County Durham Plan (see below) There could be no “one fits all” approach and sites would be considered on their merits, but this does give the opportunity to deliver high quality development that would meet the objectives of the emerging County Durham Plan.

***The County Durham Plan***

3.7 The Council has made good progress with the Plan and has published a Core Strategy to Issues & Options Stage, including preferred options and a later Policy Directions Paper (May 2011). With the Government move to Local Plans, the approach to delivering the County Durham Plan is under review. Nevertheless, the strategic direction of travel set out in the emerging documents is unlikely to change, with the emphasis on certain key settlements, notably the focus on developing Durham City as a major economic driver. The delivery of appropriate sites now brings the economic activity needed to stimulate the local economy, a key aim not only of the County Council but of the NPPF also.

3.8 A part of the development of the Plan is the Settlement Study, which has developed a hierarchy of towns and villages based upon the level of facility. This primary evidence provides a useful indicator of the sustainability of a community in relation to the level of facilities available and allows a degree of assessment of the suitability of a settlement to take development. If a number of large housing proposals were to be approved now, the potential impact on the delivery of the County Durham Plan Core Strategy could be undermined if the location was wrong or the proposal failed to make a satisfactory contribution towards the infrastructure needed to deliver the aims of the Plan.

3.9 The Policy Direction Paper refines the approach to development in the County by setting out the five key elements of the Preferred Spatial Strategy, namely:

1. A strong focus on realising the potential of Durham City as a driver for economic development in County Durham. New employment opportunities are accompanied by complementary new housing and retail development. The provision of the new infrastructure required to support this growth is directly linked to the delivery of the new development.
2. Enabling the other eleven main towns in the County to contribute to future prosperity and to meet the needs of their communities by supporting levels of growth commensurate with their sustainability, physical constraints, land supply and attractiveness to the market.
3. Recognising the aspirations of other settlements, outside of the main towns, to play a part in meeting social and economic needs, and contributing to regeneration, by delivering smaller but significant levels of development.
4. Enabling smaller communities to become more sustainable and resilient, by re-balancing the housing stock and encouraging social and economic vitality. This will be achieved through the identification of grouping of communities and a positive approach to development that delivers community benefits.
5. Recognising that in rural areas, development that demonstrably meets the needs of the local communities, for instance affordable housing and economic diversification, including appropriate small scale tourist development, will be permitted in rural settlements whilst protecting the countryside from wider development pressures and widespread new building.

3.10 This approach has been developed out of two rounds of public consultation, so although the Plan is still emerging, the Spatial Strategy is being firmed up and as such it carries a degree of certainty in terms of the Council's approach. The Policy Directions Paper (May 2011) gives an indication of the level of development for settlements in the top two tiers in the settlement hierarchy. Although these figures will undoubtedly be refined and reviewed as the Plan progresses, they do, when considered in the light of the spatial strategy, give an indication of the scale of development appropriate in these settlements as a whole. The decision by the Secretary of State to refuse the Cala Homes application in Winchester and subsequent decisions was based on the impact it could have on the delivery that Council's Local Plan, so prematurity was an issue. In that case the site was large and represented a substantial element of their housing allocation and their Local Plan was reasonably well advanced. In our case, the Plan is less advanced but as set out above, does have some detail for the quantum of development that could go to the top two tiers of settlements.

3.11 In view of the Secretary of States approach it would seem that the scale of development is relevant in terms of impact on the emerging plan strategy. When assessing proposals therefore developments that do not comprise a significant part of the total set out in the Policy Direction Paper may not undermine the Plan strategy and may be acceptable. In the case of lower tier settlements, where no numbers are defined, the appropriateness of the scale of a proposal can be judged in relation to the scale of the settlement itself. A recent appeal refusal at Bishop Middleham suggested that the scale of development was one of the concerns so precautionary judgement will need to be applied to sites in such settlements when proposals come forward. In considering the scale of a proposal the Council will seek to assess whether it causes harm or is premature in the context of a settlement to avoid developers putting forward small parts of much larger sites to circumvent the plan preparation process.



***Five year land supply (residential proposals): the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), and County Durham Plan Sustainability Objectives***

3.12 It is expected that residential schemes will form the bulk of proposals that will need to be considered. In that respect the current Housing Land Supply and the situation set out in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA – i.e. the annual Council assessment of the broad suitability of sites for housing whereby sites are ranked as suitable [green] or unsuitable [amber or red]) are relevant.

3.13 SHLAA sites have been assessed against a set of factors but for the most part they have been assessed on site and locational matters only and not current policy (although green belt has been a factor as set out above). As such, a green designation in the SHLAA does not imply immediate suitability for development and sites have not been assessed for sustainability in the level of detail that Development Plan allocation would require or against the emerging spatial strategy in the County Durham Plan. The acceptance for development of all green SHLAA sites now would also prejudice the ability of developers and landowners of, for example, amber and red SHLAA sites to argue their merits through the preparation of the allocations section of the County Durham Plan.

3.14 The SHLAA does provide a starting point for assessment and is a guide to land supply and remains as an evidence document required in the NPPF. One of the factors that SHLAA doesn't consider in detail is site sustainability and in the case of sites under consideration, developers will need to provide evidence that they have assessed the suitability of their site against the sustainability objectives used by the Council. These are set out in Appendix 1 at the rear of this paper.

3.15 In relation to increasing the supply of housing the NPPF requires LPA's to boost significantly the supply of housing and we should: "identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land".

3.16 When sites do come forward it is reasonable that developers contribute to appropriate needs arising from their scheme and it seems appropriate that those putting sites forward accept that their returns will need to factor infrastructure requirements associated with bringing the site forward into their costs and not place a burden on the public purse. In relation to the five year housing land supply requirements, the situation varies between the seven former district areas in County Durham. In areas that lack a five year supply, this will be a material consideration, but it will not negate the need to address the other requirements set out in this paper. However, in areas that have a five year supply potentially appropriate scheme will not be dismissed on these grounds alone on the basis that housing requirements for the County as set out in RSS are not a ceiling.

**Would demonstrable harm arise as a consequence of approval?**

3.17 This is one of the key premise of the planning system and although points 1 to 4 above cover most material matters, it will also be assessed as part of the consideration of a site.

**In addition to the five key points set out above the following matters of detail are also relevant:**

***Green Belt Sites***

3.18 The emerging County Durham Plan proposes green belt deletions to meet its objectives. These proposals have been the subject of support from the development industry but have raised concerns for others in the community. A campaign to protect the green belt around Durham City has been established and for the Government's Localism agenda to have meaning, these concerns will need to be debated through the Plan preparation process to establish the merits of both arguments before a decision on the final approach is taken. The Government has also reasserted the need for Green Belt protection and the requirement to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for any Green Belt deletion remains. As such, it is highly unlikely that proposals that involve the development of green belt land will be viewed favourably in the light of this Paper. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has, in the vast majority of cases, not entertained green belt sites, and in the interest of transparency it would be inappropriate to consider such sites as acceptable now at this stage in the preparation of the County Durham Plan.

***Affordable Housing***

3.19 The current requirements on allocated sites should apply to the consideration of other sites also. Key amongst these is the need to provide affordable housing to the level set out in the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). In assessing current proposals that accord with policy the viability of delivering affordable housing is considered and in some cases the requirement has been dropped or reduced on clearly demonstrated viability grounds in order to help deliver development in a difficult market. Such an approach would be less satisfactory when considering these sites, as the delivery of affordable housing is a major need in the County and would be a major benefit that could be material to the acceptability of a scheme. The Council will be pragmatic in assessing the level in relation to SHMA requirements (it is evidence base rather than policy) but landowners and developers should bear this in mind when putting forward proposal. Whilst it is accepted that site viability is a sophisticated balancing exercise, the delivery of affordable housing has been difficult to achieve in the ongoing economic climate so delivery from appropriate sites would be a material benefit.

***Recreational and open space needs***

3.20 One of the Council's requirements for residential development is appropriate recreational and amenity space both on site and sometimes off site to meet the needs of the new residents of that scheme. The Council has an Open Space Needs Assessment (OSNA) that sets out provision levels in an area and standards for what is required dependant on those existing level of facilities. The Council will assess these and set out the level of contributions that will be required on premature sites, both in terms of on-site needs or off-site contributions.

***Community Infrastructure Levy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan***

3.21 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will set out what contributions developers will need to make to meet the infrastructure needs associated with their development. This work is ongoing and actual charges are still to be determined. If proposals are approved prior to this it could undermine the ability of the Council to deliver its Plan strategy and in the current climate of lack of public funding could have serious repercussions to economic progress. Nevertheless, the evolving Infrastructure Delivery Plan can provide some evidence of needs as set out above in

Para. 3.4. When there is evidence of need the Council will set out such requirements to developers at an early stage in order that they can be factored into their financial viability calculations. In other cases, when information doesn't exist, a judgement would need to be made as to whether any other benefits coming from the development could be considered to provide benefits in lieu, also bearing in mind the economic benefits that a development may bring in its own right. In applying this approach it will be carried out in accord with the requirements on – Planning Obligations set out in the NPPF, through the use of Section 106 agreements.

***Residential development on sites allocated for other uses in existing Local Plans.***

3.22 The most obvious scenario in this case would be residential proposals on existing employment allocations. In such cases reference will be made to the Employment Land Review (ELR) that has been prepared as part of the evidence base for the County Durham Plan. The ELR suggested that there is an overprovision of employment land in many locations but that other locations, e.g. Durham City, require more. As such, any proposal for a residential or other use (e.g. retail) on existing employment land will be assessed in the light of the ELR and the other emerging County Durham Plan issues set out in the Paper.

***Employment and Retail proposals:***

3.23 This Paper has concentrated on residential development but it is likely that other proposals, notably employment and retail uses could also be forthcoming.

3.24 In the case of retail proposals the NPPF makes limited changes to the policy approach, retaining the sequential approach to location and also the assessment of impact of proposals on existing centres. As such, proposals will be considered on their merits in line with advice in existing Local Plan policies (where up to date), or NPPF.

3.25 The assessment of employment proposals will be carried out with regard to the Council's commitment to delivering economic improvement across the County. As such, where proposals do not accord with existing policy, the Council will assess the benefits of the scheme and this will be material to the decision, unless it would cause harm to other considerations..

## **4.0 Key point summary**

4.1 The new planning system is a commitment of the Government and the Council wishes to seek to address the implications of this in a positive and pragmatic manner. It is considered that by doing this it will fit comfortably with the Planning Service aim of positively facilitating good development in the County. In this respect there are certain factors that impact on our approach to considering development proposals on sites that the Council regards as departures from current Local Plan policy:

- The policy coverage in the seven existing Local Plans across the County is variable and current planning obligations available through these policies are limited but affordable housing and open space needs are mostly addressed
- The County Durham Plan in an emerging state but reference to its strategy and sustainability requirement provides a degree of guidance in decision making.

- All consideration of such proposals should assess whether approval now would undermine the emerging County Durham Plan strategy or deny other developers and interested parties the opportunity to have their say through the plan preparation process..
- The SHLAA is not an allocations document and acceptance of green sites now could prejudice the opportunity for others to promote their sites through plan preparation. .
- A charging schedule for CIL is some way off but the emerging IDP County Durham Plan evidence base will facilitate negotiation with developers on a site by site basis, in accord with the requirements for Planning Obligations in the NPPF..
- Five year land supply will be taken into account in considering proposals.
- Delivering a supply of appropriate housing sites remains a priority, not only of the NPPF but also of Durham County Council.

In conclusion, the Council intends to act pragmatically on a site by site basis and proposals will not be resisted unless demonstrable harm is evident through the factors set out in the following section.

## **5.0 Site Assessment guidelines**

5.1 This Paper seeks to provide guidance on what factors will be used to assess a proposal in cases when the Local Plan is out of date or when the Council wishes to consider a proposal that is contrary to Local Plan policy but which may have some merits. The following guidelines seek to assess the appropriateness of a land use on a site:

### ***Does the proposal:***

1. CONFORM TO THE LAND USE ALLOCATED ON A SITE IN AN UP TO DATE SAVED LOCAL PLAN POLICY– acceptable subject to consideration of detailed issues
2. CONFORM TO A SAVED AND UP TO DATE LOCAL PLAN POLICY FOR LAND USE ON UNALLOCATED LAND – generally acceptable subject to consideration of detailed issues
3. NOT ALIGN WITH 1 & 2 ABOVE BUT ACCORD WITH RSS POLICY – consider other benefits\* before making decision (green belt sites highly unlikely to be acceptable)
4. NOT ALIGN WITH 1, 2 or 3 ABOVE BUT ACCORD WITH PPG/PPS – consider other benefits\* before making decision (green belt sites highly unlikely to be acceptable)
5. NOT ALIGN WITH 1 to 4 ABOVE BUT ACCORD WITH THE EMERGING COUNTY DURHAM PLAN STRATEGY – consider benefits\* proposes by

developer and sustainability issues (green belt sites highly unlikely to be acceptable)

6. NOT ALIGN WITH 1 to 5 ABOVE BUT ACCORDS WITH NPPF – consider impact on emerging Plan Strategy, benefits\* proposed by developer and sustainability issues (green belt sites highly unlikely to be acceptable)
7. NOT ACCORD WITH ANY OF ABOVE – unlikely to be acceptable

\* for the purpose of these assessments reference to benefits relates to factors that could be material to a decision to accept a proposals where a policy is out of date in the context of advice in NPPF. Such benefits would be addressed as planning obligations in accord with the requirements of the NPPF. The following constitute potential benefits that could be material in considering proposals:

***Assessing the benefits arising from the proposal?***

5.2 In the case of proposals that don't comply to existing policy, the following factors should be assessed to see if this justifies the approval of a departure:

***1. Does the proposal meet the objectives of the emerging County Durham Plan and does it comply with the emerging spatial strategy?*** The County Durham Plan has been through three rounds of consultation and the emerging spatial strategy is set out above. The approach is subject to further consultation but provides a guide to what might be appropriate in a particular location. To reiterate, this approach is not considered suitable when considering green belt sites. The Council's strategy for the green belt (notably around Durham City) is the subject of both support and objection and it would be inappropriate to make decisions on green belt sites ahead of the ongoing preparation of the County Durham Plan.

***2. Does the proposal deliver current needs or contribute to improved facilities in the locality?*** Much of the evidence base for the County Durham Plan is in place, but notably the OSNA, the SHMA and the developing IPD are key documents. These set out requirements for, in the case of the OSNA, contributions to open space needs in a locality and, in the case of the SHMA provide evidence of affordable housing needs. In a difficult economic climate, the level of these needs offered on a development would be material to consideration of that proposal, as this might present a chance to achieve the delivery of what would otherwise not be delivered. Equally, a developer contribution (negotiated in accord with guidelines in the NPPF) on a site by site basis) to other appropriate infrastructure needs generated by the development, where that need is established through the emerging IDP, would also be material.

***3. Is there Community support?*** In the context of achieving the aims of the Localism agenda and not circumventing the ability of third parties to comment on a proposal as it goes through the preparation stages in the County Durham Plan, does the proposal have local and wider support as indicated through a Statement of Community Involvement or any other means? In cases when there is reasonable or strong support for a proposal this would provide a degree of comfort that to permit it now would not undermine the future County Durham Plan strategy. However, where there are objections to a proposal these will be assessed, for example, to clarify if the objection relates to a matter of detail that can be addresses by the developer, whether it is material to planning or whether it is a matter of principle and approval would undermine delivery of the emerging County Durham Plan.

**4. Is the proposal sustainable?** Developers submitting an application should assess their proposal against the Sustainability Objectives of the County Durham Plan and also the requirements set out in the NPPF. This would demonstrate the sustainability of a site and, although not providing the opportunity to test the site against others (as would be the case in an assessment during preparation of the County Durham Plan), it would be an indication of a level of sustainability of the site in its own right. Should the appraisal show a lack of sustainability then the developer should indicate the measures proposed to make a location sustainable, as defined in the NPPF.

The Councils' planning staff will be able to provide more guidance on this Paper if required but it is the intention of the Council to take a pragmatic view of the new National Planning situation and of its own aspirations for developing the County's economy, whilst at the same time seeking to avoid prejudicing the open debate that should accompany preparation of the County Durham Plan. As the County Durham Plan continues through the stages of its preparation it starts to carry more weight so this Position Statement will become less relevant.

## **Appendix 1**

### **County Durham Plan Sustainability Objectives:**

Developers should address these objectives as part of their submission

1. To provide everybody with the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home
2. To promote strong, secure communities
3. To improve education, training and life-long learning, and maintain a healthy labour market
4. To reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles
5. To reduce the need to travel and promote use of sustainable transport options
6. To alleviate deprivation and poverty
7. To develop a sustainable and diverse economy with high levels of employment
8. To reduce the causes of climate change
9. To respond and enable adaptation to the inevitable impacts of climate change
10. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity
11. To protect and enhance the quality and character of landscape and townscape
12. To protect and enhance cultural heritage & the historic environment
13. To protect and improve air, water and soil resources
14. To reduce waste and encourage the sustainable and efficient use of materials
15. To improve the sustainability of minerals extraction and use and reduce adverse impacts on communities and the environment

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Cabinet

30 May 2012

**Design and Development Brief for  
Milburngate House, Durham City**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic  
Development;**

**Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To approve the Milburngate House Design and Development Brief for use in planning and related matters.

**Background**

- 2 The brief is the result of a joint commission between National Savings and Investments (NS&I) and Durham County Council (DCC) for the Milburngate House site, which is owned by NS&I.
- 3 NS&I are looking to move to the Freemans Reach site and are therefore considering the future of their existing premises. Taylor Young Ltd were appointed to produce a brief, the purpose of which is to establish clear guidelines for this sensitive city centre site in order to guide potential developers when they consider redevelopment of the existing building.



**Milburngate House**

- 4 NS&I have been working with DCC and the Homes and Community Agency (HCA), owners of the Freemans Reach (former Ice Rink) site on the opposite side of the river. This is to establish a development partner, with NS&I

becoming the tenant of the first phase of a new development. The development proposals are shortly to be taken through the planning pre application stage. It is anticipated that NS&I will be able to relocate from Milburngate House in 2014 and they are proposing to market the site in the summer of 2012. Vacating Milburngate House and offering the site for redevelopment is seen as the most cost effective solution due to the deteriorating condition of the building and increasing repairs/improvement costs.

### **The Brief – consultation and content**

- 5 The brief has been the subject of extensive consultation during its preparation, with consultation with a specific range of stakeholders and in addition two rounds of public consultation. The first in May 2011 was to establish reaction to site issues and options through a well attended two day public exhibition in Durham Town Hall. The second (November 2011) was to refine the content of the brief that incorporated comments from the first consultation and this was carried out by e-mail distribution to interested parties. Details of the consultation exercises, and on how the brief has been refined to reflect comments received, are included in the brief.
- 6 The document is in two principal parts, firstly, an analysis of the site constraints and, secondly, opportunities and design guidelines. It also includes analysis of the capacity for a potentially acceptable range of uses that would be able to meet the design guidelines.
- 7 The main issues dealt with are the access restrictions from the busy City Centre roads and the relationship with the City's heritage. The principal heritage issues are the relationship with the World Heritage Site (WHS) and the surrounding conservation area. Suggested limitations on height and extent are included to avoid undue impact on WHS views. Site specific suggestions for handling development are intended to maximise the beneficial impact of replacing the existing discordant building.
- 8 In relation to potential land uses, these focus on: residential use; retail or other town centre uses; or leisure, and in particular restaurants, cafes and bars. This is not a definitive list, retaining or replacing office use remains a possibility and other uses may be acceptable, indeed it is important that other existing occupiers of the site are taken into consideration as future options are explored. Those uses forming examples in the brief have been tested in terms of planning and highway suitability and also are considered to be realistic commercial propositions as verified through a property market review.
- 9 Setting guidelines helps give developers confidence in the opportunities for the site and provides clear suggestions for judging the quality of new development during the planning process. It was not suggested that the brief should be adopted as a supplementary planning document in association with the County Durham Plan. Adoption by the County Council as a brief provides sufficient robustness to enable use in the planning process as the proposals within accord with the saved policies of the City of Durham Local Plan.
- 10 The brief is intended to deal with full redevelopment of the whole site. Market reaction to such a development opportunity in the current economic climate is

difficult to predict and an option for part retention of the building could emerge. If it does, changes may still be related to some of the design parameters in the brief which would also guide any new sections of development. Renovation of any retained building will still need to respect the sensitivity of its setting and uphold quality of design.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

- 11 It is recommended that the Design and Development Brief for Milburngate House (February 2012), is adopted by the Council to support future redevelopment.

### **Background Papers**

Taylor Young: Milburngate House – Design & Development Brief February 2012 - a copy has been deposited in the Members' Resource Centre.

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**Contact: Gavin Scott Tel: 03000 261918**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance –**

The costs of preparing the brief have been met jointly by National Savings and Investments and Durham County Council, each paying £22,900 out of £45,800.

### **Staffing –**

None

### **Risk –**

The brief acts as mitigation against development that would prove difficult to approve through the planning process.

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

Reference to Article 12 of the Constitution (12.03) indicates that adoption of the brief does not represent a “Key Decision” as such it is not subject to EQIA. The brief has however, been prepared in a way that any outcomes would be expected to deliver development that fully addressed equality and diversity issues.

### **Accommodation –**

None

### **Crime and Disorder –**

None

### **Human Rights –**

None

### **Consultation -**

Consultation was embedded in the production of the brief as follows:

- a) Through individual consultation with local stakeholders and including English Heritage.
- b) A two day consultation took place at Durham Town Hall on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st May 2011. Boards were presented displaying proposed designed principles and a series of potential approaches to the site’s redevelopment. The views of the attendees were gathered using a feedback form that also enabled ranking of various site options.
- c) November 2011 e-mail and internet based consultation including :
  - Brief downloadable from Durham City Vision website link from Durham County Council website.
  - Separate briefing note to County Council members.
  - Local MP
  - Key stakeholders - inc. retail and residents group representatives.
  - To DCV Board including Cathedral and University representatives.
  - Via Area Action Partnership to Forum members.
  - To local residents groups
  - To previous respondents from first consultation.
  - To City Centre respondents to previous DCC planning consultations.
  - In response to requests following Durham Times/Northern Echo article.

### **Procurement –**

Procurement of the consultants for the brief was carried out using Durham County Council procedures. No further procurement is anticipated.

**Disability Issues –**

Access issues are dealt with in the development brief.

**Legal Implications –**

There are no specific legal implications for the Council as the site is in third party ownership, although the appropriate redevelopment or reuse of the site would be a major benefit for the City and County. Council adoption of the brief gives it more weight to guide potential developers bringing forward future schemes. The Council has supported the preparation of the brief and the public consultation to ensure that it reaches a wide audience.

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## Cabinet

30 May 2012


**Implications for Durham County Council  
of the Government's policy programme**


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**Report of Corporate Management Team  
Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive  
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**


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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 On 14 December 2011, Cabinet considered the most recent report on the implications of the Coalition Government's policy programme. This report provides Cabinet with an update on the major policy developments and announcements since then and analyses the implications for the Council and County Durham.

**Executive Summary**

- 2 Since the beginning of the year, the Government has made a number of policy announcements, which progress its initial policy proposals set out in *The Coalition: our Programme for Government* and subsequent bills and white papers. In addition, a number of proposed pieces of legislation have been revised following further consultation and debate and consideration by Parliament.
- 3 The most significant announcements since the last report to Members relate to the following, outlined in more detail below:
- Deficit reduction;
  - Economic growth and planning reform;
  - Engagement and economic participation;
  - Education standards and inspection;
  - Local Government finance;
  - Welfare reform;
  - NHS and public health reforms;
  - Late night drinking and hate crime;
  - National alcohol strategy;
  - Open data and transparency;
  - Open Public Services;
  - Waste and recycling;
  - Electoral reform;
  - E-accessibility.
- 4 The common themes of Government policy such as transparency, choice, community empowerment and more diverse patterns of public service provision are still evident.

- 5 Clearly, the various policy changes will have major implications for the Council and the steps it is taking to develop an 'altogether better Durham'.
- 6 The Council and its partners are continuing to analyse the impact that Government policy will have on local communities and on our ability to deliver the sustainable community strategy and wherever possible, are working together to respond proactively to the Government's policy changes.
- 7 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and agree the action being taken to anticipate and respond to the Government's policy reforms.

## Background

- 8 Cabinet considered a report on 15 September 2010 on the emerging policy statements made by the Government. Initially, the most comprehensive policy statement was the *'The Coalition: our programme for government'* which set out the Government's proposals to tackle the deficit and transform the relationship between citizens and the state, under the watchwords, of 'freedom', 'fairness' and 'responsibility'.
- 9 Since then, the Government has published its Comprehensive Spending Review and a number of white papers and bills, which provided more detail on its policy proposals. These have been the subject of reports to Cabinet on 2 November 2010, 26 January 2011, 25 May 2011, 14 September 2011 and 14 December 2011. Where necessary, further policy reports have been prepared on specific topics, such as the Localism Bill/Act, changes to the NHS and health care and proposed reforms to the planning system.

## Update

- 10 The most significant policy announcements since the last report to Members in December 2011, relate to the following, which are outlined in more detail below:
  - Deficit reduction and public expenditure;
  - Economic growth and planning reform;
  - Engagement and economic participation;
  - Education standards and inspection;
  - Local Government finance;
  - Welfare reform;
  - NHS and public health reforms;
  - Late night drinking and hate crime;
  - National alcohol strategy;
  - Open data and transparency;
  - Open Public Services;
  - Waste and recycling;
  - Electoral reform;
  - E-accessibility.



## **Deficit reduction and public expenditure**

- 11 The Government has maintained its strategy to reduce the deficit, principally by reducing public expenditure.
- 12 This is to be achieved by departmental spending reductions across Government, with the largest percentage reductions to be made in Communities and Local Government, Work and Pensions, Environment and Rural Affairs and Transport.
- 13 In his Autumn statement, the Chancellor announced continuing public sector pay restraint for a further two years, limiting pay increases to one per cent a year. In addition, pay review bodies were to be established to review differences between wage levels in the public and private sectors in different parts of the country, with a view to considering the introduction of regional as opposed to national pay policies. In the 2012 Budget, the Chancellor confirmed his interest in introducing regional pay, publishing his economic evidence for such a move and announcing that some government departments will have the option of negotiating regional pay settlements for civil servants when the current civil service pay freeze ends. It is expected that the approach will be rolled out to other parts of the public sector in due course.
- 14 The Chancellor also announced that to maintain departmental budget reductions at current forecast levels, it would be necessary to achieve a further £10 billion reduction in welfare savings by 2016, based on reduced unemployment forecasts. This would be in addition to the £18 billion reduced spending on welfare included in the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2010 and the 10 per cent reduction in the costs of Council Tax benefit support.
- 15 Each year, the Government publishes public expenditure statistical analyses which give an indication of the distribution of public spending between regions.
- 16 The analyses for 2010/11 highlight that for total identifiable public expenditure on services per head in real terms, expenditure per head in the North East was 0.34 per cent less than the national (England) average increase of 11.31 per cent between 2006/7 to 2010/11, whereas that in East Anglia was 9.57 per cent more than the national average. In the more recent period since the CSR, the reduction in expenditure per head in the North East was 42 per cent more than the 'national average', while the expenditure reduction per head for East Anglia was 56 per cent less the national average over the same period. East Anglia was in fact one of four regions including the East Midlands, the South West and the North West where the percentage expenditure reductions per head were below the national average.

## **Economic growth and planning reform**

- 17 Alongside the 2011 Budget, the Government published its Plan for Growth to articulate its measure to promote long term economic growth. This contained 235 measures to encourage investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy, make the UK the best place in Europe to start, finance

and grow a business, create a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe and create the most competitive tax system in the UK.

- 18 To coincide with the 2012 Budget, the Government published a progress report against the plan and the subsidiary National Infrastructure Plan. Progress was being made against 74 per cent of actions with a further 25 per cent completed.
- 19 A major element of the Government's strategy for economic growth is reform of the planning system. Central to this is the consolidation of national planning policy statements and guidance into a single National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Cabinet considered a report on the Government's draft proposals for reform at its meeting of 12 October 2011.
- 20 The draft Framework was subject to considerable debate by different interests and lobbies and on 27 March 2012, the Government published the final National Planning Policy Framework, which came into immediate effect.
- 21 Transitional arrangements allow local authorities and inspectors, for the next 12 months, to continue to give full weight to 'relevant' policies adopted since 2004 even where there is a 'limited degree of conflict' with the NPPF. However, the arrangements also allow "due weight" to be given to relevant policies in existing plans beyond this 12-month period, depending on their degree of consistency with the framework. Decision-makers may also give weight to emerging local plan policies, according to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF.
- 22 The NPPF is intended to refocus planning policy to better support growth by introducing a presumption in favour of sustainable development to underpin all local plans and decisions, and to localise choice about the use of previously developed land, ending nationally and regionally imposed targets.
- 23 In addition to reforming national planning policy, the Government announced that it intends to introduce further measures to deregulate and simplify the planning system, for example consulting on reducing information requirements and on proposals to amend the Use Class Order and the associated permitted development rights to make changing the use of buildings easier, for implementation by April 2013.
- 24 A more detailed assessment of the NPPF, its implications and the support the Government has pledged to local authorities to enable them to get their plans up to date quickly is the subject of a more detailed report to this meeting of Cabinet.

### **Engagement and economic participation**

- 25 On 25 November 2011, the Deputy Prime Minister launched the £1 billion Youth Contract scheme to provide new opportunities for young people, including apprenticeships and work experience placements. The announcement was billed as marking a substantial increase in the support and help available to young people through the Work Programme, Jobcentre Plus and sector-based work academies.

- 26 Key measures include the provision of 160,000 job subsidies worth up to £2,275 each to business to employ an 18-24 year old through the Work Programme and an increase in the number of incentive payments worth £1,500 each for employers to take on young people as apprentices. In addition, an extra 250,000 Work Experience places over the next three years will be created so that every 18 to 24 year-old can be offered a work experience place, before they enter the Work Programme.
- 27 In addition, extra support is to be provided through Jobcentre Plus in the form of weekly, rather than fortnightly signing-on meetings, more time to talk to an adviser and a National Careers Service interview.
- 28 On 1 December 2011, the Government published *New Challenges, New Chances*, its response to the proposals to reform further education so that it is better able to provide people with the necessary skills and qualifications to secure employment and meet the needs of businesses and employers.
- 29 Key elements include:
- providing better access to comparative information on training providers and courses to enable students to make informed choices;
  - providing intensive support and intervening to tackle failing provision;
  - engaging business in qualification design, development and assessment;
  - a new independent commission on adult education and vocational learning will be established to promote excellence in teaching;
  - supporting the sector to capitalise on international demand for technician and higher level vocational skills training and qualifications;
  - ensuring that young people aged 19 up to 24 will be able to access a full range of programmes including, English and maths skills, to enable them to continue into further learning or move into employment. FE Loans will support those aged over 24 doing courses at Level 3 and above who want to re-train or up-skill to get a job or progress onto higher education;
  - a comprehensive Vocational Education and Training programme including Government funding to support Higher Apprenticeships, enabling employers, colleges and universities to deliver the advanced skills most critical for growth;
  - more freedoms and flexibilities for colleges to ensure the provision of high quality, flexible courses to meet the needs of their local areas.
- 30 On 15 December 2011, the Government outlined its wider plans to increase the participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work. *Building Engagement, Building Futures* sets out the Government's strategy to improve the opportunities for young people, so they can succeed in education and training and gain the skills they need to secure an apprenticeship or employment. The strategy includes radical reforms to schools, vocational education, skills and welfare provision, focusing on five priorities for action:
- Raising attainment in school and beyond to ensure that young people have the skills they need to compete in a global economy;
  - Helping local partners to provide effective and coordinated services that support all young people, including the most vulnerable, putting the

country on track to achieve full participation for 16-17 year olds by 2015;

- Encouraging and incentivising employers to inspire and recruit young people by offering more high quality apprenticeships and work experience places;
- Ensuring that work pays and giving young people the personalised support they need to find it, through Universal Credit, the Work Programme and our Get Britain Working measures; and
- Putting in place a new Youth Contract worth almost £1 billion over the next three years to help get young people learning or earning before long term damage is done.

- 31 To deliver the priorities, the Government announced that it would provide £4.5 million over the next two years to give more 16-19 year olds access to work experience, prioritising areas with the highest proportion of young people not in education, employment or training for funding to test new approaches to work experience. The Department is also working with employers to cut red tape around work experience and has published a new myth-busting guide for schools, colleges and employers.
- 32 An extra 250,000 work experience places will be provided over the next three years for young unemployed people across the UK as part of the Youth Contract. This will come with an offer of a work experience place for every 18-24 year-old who wants one, before they enter the Work Programme.
- 33 Charities and businesses will be funded to help the most disengaged 16-17 year olds get skills and jobs. As part of the Youth Contract, £150 million will be available over the next three years to get the most vulnerable and disengaged young people back in education, onto an apprenticeship or into sustainable employment.
- 34 Following the Wolf review of vocational education, new 16-19 programmes of study will be designed to offer breadth and depth of qualifications to ensure young people have as many options as possible. This will include meaningful work-experience and a focus on English and maths.
- 35 Employers will also be encouraged to take on an 18-24 year-old from the Work Programme by making available 160,000 job subsidies worth up to £2,275 for each business, to cover an employer's National Insurance contributions for taking on a Work Programme employee.
- 36 The subsidies are part of wider reforms to the apprenticeships programme, which as part of the Youth Contract, include funding for at least 40,000 incentive payments for small firms to take on 18-24 year old apprentices.
- 37 The Government also reiterated its intention to join up the welfare and skills systems, so that the Work Programme and skills providers work together to offer basic skills training, training in sectoral/vocational areas needed locally, and work experience to best support young people with low skills levels.
- 38 In addition, the strategy confirmed the intention to launch a National Careers Service in April 2012 to provide information, advice and guidance about careers, further and higher education, apprenticeships and other forms of training.

- 39 On 20 January 2012, the Government launched a consultation on the practical implications of raising the participation age (RPA), under which young people are legally obliged to participate in education or training. From summer 2013, this will apply until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17, and from summer 2015 onwards until their 18th birthday.
- 40 The move was legislated for in the Education and Skills Act 2008 and will require young people to remain in full-time education, whether at a school or college, undertake an apprenticeship, or work full-time (for 20 hours or over per week and for at least eight weeks) while undertaking part-time study alongside (for the equivalent of a day a week).
- 41 The consultation seeks views on whether full time work should be extended to include unpaid voluntary work and internships alongside part time study and the financial penalties local authorities can levy on employers for breaching the legislation. Within this, it is suggested that local authorities should only be allowed to use the proceeds of fines for RPA enforcement and monitoring work. The outcomes of the consultation are expected later in the year when the draft implementation regulations and orders are published.
- 42 In a related step, in the 2012 Budget, the Chancellor announced plans to pilot additional loans for young people to set up and grow businesses under a new National Enterprise Allowance scheme.

### **Education standards and inspection**

- 43 On 9 February 2012, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) published outline proposals for reforming the approach to schools inspection. The clear aim is to raise the bar on school performance, by addressing the issue of 'coasting schools' which fail to strive for continuous improvement and by placing a priority on the quality, leadership and management of teaching.
- 44 In the consultation document *A Good Education for All*, Ofsted proposed that from September 2012 schools cannot be judged 'outstanding' unless their teaching is rated as 'outstanding' in an inspection, and that they will only be deemed to be providing an acceptable standard of education where they are judged to be 'good' or 'outstanding'. The judgement categories of 'satisfactory' and 'notice to improve' will be replaced by a single judgement of 'requires improvement' and where schools are judged as requiring improvement, they will be subject to a full re-inspection earlier than is currently the case. Where a school is judged as 'requires improvement' on two consecutive inspections, it will be deemed to require 'special measures'. In coming to a judgement on leadership and management in a school, inspectors will undertake an analysis of anonymised information, provided by the school, of the outcomes of the most recent performance management of all teachers within the school.
- 45 In addition, the consultation confirmed Ofsted's intention to undertake inspections without notice being provided to the school. Currently, no notice inspections are only undertaken where there is cause for concern about a school's performance or capacity to improve. Under the latest proposals they would be deployed more generally to test and drive up school performance.



## Local government finance

- 46 On 3 October 2011, the Chancellor announced that he would provide a further £675 million support to English local authorities to enable them to freeze council tax for a further year in 2012/13. This was followed by the enactment of provisions in the Localism Act 2011, which in effect required any local authority proposing a council tax increase of more than 3.5 per cent in 2012/13 to put its proposal to a local referendum.
- 47 On 19 December 2011, the Government announced the outcome of the Local Government Resource Review, publishing its response to the consultation on introducing business rates retention and the localisation of support for council tax support. The two policy proposals were the key features of the Local Government Finance Bill which was introduced to Parliament that day.
- 48 Within the past fortnight, the Secretary of State has announced that councils will be allowed to retain 50 per cent of revenue generated from business rates, with the remainder being provided to central Government to redistribute to authorities through grants. To avoid disproportionate benefits being gained by councils with exceptionally large business bases relative to their baseline funding, the Government plans to share such gains via a levy aiming to assist vulnerable or less prosperous authorities. This is intended to provide a 'safety net' to guarantee that council incomes do not fall by over 10 per cent. In addition to these measures, local authorities will be allowed retain the entirety of business rates from new renewable energy projects.
- 49 We have also received a consultation document from the Secretary of State on indicative funding arrangements for the localisation of council tax support which is being evaluated and will be subject to a future report to Cabinet in the summer.
- 50 On 1 February 2012, the Government announced the New Homes Bonus allocations for 2012/13. Durham was allocated £1,299,616 as the second instalment from year one and a further £1,251,468 as the first instalment for year two of the scheme.
- 51 The financial implications of these announcements and proposals were included in the Council's medium term financial plan and budget for 2012/13 as approved by Council on 22 February 2012. In addition, Cabinet considered a further report on the introduction of localised council tax support at its meeting of 18 April 2012.
- 52 The Corporate Director, Resources will bring a further report to Cabinet on a proposed local council tax support scheme towards the end of this year.
- 53 In addition, in his 2012 Budget, the Chancellor confirmed that he will introduce a discount on loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) for local authorities that provide improved information and transparency on their long term borrowing and capital spending plans. It was also confirmed that the Government will work with the local authority sector to consider an independent body to facilitate the provision of PWLB lending at a further reduced rate where authorities demonstrate quality and value for money.

## Welfare reform

- 54 On 21 November 2011, the Government published proposals to extend data sharing between the Department of Work and Pensions and local authorities to better target welfare and simplify the process for people applying for support.
- 55 On 8 March 2012, the Government's wider welfare reforms contained in the Welfare Reform Bill received Royal Assent. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 as is it now known provides the primary legislation for the introduction of:
- Universal Credit to provide a single streamlined benefit intended to ensure 'work always pays';
  - a stronger approach to reducing fraud and error with tougher penalties for the most serious offences;
  - a new claimant commitment showing clearly what is expected of claimants while giving protection to those with the greatest needs;
  - reforms to Disability Living Allowance, through the introduction of the Personal Independence Payment to meet the needs of disabled people;
  - a new approach to Housing Benefit, which will entail a transfer of administrative responsibility from local to central government and which is intended to be fairer, bring stability to the market and improve incentives to work;
  - measures to tackle abuse of the Social Fund system by giving greater power to local authorities;
  - reforms to Employment and Support Allowance to make the benefit fairer and to ensure that help goes to those with the greatest need;
  - changes to support a new system of child support which puts the interest of the child first.
- 56 When first introduced, as well as introducing a fairer welfare system which ensures that work pays, the reforms were also intended to save £18 billion from the welfare budget in line with the Comprehensive Spending Review. In his 2012 Budget, the Chancellor advised that to maintain departmental spending reductions at current levels it would be necessary to achieve a further £10 billion of savings from welfare by 2016.
- 57 A more detailed report on the implications of welfare reform will be considered by Members at this meeting of Cabinet.

## NHS and public health reform

- 58 The Health and Social Care Bill received Royal Assent on 27 March 2012 and the Health and Social Care Act provides the primary legislation for the Government's NHS reforms.
- 59 The Government continues to provide guidance in relation to NHS reforms including its Vision for HealthWatch and clarification for local authorities in commissioning effective local Healthwatch organisations.
- 60 The Department of Health published *Developing Commissioning Support: Towards Service Excellence* to help commissioning support organisations

fully support Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in their new commissioning role.

- 61 A number of public health policy documents have recently been published by the Government, which provide further direction on the transition of public health functions from primary care trusts (PCTs) to local authorities. These include the Public Health Outcomes Framework, guidance on public health workforce matters and a planning support guide for local authorities and PCTs. A workforce strategy is expected in Autumn 2012.
- 62 Local authorities will receive a ring-fenced grant to deliver their new public health responsibilities from April 2013. Exact details are not expected until the end of 2012.

### **Late night drinking, community cohesion and hate crime**

- 63 On 18 January 2012, the Government consulted on dealing with the problems of late night drinking, focusing on the measures in the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to introduce 'early morning restriction orders' (EMROs) to control alcohol-related anti-social behaviour and a 'late night levy' to help meet the additional costs of maintaining public order. The consultation sought views on the process of adopting an EMRO and/or the levy, categories of business which will be exempt from any EMRO, exemptions and the kinds of services a licensing authority may fund with the 30 per cent of net levy receipts it may retain from the net levy revenue.
- 64 On 21 February 2012, the Government published *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, which sets out their approach to achieving a more integrated society. The strategy document proposes that issues of social mobility, participation, responsibility, common ground and tackling extremism and intolerance are key factors which they believe contribute to integration.
- 65 The strategy outlines actions taken by the Government to challenge all forms of extremism and intolerance, some of which include a revised Prevent Strategy, establishing new standards for teachers, funding third sector organisations such as the Anne Frank Trust and establishing a working group on Anti- Muslim hate crime.
- 66 On 15 March 2012, the Government published *Hate Crime Action Plan: Challenge it, Report it, Stop it*, its blueprint to tackle hate crime, bringing together activity across Government departments and working with local agencies, voluntary organisations and an independent advisory group on hate crime. The strategy focuses on three key objectives:
- Preventing hate crime happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster hatred, and encouraging early intervention to reduce the risk of incidents escalating.
  - Increasing the reporting of hate crime that occurs by building victims' confidence to come forward and seek justice, and working with partners at national and local level to ensure the right support is available when they do.



- Working with the agencies that make up the Criminal Justice System to improve the operational response to hate crime. We want a more effective end-to-end process, with agencies identifying hate crimes early, managing cases jointly and dealing with offenders robustly.

67 The action plan outlined 23 detailed measures, many of which will be implemented during 2012/13.

### **National Alcohol Strategy**

68 On the 23 March 2012 the Government published an alcohol strategy which set out proposals to reduce 'binge drinking', including the proposed introduction of a minimum unit price for alcohol. The strategy outlines a multi-agency response focusing on the role of the health, police, local government and voluntary sector in tackling alcohol misuse.

### **Open data and transparency**

69 On 29 November 2011, the Chancellor provided further detail on the open data measures announced in his Autumn Statement. The aim is to use data held by public organisations to drive economic growth, for example by making available NHS data to support research and development and innovation in the medical and life science industries.

70 Measures announced include linking primary and secondary healthcare datasets, publishing data on prescriptions and fit notes, train, and rail fares data, Civil Aviation Authority information, highways and traffic data, linking data on welfare including Universal Credit, publishing reference data from organisations such as the Met Office and Companies House and the establishment of an Open Data Institute to drive the realisation of the economic and commercial potential of publicly-funded data.

71 On personal data, it is proposed that all NHS patients will be able to access their personal GP records online by the end of this Parliament. In addition, the Government intends to publish a new procurement arrangement shortly for school information and learning services to improve parents' and pupils' access to education data and increase competition in the provision of learning services.

### **Open public services**

72 On 17 October 2011, the Government published a prospectus for the next phase of community budgets. On 21 December 2011, 10 neighbourhood level community budget pilots were announced alongside four national pilots for whole area community budgets. Based on its experience of reorganising budgets during Local Government Reorganisation and its Total Place and Total Capital pilots, the Council was invited to join a learning and support network to act as a critical friend to the four whole area pilot authorities.

73 On 23 November 2011, the Government opened a call for evidence on the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) to assess their effectiveness and to explore whether they could be

improved and become less of a barrier to private and third sector organisations interested in taking on the delivery of public services.

- 74 The move is part of the drive to open up public services to more diverse patterns of provision and on 6 December 2011, the Government announced a £10 million Mutual Support Programme to provide business and professional services to existing mutual organisations and groups of public sector staff interested in taking over and managing public services under contract to their employing organisation.
- 75 On 4 January 2012, the Government published its response to the consultation on the *Future of Local Audit*, which includes proposals to outsource local audit work to the private sector and mutuals established by Audit Commission employees.
- 76 On 5 March 2012, the outcome of initial contract bids for the outsourcing of Audit Commission district audit work was announced.
- 77 Grant Thornton, was awarded contracts worth £41.3m a year for the North West, West Midlands, London (south), Surrey and Kent, and the South West. KPMG was awarded contracts worth £23.1m a year in Humberside and Yorkshire (except North Yorkshire), East Midlands, and London (north) and Ernst & Young won contracts worth £20m a year in East and South East England (except Surrey and Kent).
- 78 DA Partnership, a proposed mutual to be set up by Audit Commission staff was awarded only the contact for North East England and North Yorkshire and subsequently confirmed that the awards meant it had insufficient work to launch as a stand alone mutual. It now will become a wholly owned subsidiary of audit firm Mazars, with which it had been acting in partnership.
- 79 On 29 March 2012, the Government published its first progress report on its Open Public Services agenda outlined in the White Paper published last July. The update summarises a range of measures the Government has taken to improve performance, provide more choice and transparency and to open up public services to broader, more local and community driven provision. Many of the actions lie within other reform programmes such as the NHS reforms and the drive to encourage the establishment of academies and free schools
- 80 As part of the update, the Government launched a call to evidence on a new statutory 'right to choice', which would require public services to provide people with choice in the delivery of public services, such as a range of providers or delivery options. The move will be supported by an independent review of barriers to choice and a 'You have the right to choose' campaign.
- 81 'Choice champions' will be established to promote choice and provide independent challenge and scrutiny of public services and to support citizens in making effective choices in public services.
- 82 'Choice frameworks' will be created to raise awareness of the choices available in a number of individual public services and of the standards people should expect. As well as previously announced proposals to improve the effectiveness of public service ombudsmen, the Government has suggested that it may introduce a national 'one stop shop' for public service complaints to

make it easier for people to complain and to provide them with information if they feel that they need to escalate their concerns.

- 83 On commissioning, the Government advised that it intends to bring forward consultation proposals on the rights to appeal for providers if they feel they have been unfairly excluded from a commissioning process.
- 84 The Government also advised that it intends to consult shortly on proposals to make it easier to establish neighbourhood councils and to work with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to develop model schemes for what powers, assets and roles and responsibilities could be devolved and managed at a more local level. This will also look at how neighbourhood councils could become more involved in local service delivery where there may be resistance from a principal authority.
- 85 In conjunction with the relevant portfolio holder, the Assistant Chief Executive is preparing a draft response from the Council to the call for evidence.

### **Waste and recycling**

- 86 On 3 February 2012, the Government published guidance on its £250 million Weekly Collection Support Scheme. The fund, which was initially announced by the Secretary of State in September 2011 is open to bids from English local authorities that wish to introduce, reinstate or retain weekly collections of household waste and increase recycling.

### **Electoral reform**

- 87 On 13 December 2011, the Government published a Draft Recall of MPs Bill to legislate for the introduction of a power of recall, allowing voters to force a by-election where an MP is found to have engaged in serious wrongdoing and having had a petition calling for a by-election signed by 10 per cent of his or her constituents.
- 88 The draft Bill sets out two triggers for a recall petition: firstly where an MP is convicted in the UK of an offence and receives a custodial sentence of 12 months or less, and secondly where the House of Commons resolves, through a vote by MPs, that a recall petition should be opened. The first trigger closes a gap in the existing legislation whereby MPs are only disqualified if they receive a custodial sentence of more than 12 months and the second trigger is an additional disciplinary power for the House of Commons, which will allow constituents to have their say in deciding whether their MP should stay in office.
- 89 On 9 February 2012, the Government published proposals to support the introduction of individual elector registration. In order to make it easier for people to stay registered and to make the electoral register more complete and up to date, 'data matching' will be used to retain up to two-thirds of those already on the electoral register. Under the data matching process, an elector's name and address would be compared against other public databases. If an individual's details 'matched' then they would not have to take any action to remain on the register. This would allow the Government to

focus efforts and resources on those electors whose details could not be confirmed and those people who are currently not on the register. In order to ensure that the electoral register is as complete and up to date as possible for the transition, the canvass scheduled for autumn 2013 will now take place in spring 2014.

### **E-accessibility**

- 90 On 29 February 2012, the Government opened a consultation on the second release of its 'Gov.uk' website which is intended to provide access to all government on-line services and information. The development is part of the Government's e-accessibility action plan which focuses upon website regulation, accessible consumer technology and digital equipment, websites services, accessible content and electronic access awareness and promotion.
- 91 On 15 December 2011, the Government gave local authorities final deadlines for submitting satisfactory applications to Broadband Development UK for a share of £530 million of funding intended to provide 90 per cent of homes and businesses with access to superfast broadband and everyone with access to at least 2Mbps.
- 92 In his Autumn statement, the Chancellor outlined plans to invest £100 million to make core cities, including Newcastle-upon-Tyne 'super-connected' with superfast broadband and wi-fi enablement. This was followed by a further announcement in the 2012 Budget that a further £50 million would be available to do the same in smaller cities.

### **Consultations**

- 93 Following the most recent policy implications report considered by Cabinet, Members asked for an update on current and forthcoming consultation opportunities through which Members could help to shape Government policy. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the main consultations announced by Government since the beginning of the year.
- 94 The Council constantly monitors consultations and calls for evidence and officers consider opportunities to respond via the Improvement Planning Group which meets on a fortnightly basis.

### **Implications**

- 95 The Government's policy proposals have many implications for the County and the Council, its role and function and the way it works with and relates to local communities and strategic partners. Below, we sketch out the principal implications against the strategic themes of the Council Plan and County Durham Sustainable Community Strategy.

### **Altogether better council**

- 96 As yet, the Council has not had sufficient time to consider the implications of the announcement in the past two weeks on the proportion of local business rates revenues which local authorities will be allowed to retain. In addition, it is yet to learn how much grant it would receive from the 50 per cent of

business rates revenue to be retained and redistributed by central Government.

- 97 As highlighted in the more detailed report on welfare reform to this meeting of Cabinet, one of the most challenging aspects of the Government's policy programme will be to respond to and manage the consequences of welfare reform changes in the County.
- 98 At the time of the Comprehensive Spending Review, it was announced that welfare spending was set to be reduced by £18 billion by 2014/15, however the Chancellor has now advised that to maintain current departmental spending targets, it will be necessary to reduce welfare spending by a further £10 billion by 2016/17. This is likely to put more pressure on local authority services from increased demand from people struggling to cope with further welfare cuts and changes. Alternatively, the Council as a whole and its strategic partners could come under further pressure, if the Government decides to make the savings from across a broader range of departmental budgets and not just welfare. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimates that if welfare spending is held steady rather than reduced by a further £10 billion by 2016/17, the rate of reduction in central spending on public services across government departments would need to increase from 2.3 per cent a year during the course of this Parliament to 3.8 per cent in the following two years, after inflation is taken into account.
- 99 If this is the case, Durham will need to continue its efforts to highlight the growing inequity in the distribution of the spending reductions. There is increasing evidence to suggest that North East England is being disproportionately affected by the reductions in public expenditure and there is growing concern that Government policy, such as the introduction of Business Rates retention will maintain current disparities between places as opposed to enabling growth-orientated but less competitive areas, such as Durham to catch up with more prosperous parts of the country.
- 100 The Council will also need to keep its spending plans under continuous review, working with its strategic partners to ensure that the needs of the County and its communities continue to be met and that the Council's financial strategy continues to anticipate and respond to the changing public sector funding landscape.
- 101 Although the Government's agenda to decentralise power and open up public services has not been implemented as quickly as it initially hoped, a number of the key legislative building blocks such as the Localism Act 2011 are now in place and we can expect the pace of reform to speed up. The long-awaited progress report on decentralisation, initially promised last summer will be published shortly.
- 102 Individual departmental plans to open up public services, initially flagged in last July's Open Public Services White Paper, have yet to be published, however the recent progress report published by Government highlights that a number of departments are moving to diversify provision, introduce competition and increase consumer choice. This is most evident in relation to schools (in terms of academies and free schools and measures to tackle



'coasting' performance) but also in the initial steps taken to support the development of staff mutuals within the public sector.

- 103 The proposed statutory 'right to choice' if introduced would require the Council to review its approach to commissioning across services and to review the provision of alternative delivery options, where it is practical to do so. The proposed 'choice frameworks' will be an important area to understand as they will set out the standards of service that people should expect and will be at the heart Government public information campaigns to promote consumer rights and choice.
- 104 The move to establish 'choice champions' is intended to provide independent challenge and scrutiny of public services and to support citizens in making effective choices. The Council will need to understand how this relates to its democratic scrutiny functions and other existing and proposed methods of consumer advocacy and scrutiny, such as citizens advice bureaux and local healthwatch.
- 105 Within this, it is interesting to note that the Public Accounts Committee has expressed concern about accountability and scrutiny of public money when public services are decentralised and devolved. In its progress report on *Accountability for public money*, the committee commented that public sector reforms, such as increasing the number of foundation trusts and academy schools and introducing elected police commissioners, lacked 'clarity, consistency and completeness' and that current arrangements which seek to reconcile accountability and localism do not provide the necessary assurance on either probity or value for money.
- 106 As highlighted above, the Council is preparing a response to the current call for evidence on the right to choice. It may also wish to respond to the forthcoming consultations on the rights to appeal for providers in the commissioning process and the process for establishing neighbourhood councils.
- 107 This may have implications for the development of town and parish councils in the County as may the LGA and NALC work on service devolution and delivery models, if they receive Government backing.
- 108 It is interesting to note that access to lower cost borrowing for local authorities via the Public Works Loan Board will be contingent on transparency around long-term capital spending and potentially in the longer term, on demonstrating quality and value for money. Given the strength of its approach to medium term financial planning, the Council is well placed to respond to any opportunities this might provide, should it wish to increase its borrowing.
- 109 The development of the gov.uk website reflects the Government's desire to simplify access to public services and information online and to achieve significant savings in Government website costs. Information on and access to local authority services will be integrated into the new website and the Council will need to explore how this can be supported through its customer first and website strategies.

- 110 The proposal to use data-matching to facilitate individual voter registration (IVR) is intended to address concerns and reduce the risk that IVR may lead to fewer people registering to vote. However, pilots in 22 local authorities evaluated by the Electoral Commission found that the additional level of input required was not proportional to the benefits, with relatively few additions made to the electoral registers. The decision to postpone the autumn 2013 canvas until spring 2014 reflects the fact that electoral registration officers will need more time to prepare for the introduction of the new system.

### **Altogether wealthier**

- 111 Alongside controlling public expenditure, the Government aims to balance the country's finances by stimulating economic growth and encouraging economic participation rather than welfare dependency.
- 112 In his Autumn statement and the 2012 Budget, the Chancellor announced a number of macro-economic measures to promote investment and growth and a series of announcements to support business start-ups and expansion.
- 113 Although there were no major infrastructure announcements directly benefiting the County, the Government did confirm funding of £7.79 million through the Broadband UK programme to support the Digital Durham project. This will enable the Council to increase broadband provision to at least 2Mbps across the County by 2014/15 and to up to 30Mbps by 2016/17. The project will also extend the provision of public access wi-fi through council and community buildings.
- 114 The key policy announcement for the county was the publication of the final National Policy Planning Framework, within which the County Durham Plan and all future planning decisions will work.
- 115 The draft NPPF attracted fierce criticism and the revised framework has sought to take account of the biggest concerns including:
- confirmation of the development plan as the basis for planning decision-making locally;
  - a fuller explanation of what is meant by 'sustainable development';
  - recognition of the "intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside" amongst the Core Planning Principles;
  - confirmation of the need for Local Plans to identify and maintain a rolling five year housing land supply, plus an additional five per cent. Councils that have a record of "persistent under delivery on housing" must earmark a five-year supply plus 20 per cent;
  - support for brownfield development (but no requirement for a sequential test requiring brownfield land to be used before greenfield);
  - stronger support for town centres and recognition that town centres should be the preferred location for office uses;
  - clarification of the relationship between local and neighbourhood plans;

- a 12-month, supported, timetable for implementation.
- 116 Transitional arrangements accompanying the NPPF allow "due weight" to be given to relevant policies in existing plans beyond an initial 12-month period, depending on their degree of consistency with the framework. This will inevitably be subject to interpretation. Given that the NPPF is now in force, as a matter of some urgency, the Council is undertaking an exercise to determine which 'saved' local plan policies are consistent with the NPPF and can therefore continue to be used in decision making until the County Durham Plan is adopted.
- 117 In relation to increasing economic participation, the Government's welfare reforms designed to 'make work pay' will now be implemented given that the Welfare Reform Bill has passed into law. In addition, schemes such as the Work Programme and the Youth Contract are now being implemented, although some major employers have expressed concern about young people being compelled to take up work experience opportunities or risk losing benefits.
- 118 The key issue for the County is whether the economy will be able to expand sufficiently to create enough jobs to meet the growing demand from people moving off welfare or out of the public sector.

### **Altogether healthier**

- 119 Now that the Health and Social Care Act has been passed, rapid progress is expected to be made with the Government's NHS and public health reforms to ensure implementation from April 2013.
- 120 Work is progressing locally within County Durham to implement the NHS reforms and to transfer public health functions to the Council.
- 121 The Council has established a Public Health Transition 'Receiver' Group to manage the transition from NHS County Durham to the Council. A public health transition plan has been agreed between the two organisations to ensure that staff, functions and responsibilities are transferred by 1 April 2013.
- 122 To support this, a corporate risk assessment has been completed and due diligence is being carried.
- 123 The commissioning of Local Healthwatch in County Durham is making progress and the development and consultation on a model for Local HealthWatch is complete. Local HealthWatch will need to be procured by the Government deadline of 1 April 2013 and the County is currently on-track to achieve this deadline.
- 124 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will be reviewed in August 2012 in order to inform the first Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for County Durham which will set out the priorities from which health and social care commissioning plans will be developed. A stakeholder event will be held next month to discuss and share the draft Strategic Objectives for 2013/14 (linked to the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy). The strategy will be considered by Cabinet by the end of this year.



- 125 The Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis. The board's future work programme includes the approval of winter planning arrangements, consideration of an Operating Framework for Children's and Adult's Safeguarding and a review of existing joint commissioning strategies (including those for older people and people with learning disabilities).
- 126 Cabinet received a report on recent developments in relation to NHS reforms on 18 April 2012 and further detail on national and local developments will be reported to Cabinet on 11 July 2012.
- 127 The national alcohol strategy calls for action to be taken at a local level and highlights measures which will enable a more effective local response to binge drinking. Action on alcohol will be a key issue for the County's Health and Wellbeing Board and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 128 Within the Council, work is underway via the alcohol harm reduction group of the Safe Durham Partnership, to update the local alcohol strategy in the light of the national strategy. A strategy development day is being held to agree actions to be carried forward by a variety of agencies and council services.

### **Altogether safer**

- 129 The measures in the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 should help the Council and its community safety partners, including the incoming Police and Crime Commissioner to better manage alcohol-related anti-social behaviour and crime. We will however, need to await the outcome of the consultation on the detailed measures before being able to determine how they can best be deployed in the County. For the Council, this is most likely to be through the implementation of revised licensing policy.
- 130 The ability to direct proceeds from the late night levy will help partners to meet the costs of managing late night public order, however a balanced approach will be needed to ensure that legitimate and beneficial late night economic activity is not suppressed.
- 131 The Hate Crime Action Plan acknowledges the role of alcohol as a contributing factor of violence, including violence resulting from hate crime and points towards the Government's new alcohol strategy, which will focus on changing public behaviour towards alcohol and anti-social behaviour.
- 132 The action plan primarily focuses on Government-level actions and the Council and its partners will need to await the detail of detailed policy measures which are expected later this year.
- 133 The Government report on *Creating the Conditions for Integration* highlights that one of the key factors in achieving integration is to challenge extremism and intolerance. Within this, the Government states that it expects locally-led action partnerships to ensure that extremist narratives are challenged, groups and individuals who promote division and prejudice are not implicitly endorsed by engagement or use of public buildings and that vulnerable people are protected through early intervention.

- 134 In many respects, the Council and its community safety partners are already working in line with the Government's expectations through the Safe Durham Partnership. The partnership is currently reviewing its action plan and a progress report will be brought to the next meeting of Cabinet.

### **Altogether better for children and young people**

- 135 The proposed new approach to the inspection of schools is intended to drive up teaching standards and the performance of schools.
- 136 The more general use of un-announced inspections will give schools less time to prepare for inspections and the introduction of the 'requires improvement' grading to replace 'satisfactory' highlights the importance the Government attaches to continuous improvement.
- 137 Achievement Services and schools in the County will need to prepare for the new approach which is expected to be introduced from September 2012, once the outcome of the current consultation by Ofsted is known.

### **Altogether greener**

- 138 The presumption in favour of sustainable development enshrined in the new National Planning Policy Framework will have implications for the ability of the Council and its strategic partners to conserve and protect the County's natural assets and heritage.
- 139 Now that detail has been published on the Government's Weekly Collection Support Scheme, the Council is in a position to consider whether it can use the scheme to improve waste collection services in the County.
- 140 The Council is currently in the process of harmonising collection arrangements across the seven former district council areas and introducing alternate weekly collections throughout the County. An expression of interest under the Support Scheme has been submitted to for funding to augment the alternate weekly collection scheme by providing a weekly collection of segregated food waste on a trial basis in part of the County. The waste collected would be recycled at an anaerobic digestion plant in the County to provide electricity. If supported, the proposal would further increase the Council's recycling performance, removing biowaste from the waste stream, reducing treatment costs as well as providing a clean source of electricity generation.

### **Implications for partnership working**

- 141 Given the scope, scale and pace of Government reforms it is imperative that the Council continues to work with partners to ensure that we work together to achieve the aims of the sustainable community strategy. This is particularly so in relation to health and social care, where we need to ensure that the new partnership and working arrangements which are being established, help the Council to deliver the health outcomes we have set out to achieve for local people.
- 142 As reported to Members in November 2011, the County Durham Partnership has reviewed its priorities in the light of the current and changing policy

context and considered how it could ensure that its operational arrangements continue to remain fit for purpose.

## **Conclusions**

- 143 The common themes of Government policy around transparency, choice, community empowerment and more diverse patterns of public service provision are still evident although it appears as if the Government has not been able to implement some of its reforms as quickly as it initially proposed.
- 144 Clearly, the various policy changes will have major implications for the Council and the steps it is taking to develop an 'altogether better Durham'.
- 145 The Council and its partners are continuing to analyse the impact that Government policy will have on local communities and on our ability to deliver the sustainable community strategy and wherever possible, are working together to respond proactively to the Government's policy changes.

## **Recommendations**

- 146 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and agree the actions taken to anticipate and respond to the Government's reforms.

## **Background papers**

Cabinet, 15 September 2010, Implications on Durham County Council of the Coalition Government's emerging policy programme

Cabinet, 26 January 2011, Implications on Durham County Council of the Coalition Government's policy programme

Cabinet, 9 March 2011, NHS Reforms

Cabinet, 25 May 2011, Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's policy programme

Cabinet 13 July 2011, NHS Reforms/ Health and Wellbeing Boards

Cabinet, 14 September 2011, Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's policy programme

Cabinet, 14 December 2011, Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's policy programme

Cabinet, 29 February 2012, Localism Act

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**Contact: Kevin Edworthy Tel: 0191 383 6514**

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## Appendix 1: Implications

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**Finance** – The Chancellor’s 2012 Budget identified the need to find a further £10 billion in welfare savings in order to maintain current departmental spending targets. Should unemployment levels not fall in line with Government forecasts, this may put further pressure on Council budgets if the Government seeks to achieve the savings from local government.

The Council’s MTFP and budget took into account the New Homes Bonus and the grant support to freeze council tax in 2012/13 and anticipated a number of proposals in the Local Government Resource Review. This will have significant implications for the way that local government services are funded in the future.

Implementing a number of the Government’s reforms, such as the National Planning Policy Framework and the Localisation of Council Tax Support will involve further costs from within fixed and restricted budgets.

If Durham is a designated qualifying council, the additional discount on loans from the Public Works Loan Board will reduce the cost of borrowing within affordable limits to fund designated schemes in the Council’s capital programme.

The late night levy may help to contribute to the Council’s costs in managing and dealing with the consequences of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in town centres. Details are awaited on the proportion of the levy to be directed to local authorities. Likewise, details are awaited on the amount of ring-fenced grant the Council is to receive to deliver the public health responsibilities transferred from the PCT.

**Staffing** – The Council is continuing to plan for the transfer of public health staff from the PCT. The Government’s proposals to extend the Work Programme and introduce the Youth Contract may provide the Council with more support to offer young people employment and apprenticeship opportunities.

**Risk** – Detailed risk assessments are undertaken for key projects undertaken by the Council to implement and respond to the Government’s reforms.

**Equality and Diversity** – *Creating the Conditions for Integration* (the Government’s cohesion strategy) and the Hate Crime Action Plan will need to be taken into account when the Council refreshes its equalities action plan and strategic approach to community safety.

**Accommodation** – There are no specific implications.

**Crime and Disorder** – The National Alcohol Strategy and proposals relating the late night drinking will support the Council’s efforts to reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour. The cohesion strategy and Hate Crime Action Plan recognise the role of local partnerships in tackling hate crime and preventing violent extremism.

**Human Rights** – The Human Rights implications of the policy proposals have not been assessed.

**Consultation** – The Council will be expected to consult service users and other local authorities in developing policy responses to a number of the Government's proposals.

**Procurement** – The drive to open up public services is increasing in pace, which will have implications for the Council's commissioning and procurement frameworks and the ability of potential providers to challenge the Council's procurement decisions if they are dissatisfied.

**Disability Discrimination Act** - The Disability Discrimination Act implications of the Government's reforms have not been assessed in detail but would be addressed in any equality impact assessments undertaken as the Council develops its own policy responses.

**Legal Implications** – With the National Planning Policy Framework coming into force, the Council will need to ensure that the draft County Durham Plan and the local planning policy framework are compliant to reduce the risk of legal challenge and appeals. The proposed statutory 'right to choice' may also increase the potential for legal challenge.

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## **Appendix 2: Government consultations and calls for evidence announced in 2012**

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**05/01/2012**

### **Allocation of accommodation - Guidance for local housing authorities in England - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 30 March 2012 seeks views on new draft statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/allocationofaccommodation>

**09/01/2012**

### **Regulation of providers on the Early Years Register - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 6 April 2012 seeks views on proposals for a revised framework for the regulation and inspection of registered early years provision.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/regulation-of-providers-early-years-register>

**10/01/2012**

### **Inspection of adoption support agencies - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 3 April 2012 seeks views on proposals for a revised framework for the inspection of adoption support agencies. Ofsted seeks views from those who have an interest in, or expertise relating to, adoption to ensure that the inspection framework takes proper account of the needs and circumstances of all interested parties. Above all, the framework must assure the quality of services for all those receiving adoption support and promote their continuing improvement.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/inspection-of-adoption-support-agencies>

**10/01/2012**

**Consultation on proposed changes to the department's statistics - Land use change statistics, rationalised collection of local authority housing statistics and publication of regional statistics**

This consultation, which runs until 2 April 2012 seeks views on options for changing the data collection for land use change statistics, proposals for a rationalised collection of housing data from local authorities and ceasing publication of departmental statistics at regional level.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/consultchangesstats>

**11/01/2012**

**Social housing fraud - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 4 April 2012 seeks views on proposals to help landlords reduce tenancy fraud within the social housing stock. It includes measures that would greatly increase both the deterrent to tenants to commit fraud and landlords' ability to detect and prosecute those who do so.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/socialhousingfraud>

**12/01/2012**

**Draft CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme allocation regulations - A consultation**

The CRC is a mandatory scheme aimed at improving energy efficiency and cutting emissions in large public and private sector organisations. This consultation, which runs until 10 February 2012 seeks views on the updated draft CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme allocation regulations. They contain consequential changes from previous simplifications of the CRC scheme.

[http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/crc\\_efficiency/crc\\_efficiency.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/crc_efficiency/crc_efficiency.aspx)

**12/01/2012**

### **Red Tape Challenge -Housing and construction**

This is a site, designed for the public, to help the government cut unnecessary regulations. The site has been updated with information on the new red tape challenge on housing and construction.

<http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/home/index/>

**16/01/2012**

### **Personal Independence Payment - Assessment thresholds and consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 30 April 2012 seeks views on the second draft of the assessment criteria for Personal Independence Payment. In particular it seeks views on the changes that have been made since the first draft, the proposed descriptor weightings and entitlement thresholds and the draft regulations.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2011/pip.shtml>

**16/01/2012**

### **Early years professional status standards review - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 23 March 2012 seeks views on the proposed draft early years professional status standards. The aim is to produce a revised set of standards for implementation by training providers' delivering the early years professional status from September 2012.

<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/early-years/graduate-leaders-in-early-years/eyps-standards>

### **16/01/2012 09/03/2012 Amending the powers of local authorities regarding presentation of waste for collection - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 9 March 2012 seeks views on proposed amendments to Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which sets out the penalties which local authorities may apply to householders who present their waste incorrectly for collection. The amendments will abolish the criminal offence currently provided for in Section 46. A new, civil sanction will be put in place instead.



**18/01/2012**

### **Dealing with the Problems of Late Night Drinking – A Consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 10 April 2012 is about two measures in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 that will be implemented through regulations: early morning restriction orders ('EMROs') and the late night levy.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/late-night-drinking/>

**19/01/2012**

### **JSNAs and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies – Draft Guidance**

Support for health and wellbeing boards and their partners in developing joint strategic needs assessments (JSNAs) and health and wellbeing strategies has been published in the form of draft statutory guidance, which is out for consultation until 17 February 2012.

<https://www.wp.dh.gov.uk/healthandcare/files/2012/01/JSNAs-and-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategies-draft-strats.pdf>

**20/01/2012**

### **Raising the participation age regulations - A consultation**

From summer 2013 all young people will be required to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17, and from summer 2015 onwards until their 18th birthday. This consultation, which runs until 13 April 2012 seeks views on elements of how raising the participation age will work in practice.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1694&external=no&menu=1>

**23/01/2012**

**Children's safeguarding performance information - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 16 April 2012 seeks views on the proposed children's safeguarding national performance information dataset, how the data is published and how the locally held information published in December 2011 is used.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1803&external=no&menu=1>

**23/01/2012**

**Gambling Act 2005 - Legislative reform orders - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 16 April 2012 seeks views on two proposals: to remove restrictions on the employment of people under the age of 18 years at a track with a betting premises licence; and remove restrictions on the availability of entitlements to gaming machines at premises selling alcohol at airports.

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/consultations/Under\\_18s\\_employment\\_on\\_tracks\\_consultation.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/consultations/Under_18s_employment_on_tracks_consultation.pdf)

**24/01/2012**

**Climate change regulations 2012 and the scheme administration charges - Opportunities to comment**

This consultation, which runs until 16 March 2012 seeks views on draft Climate Change Regulations 2012 and the scheme administration charges.

[http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/consultations/cc\\_regs\\_2012/cc\\_regs\\_2012.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/consultations/cc_regs_2012/cc_regs_2012.aspx)

**27/01/2012**

**Regulations for Healthwatch England membership - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 2 March 2012 seeks views on the development of the Healthwatch England membership regulations. It asks for comments on: the number of the member; suitability for membership; the process for appointing members; and the period of time a member should be appointed.

**30/01/2012**

**Traffic orders - Simplifying the process - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 23 April 2012 seeks views on amending the requirements placed on traffic authorities when they propose and make traffic orders.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-06/>

**30/01/2012**

**Getting it right for victims and witnesses - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 22 April 2012 seeks views on the government's proposed approach to ensuring that victims and witnesses get the support they need. It also seeks views on proposals to reform the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme to protect compensation payments for those most seriously injured while removing less serious injuries like sprains from the scheme and restricting payments to those with criminal convictions.

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/victims-witnesses-cp3-2012.htm>

**31/01/2012**

**Permit schemes for street works - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 25 April 2012 seeks views on proposals to give local authority applications more power to operate 'permit schemes' to better manage street works.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-02/>

**31/01/2012**

**Proposed policy statement for part two of the Localism Act 2011 - A consultation**

This consultation seeks views on a proposed policy statement for part two of the Localism Act 2011. Part two of the Localism Act is about incentivising public authorities to comply with European law, in order to avoid any financial sanctions in the first place.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/20750331.pdf>

**31/01/2012**

**Devolving local major transport schemes - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 2 April 2012 seeks views on a new system for prioritising and funding local major schemes beyond 2014-15.

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-04/main-document1.pdf>

**06/02/2012**

**Counter terrorism stop and search powers code of practice - A consultation**

Home Office This consultation, which runs until 1 April 2012 seeks views on a draft code of practice governing counter-terrorism stop and search powers currently being considered by Parliament in the Protection of Freedoms Bill.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/consultation-ct-code/>

**07/02/2012**

**Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 20 March 2012 seeks views on the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012. These regulations provide the legal basis for pupil referral units to become alternative provision academies.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1807&external=no&menu=1>

**07/02/2012**

### **Call for evidence on the European Commission's data protection proposals**

This call for evidence, which runs until 6 March 2012 seeks views on new legislative proposals for data protection which were published by the European Commission on 25 January 2012.

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/data-protection-proposals-cfe.htm>

**08/02/2012**

### **Legislative changes to firearms control - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 8 May 2012 seeks views on whether to make changes to the sentencing framework for the illegal importation of firearms. It also seeks views on whether to introduce new firearms legislation targeted at individuals who supply firearms to the criminal market and asks what would be an appropriate sentence.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/firearms-legislation/>

**09/02/2012**

### **Mandatory consideration of revision before appeal - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 4 May 2012 seeks views on draft regulations for the implementation and operation of the appeals reform provisions in the Welfare Reform Bill.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2012/mandatory-consideration.shtml>

**09/02/2012**

**A good education for all - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 3 May 2012 seeks views on proposals for amended inspection arrangements for maintained schools and academies, further education and skills and initial teacher education from September 2012.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-education-for-all>

**09/02/2012**

**Open Standards - Open opportunities flexibility and efficiency in government IT**

This consultation, which runs until 1 May 2012 seeks views on the definition and mandation of open standards for software interoperability, data and document formats in government IT.

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/open-standards-open-opportunities-flexibility-and-efficiency-government-it>

**10/02/2012**

**Remote communities - A call for evidence**

The purpose of this call for evidence, which is open until 1 July 2012 is to seek the views of residents in remote communities to improve the Office of Fair Trading's understanding of how remoteness effects both consumers and businesses.

<http://www.offt.gov.uk/OFTwork/consultations/remote-communities/>

**17/02/2012**

**Transforming bailiff action - A consultation**

This consultation, which runs until 14 May 2012 seeks views on proposals for transforming bailiff action and providing more protection against aggressive bailiffs. The aim of the proposals is to simplify and clarify the process, improve the accountability of enforcement agents and address unnecessary or inappropriate enforcement activity.

[https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/transforming-bailiff-action/consult\\_view](https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/transforming-bailiff-action/consult_view)

### **17/02/2012 Red Tape Challenge**

The red tape challenge on water and marine regulation has been launched.

<http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/themehome/water-and-marine/>

### **21/02/2012**

#### **Review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes - A call for evidence**

This call for evidence seeks comments to support the independent review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/prsreviewcall>

### **21/02/2012**

#### **Review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes - Call for evidence**

This call for evidence seeks comments to support the independent review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/prsreviewcall>

### **22/02/2012**

#### **Guidance to Support the Provision of Healthcare Public Health Advice to Clinical Commissioning Groups**

From 2013-14, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) will have access to public health advice, information and expertise in relation to the healthcare services that they commission, provided by local public health teams based in local authorities. The policy intention is to make it a mandatory requirement for local authorities to

provide this service to CCGs, but the detail of the arrangements will need to be planned locally.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/02/local-public-health-guidance/>

**23/02/2012**

### **Amending the Waste Regulations 2011 on the separate collection of recycling**

Defra and the Welsh Government are seeking views on amendments we are proposing to The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (“the Regulations”).

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/02/23/waste-regulations-1202/>

**24/02/2012**

### **Review of compliance with the Irresponsible Lending Guidance**

This consultation seeks views as part of a review of compliance with the Consumer Credit Act and the extent to which businesses in the pay-day sector are meeting the standards set out in the Office of Fair Trading's irresponsible lending guidance.

<http://www.offt.gov.uk/OFTwork/credit/payday-lenders-compliance-review/>

**24/02/2012**

### **Consultation on the Draft Legal Deposit Libraries (non-print works) Regulations 2013**

This consultation seeks views on revised draft regulations and impact assessments for non-print legal deposits. The draft regulations are designed to ensure legal deposit libraries provide a national archive of the UK's non-print published material.

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/consultations/8878.aspx>



**28/02/2012**

### **Draft water resources planning guideline**

This consultation seeks views on the draft new guidance for water companies to follow when completing their statutory water resources management plans.

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/ho/waterres/draft/plans>

**29/02/2012**

### **Rare Diseases Consultation**

This is a UK-wide consultation undertaken by the Department of Health on behalf of all 4 UK health administrations. The consultation on rare diseases has been launched following the European Council's recommendation that every member state of the European Union should develop a national strategy on rare diseases. Responses to the consultation will inform the final plan, which is due to be produced by the end of 2013.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/02/consultation-rare-diseases/>

**29/02/2012**

### **Second release of GOV.UK beta**

The Government Digital Service is seeking views on phase two of the GOV.UK beta, 'Inside government'. The new area of the site is a space for people who are personally or professionally interested in the business of government to research how government works and what it is doing.

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/second-release-govuk-beta>

**29/02/2012**

### **Delivering Dignity: Securing Dignity in Care for Older People in Hospitals and Care Homes - A Report for Consultation**

The NHS Confederation, Age UK and the Local Government Association established the Commission on Dignity in Care for Older People in July 2011 to identify the underlying causes of persistent failings, and determine what must change to deliver dignity in the care system, focussing on hospitals and care homes. This draft report sets out 'what good looks like', based on evidence from hospitals and care homes that are already providing excellent dignity in care for older people. The report seeks to help hospitals and care homes identify how they need to change to deliver dignity for every person every time. It also sets out the changes that need to take place in the wider health and social care system to support hospitals and care homes in prioritising dignity in care.

<http://www.nhsconfed.org/Documents/dignity.pdf>

**29/02/2012**

### **Feedback on the Outpatient survey 2011**

The CQC surveys team is interested in what people think about the information provided in the latest Outpatient survey published on 14 February 2012.

<https://webdataforms.cqc.org.uk/Checkbox/outpatientsurvey2011.aspx>

**01/03/2012**

### **Regulation of Health and Social Care Professionals**

This consultation seeks views on how the regulation of health care professionals in the UK and social workers in England can be made clearer, simpler, more modern and more consistent. The Law Commissions are setting out provisional proposals for the structure of a new legal framework across the UK.

<http://lawcommission.justice.gov.uk/consultations/healthcare.htm>

**01/03/2012**

### **Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses**

This consultation, which runs until 25 April 2012 seeks views on a proposed licensing scheme that would promote and safeguard the welfare of wild animals in travelling circuses in England. Under the proposals, operators of a travelling circus that failed to safeguard the welfare of their animals would face enforcement action.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/03/01/circus-animals-1203/>

**05/03/2012**

### **Revised Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance - A consultation**

This consultation seeks views on the revised Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance for local authorities, commissioners of local health services and Jobcentre Plus when exercising their functions under the Childcare Act 2006.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1808&external=no&menu=1>

**05/03/2012**

### **Draft revised statutory guidance for local authorities on services and activities to improve young people's wellbeing - A consultation**

This consultation seeks views on draft revised statutory guidance on local authorities' duties to secure sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities for 13 to 19 year-olds to improve their well-being. This duty also requires local authorities to ascertain and consider young people's views and to publicise all activities aimed at these young people.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1811&external=no&menu=1>

**06/03/2012**

**Responses to initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England - A consultation**

This consultation seeks views on the responses to the government's initial proposals to reduce the total number of constituencies in England from 533 to 502 so that each constituency contains a similar number of registered electors.

<http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/>

**07/03/2012**

**Have your say on children and young people's health outcomes**

This consultation seeks views on the health outcomes that matter most for children and young people and how the different parts of the health system will work together to deliver these.

<http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/children-say/>

**08/03/2012**

**Rail fares and ticketing review**

This consultation is designed to gather evidence to inform the government's Rail Fares and Ticketing Review.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-09/>

**08/03/2012**

**Rail decentralisation: devolving decision-making on passenger rail services in England**

This consultation seeks views on how to devolve, where appropriate, more accountability and decision-making related to local English rail services to sub-national bodies, such as local authorities and passenger transport executives.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-10/>

**08/03/2012**

**Street works qualifications - A consultation**

This consultation seeks views on proposals arising from the Red Tape Challenge to remove the current requirement for street works operatives and supervisors to hold specific qualifications, and instead allow employers to determine suitable training.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-05/>

**08/03/2012**

**Code of Practice on Noise from Ice-Cream Van Chimes Etc. 1982**

This consultation seeks views on the future of the Code of Practice on Noise from Ice-Cream Van Chimes Etc.1982. The code gives guidance on methods of minimising annoyance caused by the operation of loudspeakers fixed to ice-cream vans and similar vehicles used to sell perishable goods to the public.

**22/03/2012**

**Call for evidence on the production of an appraisal tool for local speed limits - A consultation**

This consultation seeks evidence on the impact of speed limit changes to support the development of an appraisal tool to help local authorities assess the full costs and benefits of local speeds.

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-12/evidence-appraisal-tool.pdf>

**23/03/2012**

**Revised implementation proposals for workplace pension reform**

This consultation seeks views on the changes to the automatic enrolment implementation timetable for employers with less than 250 **workers** in their PAYE scheme and to the arrangements for phasing of minimum contributions affecting all employers.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wpr-rev-implementation-consultation.pdf>

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Cabinet

30 May 2012



**County Durham Partnership Update Report**

**Report of Corporate Management Team**  
**Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**  
**Cllr. Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**  
**Cllr. Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Durham County Council's Cabinet on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County.

**Background**

2. As the AAPs and the wider County Durham Partnership Framework continue to be embedded across the County it remains important that Cabinet receive regular updates on this work.

**County Durham Partnership Forum**

3. The CDP Forum in February heard from the Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP) and Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP). This was the second Forum meeting at which two AAPs showcased their work to the Forum members. Members again found this very useful to share the work of the AAPs and to learn from their colleagues in other areas.
4. The thematic focus at the February meeting was on Altogether safer. Rachael Shimmin, Chair of Safe Durham Partnership (SDP), gave a presentation giving some background information on the work of the SDP before looking at how AAPs and the CDP can work with Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving groups to tackle the complex interlinked problems facing some of our communities.

**Altogether wealthier**

5. A joint meeting of the Business and Employment Groups was held in March to welcome a presentation from Andrew Hodgson, Vice Chair of the North Eastern Enterprise Partnership and lead for the Skills agenda. The outcome of the meeting focused on agreeing joint strategic aims, representation and a renewed focus on delivery. Further joint working with the LEP is planned through the Transport, Rural and Innovation agendas.

6. Rural communities in County Durham are set to benefit from a share of £15m worth funding as part of a Government scheme to help reduce business isolation and promote growth. The money will be used to establish three rural business networks that encourage and promote rural businesses, as well as a number of physical local hubs that will inject intensive business support. The successful bid, submitted by The North Eastern Farming and Rural Advisory Network (NEFRAN) on behalf of the North Eastern Local Enterprise Partnership, will provide support for rural businesses across Northumberland, Durham and Gateshead. The money has been awarded by DEFRA as part of the Rural Growth Networks pilot scheme to help support and grow rural enterprises. The three networks will focus on enhanced business support, better broadband provision, a simplified planning approach and an estates management framework across uplands areas.
7. The business hubs are spread across the pilot area and will include business support, networking opportunities, dedicated mentoring, and high quality workspace and office units. There will also be specific support for creative enterprises and a project that focuses on the redevelopment of redundant buildings.
8. The Derwent Valley Enterprise Hub will develop an enterprise hub in the Derwent Valley, supporting up to eight creative businesses in the Garden Shed, which is utilising underused buildings within the National Trust's Gibside Estate. In Durham it will promote tourism businesses (especially the development of bed and breakfast accommodation), food and drink related activities, and exploring the development of other land and property assets in rural Durham and Gateshead for business use.
9. Middleton Farmers' Auction Mart Development is about providing new office space for rent in Middleton in Teesdale both as individual units and as shared space. It will provide a facility for farmers markets and agricultural and business training. The facility will enable the growth of around 24 businesses through access to managed workspace not currently available.
10. For more information please contact Angela Brown, Partnership Support Officer on 0191 387 2117 or email [angela.brown@durham.gov.uk](mailto:angela.brown@durham.gov.uk)

### **Altogether better for children and young people**

11. The Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016 is currently proceeding through the approval process and is on target for final sign-off by the Children's Executive Board (CEB) on 13 June 2012. A formal consultation period for the plan ended on 29 February 2012. 26 responses were received and considered from a variety of stakeholders including the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the LSCB. All responses have been considered and the vast majority have been reflected in the plan. The comments received focused mainly on layout, formatting, performance measures and additional information to strengthen particular points made within the plan (e.g. Elected Member involvement).
12. The Plan has two main elements. Firstly, it will focus on those areas that are root causes of poorer outcomes rather than focus on both the causes and effects of poorer outcomes. Secondly, the team will mobilise their resources to



intervene early. The needs of vulnerable families will be identified at the earliest opportunity and they will receive the support that they need at a much earlier stage. This will be delivered through One Point, the integrated service.

13. Children, young people and families have been central to the shaping of the CYPFP at every stage. In addition to this, a Children and Young People's version of the CYPFP is currently being developed in conjunction with children and young people from Investing in Children.
14. Following a review of the Children's Trust, the CEB is now in the process of developing an underpinning structure for the delivery of partnership work at a local level. Partnership arrangements at an area and local level are now being set up and letters have been sent out to partners requesting them to identify suitable representatives to contribute to these new locality arrangements. The review identified that a greater focus should be on 'Think Family' and as such, the Children's Trust will now be known as the Children and Families' Trust.
15. For more information please contact Claire McLaren, Planning, Quality and Research Manager on 0191 383 3604 or email [claire.mclaren@durham.gov.uk](mailto:claire.mclaren@durham.gov.uk)

### **Altogether healthier**

16. The Health and Wellbeing Partnership has agreed revised terms of reference for Health Networks and established a Health Networks Steering Group to support Health Network development through monitoring of the Health Networks development plan. The partnership agreed that through the Health Networks Fund, each Health Network will be able to access £30,000 of funding for the 2012/13 financial year.
17. The partnership has considered the Public Health Outcomes Framework which has as its two high-level outcomes: increased healthy life expectancy and reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities (through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities). However nationally further development of the indicator set is taking place and it is anticipated that it will be autumn 2012 before a full set of baseline data is in place to support local service planning.
18. The partnership has considered a cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk assessment, which is implemented through NHS Health Checks which is a five year rolling programme. To date most Health Checks have been carried out in GP practices, with some practices focusing on screening all patients in the target group (40-74 years old, without a cardiovascular disease related diagnosis (as these patients will already be receiving treatment for their health conditions)) and others focusing on targeting patients within the target group at higher risk of developing CVD e.g. smokers. People identified as high risk are offered medication and/or lifestyle advice/access to exercise programmes, often through the Changing the Physical Activity Landscape (CPAL) programme. A programme of Community Health Checks is being piloted aimed at those less likely to attend a GP and younger adults. Whilst this mandated screening programme makes a moderate impact upon CVD mortality rates the Partnership recognised the greater impact which population wide heart health programmes can have on CVD.

19. For more information please contact Julia Bates, Partnership Officer on 0191 370 8749 or email [julia.bates@durham.gov.uk](mailto:julia.bates@durham.gov.uk)

### **Altogether safer**

20. The Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) Plan 2011-14 has been refreshed following the completion of the annual SDP Strategic Assessment in November 2011. Following public and stakeholder consultation it was decided that the SDP priorities and 'key areas for improvement' would remain unchanged:
- a. Anti-Social Behaviour;
  - b. Alcohol Harm Reduction;
  - c. Organised Crime;
  - d. High Impact Households; and
  - e. High Impact Localities.
21. The Government's National Alcohol Strategy has been launched in May 2012. The strategy includes commitments to: introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol; consult on a ban on the sale of multi-buy alcohol discounting; introduce stronger powers for local areas to control the density of licensed premises including making the impact on health a consideration for this and pilot sobriety schemes to challenge alcohol-related offending. An Alcohol Strategy Development Day is taking place on 18th May to review the current plan and action plan for the next three years taking into consideration the National Alcohol Strategy and other local policy drivers.
22. The Government has launched its cross departmental plan to tackle Hate Crime. The three core principles are: preventing hate crime; increasing reporting; and improving operational responses. The Safe Durham Partnership will ensure linkages between its own Hate Crime Action Plan and the National Strategy; a marketing campaign is being rolled out over the summer to raise awareness of Hate Crime across County Durham.
23. The Sexual Violence Implementation Group is launching its first marketing campaign between April and June 2012 focusing on Sexual Exploitation, later campaigns will focus on vulnerability through alcohol use and sexually and domestic violent relationships.
24. The Counter Terrorism thematic group has adopted the Government's new CONTEST strategy. The thematic group will have responsibility for the PREVENT and PROTECT strands, while the Local Resilience Forum will take responsibility for the PREPARE strand.
25. A new pilot scheme to provide basic home security is underway in the South of the County. It adopts the principles of Total Home Safety with police and council officers referring victims of crime to the Handyperson Service that will carry out work to make people's homes more secure. The scheme will also help Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) volunteers access basic equipment such as timer plugs and help fit to the homes of vulnerable people.
26. The joint police and council drive to modernise NHW is proving successful. A number of local and national training events have taken place for volunteers

along with delivering initiatives such as implementing 'Cold Calling Awareness Zones'. More than 2000 new homes joined NHW in March 2012 bringing the total number of homes covered by a scheme to 58,000.

27. For more information please contact Caroline Duckworth, Strategic Manager for Safer Communities, on 0191 3708734 or email [caroline.duckworth@durham.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.duckworth@durham.gov.uk)

### **Altogether greener**

28. A range of activity is being undertaken by the sub groups of the Environment Partnership. To embed sustainable design with services, the Built Group is continuing to deliver Building for Life training sessions for those involved in planning. The group is also developing the Built Environment Public Engagement Plan.
29. The Climate Change Group is continuing to work in partnership with British Gas in relation to the Durham Insulation Scheme, which offers free or substantially discounted insulation: to date, more than 5,000 houses throughout County Durham have benefited from this scheme. The Group is also continuing discussions with utility companies in relation to mirroring a best practice community energy project within Durham. An update will be provided in the next report.
30. The Climate Change Strategy is in the final stages of development and members of the Climate Change Group are reviewing prior to the start of external consultation. The Group has not only been successful in their bid to participate in the European project, RENERGY, looking at policy development in relation to successful ground delivery across Europe but has also been invited to re-submit a proposal for another European project in relation to micro-renewable energy.
31. Durham Wildlife Trust has embarked on a one year project (EcoServ) to determine the effect on wildlife and its habitats on both the health and well-being and the local economy. Jubilee Woods, in partnership with Woodland Trust, is in celebration of the Queen's diamond jubilee and involves creating 350 acres of native woodland. 73 acres will be created between Quarrington Hill and Cassop and smaller woodlands created at locations including Wheatley Hill, Ferryhill, Bear Park and Frankland. Planting has started at two sites and the remaining planting will be carried out by winter 2012.
32. Other natural environment partnership projects continue: including Coastal Grasslands: its purpose being to conserve and restore magnesium limestone grasslands around Easington and Blackhall. Escarpment Spurs: its purpose being to conserve and restore magnesium limestone grasslands on escarpment around Kelloe Heritage Skills Training: encouraging traditional crafts, e.g. use of lime mortar and dry stone walling and Durham Heritage Coast: work has commenced on Seaham Hall public toilet and kiosk which will provide modern facilities and information for visitors.
33. A range of activity is being undertaken by the Pride sub-group. The continuation of the award winning riverbanks project; The second year of the bulb planting challenge has been a success; 150,000 crocus bulbs were

distributed to 352 schools and community groups; The Golden Ticket initiative was extended to Bishop Auckland Town Centre. With sponsorship from McDonalds, more than 40 golden tickets were issued throughout December. Continued support is being given to various groups in relation to Northumbria in Bloom and Green Flag submissions. Educational sessions within schools continue, e.g. anti-litter workshops, in conjunction the Police and Neighbourhood Wardens, were delivered to 244 pupils. The 'Green Dog Walkers' scheme continues and has been extended to the East of the county. Other dog fouling initiatives are taking place including poster campaigns

34. The Waste Group has decided to focus all its efforts into a small number of agreed priority initiatives. It is currently concentrating on the Trade Waste Partnership Project; an initiative to plan, develop and run a small traders disposal site. WRAP has offered to fund the feasibility study. This will complement the feasibility study carried out by Durham County Council in 2007; this report drew some interesting conclusions which the Group hopes to build upon. The Group met in February to further discuss this proposal and the need for future studies.
35. For more information please contact Mary Readman, Customer Relations, Policy and Performance Manager, on 0191 3834692 or email [mary.readman@durham.gov.uk](mailto:mary.readman@durham.gov.uk)

#### **Investors in Communities Awards**

36. The Investors in Communities Award is a Durham County Council scheme developed to endorse good practice in consultation and community engagement. The Awards scheme is designed to embed the corporate approach to consultation and engagement which is both consistent and coordinated across the Council and partner agencies.
37. An awards ceremony took place on Tuesday 17 April which saw Gordon Elliott present the 24 winners with their certificates showing that they had achieved either Bronze, Silver, Gold or Gold Plus standard. The Silver and Gold award winners have taken the learning and used it to develop some high quality consultation activities designed to assist local people not just to learn about the council's future plans and proposal but also influence those plans.
38. In many cases teams can demonstrate the positive outcomes from engaging directly with our local communities, reinforcing the council's commitment to continue to work directly with local people. A number of the staff have gone a step further to use the skills and knowledge they have gained throughout the whole process to help support other teams just starting along this road by sharing good practice, acting as mentors and helping with the assessment of teams applying for these awards.
39. Bronze: Adults Wellbeing & Health Commissioning Services team; Democratic Services Team; Estates and Tenancy Team; NHS Patient and Public Engagement team; One Point – Chester-le-Street hub; Outdoor sport and leisure and Safer Communities Team. Silver Awards: County Durham Partnership Team; Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP and Teesdale AAP. Gold Awards: Bishop Auckland & Shildon AAP; Derwent Valley AAP; East Durham Rural Corridor AAP; Energy Efficiency Team; Mid Durham AAP;

Spennymoor AAP; Stanley AAP; Tenant Involvement Team; Weardale AAP and East Durham AAP. Gold Plus Awards: Chester-le-Street AAP; Customer Services – Service Development team; 4 Together AAP and 3 Towns Partnership AAP.

### **Town and Parish Council update**

40. As part of the ongoing Community Governance Reviews consultations that are being undertaken in Crook and Durham City to look at the formation of Parish Councils in these areas, presentations have been given to the relevant AAP Boards.

### **Participatory Budgeting**

41. Developments have taken place with the three AAPs that were involved in the Participatory Budgeting exercise last year. Participatory Budgeting is a mechanism that allows residents in the area to vote and make decisions on the allocation of public money. Following an initial appraisal to ensure that any projects applying are eligible, all applicants will be invited to give a presentation at a public event in their area with the attendees deciding on who should be awarded the money available.
42. The 'It's Up 2 U!' exercise has been developed by the Three Towns Partnership in conjunction with Greater Willington Town Council, Crook Community Partnership and Tow Law Town Council. The public voting events will be held in May (Willington) and June (Crook and Tow Law).
43. £24,000 is available across the AAP area for local groups to apply for. Applications must cover at least one of the following priorities: - Healthy Lifestyles and Wellbeing, Crime and Community Safety, Job prospects and Employment and/or Activities for Children and Young People. Applications are being invited now for all of the Three Towns Area. Any not for profit group, volunteer led groups (i.e. with largely volunteer based input) and Faith based groups who deliver activities and services which are not purely for religious benefit are invited to apply for a grant. All applicants must work within the Three Towns Partnership area of Crook, Willington, Tow Law and the surrounding villages.
44. An additional Participatory Budgeting scheme has also now been agreed for the East Durham Rural Corridor AAP and is currently being advertised. A group training session for applicants has taken place and individual support is being offered also. The deadline for application was 18 May for projects between £300 and £3000 in line with the priorities of the AAP. The community voting event will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> July at the active life centre@coxhoe (formerly Coxhoe Leisure Centre) and will also be the Summer Forum where successes of the last year will be celebrated. The Sports Apprentices who were funded last year and have been placed at the active life centre will be carrying out sports related activities with children, young people and families, as well as promoting how they enrolled on the scheme and how other young people can. There'll also be a litter pick, Tidy Ted will be in attendance and families will be able to pot a marigold (official flower of the Olympics) to take home. The active life centre will also provide some activities which will help promote the centre and hopefully increase membership.

45. The Expression of Interest stage for Stanley AAP's It's Up 2 U 2012 Participatory Budget Project closed on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. 60 expressions of interest had been received and although the joint It's Up 2 U 2012 fund is £120,000, funding requested totalled £550,000. The Public Vote Event for It's Up 2 U 2012 is scheduled to take place on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May from 10am until 2pm in the Louisa Centre, Stanley.

### **Area Action Partnerships Update**

46. During the summer of 2011, information was distributed to people in the **Spennymoor AAP** area in relation to volunteering in order to form a group with the long term goal of developing a sustainable trips and activities committee. 50 individuals initially showed an interest. The training for this element of the project has now commenced, with an overwhelming response from parents and community members. The following programmes have been delivered and 44 people have accessed one of the courses: First Aid; Food Safety; Health & Safety and Child Protection.
47. The Parent Volunteer Training is being delivered by Spennymoor Extended Services and CAVOS. Sixteen parents are attending on a regular basis and early feedback is extremely positive. As a result of the training five parents have now joined the Spennymoor Activities Planning Group and are playing an active role in planning holiday provision for children and young people. The group decided that the Easter trips would be to Mini Moos Adventure Land and The Centre of Life at a cost of £5 per person. The group will all play a part in the organisation and evaluation of the Easter Trips. The next two sessions of the training will concentrate on establishing a Trips and Activities Committee.
48. The Youth Council is in the early stages of development. A steering group has now been established with membership from the AAP, Spennymoor Town Council, One Point and young people. The group have set some draft ideas for terms of reference and outlined some non-negotiable rules that need be incorporated into the structure (such as the area the youth council will serve).
49. The steering group decided the youth council will be themed around County Durham's Strategic themes i.e. Altogether Better for Children and Young People, Altogether Healthier, Altogether Greener, Altogether Safer and Altogether Wealthier. The themes will be localised and incorporate elements from the Town Council's Parish Plan and AAP local statistics/priorities. All of this will be led by young people and therefore designed according to their needs. Full terms of reference will not be agreed until the Youth Board is established, as it is fundamental that the youth people are 'in the driving seat' throughout the whole journey of this project.
50. Following recruitment the first meeting of interested young people was held in April to establish selection criteria e.g. interview, application, letter, multimedia, other approaches etc. It is envisaged the board will consist of 25 young people. The Board will be established in May and three training days organised to establish terms of reference/funding criteria etc with budget allocations commencing in June. Although the youth council is in the very early stages it already feels like a really exciting project that will give young people an active voice in the Spennymoor AAP area.

51. **Mid Durham AAP** and Derwentside Homes through their older people's task group are hoping to link up with both Derwent Valley and Stanley AAPs to support a Comic Relief bid which will look at financial advice, especially around the area of fuel poverty. The initial bid for this project has been short listed down to the last eight projects nationally and will be decided upon in June. This will build upon the recent Silver Dreams Lottery fund bid developed through the same task group with Derwentside Homes (a decision on this is expected in May) acting as lead agent which aims to provide a telephone befriending service which will provide advice on health and finance as well as links to volunteer support for such areas as decorating, gardening and shopping support. If both projects are supported through their respective funding streams this would see a combined service investment of approx £750,000.
52. The AAP will also be exploring the key priority of employment and job prospects over the next few months and will be utilising the recent Scrutiny review on youth employment as a key driver for its work. This priority theme is high on the agenda for virtually all the AAPs and the AAP will be making sure that this theme is addressed collectively.
53. At the March meeting the Board supported the development of the Haggrid project (Horticulture and Agriculture alternative education project) in Ushaw Moor. The project will link closely with Durham Community and Business College and the Ushaw Moor Action Groups recently developed community garden. The project will also hope to link in with the local community and develop flowerbeds and planting schemes around the village.
54. The **Weardale Action Partnership (WAP)** has backed Weardale Visitor Network (WVN) in its production of a map to guide visitors round all that Weardale has to offer. 16,000 copies of the map will be distributed by WVN, through local and national distribution channels. It is also available online from the Discover Weardale website <http://www.discoverweardale.com>. The high-quality map features key local attractions, as well as information on where to stay, shop and eat. It includes key information on local facilities, and is full of great things to see and do.
55. Tourism has been identified as a priority by both the local community through the Area Action Partnership and also by Regeneration and Economic Development at Durham County Council. The Weardale Action Partnership is delighted to be able to support WVN in its efforts to develop a compelling visitor experience that boosts all parts of the local economy and hope this is just the start of working together to boost the Tourism Economy in Weardale. Tourism was worth £47.6m in the Wear Valley district in 2010, making it one of the largest industries and employers in the area. The map will encourage Weardale as a destination, so inspiring visitors to stay over and increase their spend with local businesses.
56. Since the turn of the year **Durham AAP** has agreed its priorities for 2012/13. This includes the addition of Villages Development as an addition to the previous priorities. To ensure that the number one priority is embedded across the work of the AAP, Climate Change is contained within all four priority working groups.

57. In terms of Area Budget the AAP is fully committed and some of the latest awards include the continuation of the Mobile Cinema scheme which is moving ever closer to being self-sustaining and the proposed creation of the 'Durham Pointers' to help tourists with some basic signposting information. There has been a tremendous amount of Neighbourhood Budget activity on wide ranging subjects including restoration of stained glass windows in the Durham Heritage Museum, to a community notice board and restoration of paving in the Pity me area to support highways monies.
58. The development of the Business Improvement District is now scheduled for ballot later in the year and Wharton Park is progressing well with a Friends Group meeting in the Town Hall attracting over 130 people to hear the latest regarding the Heritage Lottery submission which has potentially been increased to over £2.2M, if successful.
59. The AAP submitted an application for Durham City to be considered as one of up to 12 national Portas Pilots. Announcements are to be made in May regarding those chosen.
60. Also looking into the Portas Pilot initiatives is **Chester-le-Street and District AAP**. They have been working with local partners and the Business Community to develop a submission. This opportunity includes bidding for £100,000 of investment to be used to test a number of theories put forward to Government by the retail expert Mary Portas. This work formed part of the AAPs Town and Village Centre Vitality Task Group.
61. Central to the bid was the development of shared partnership vision with local stakeholders and businesses to build on the work already undertaken through the Destination Development Plan to link the Town Centre with the nationally significant leisure destinations that Chester-le-Street has on its doorstep - Beamish Museum, The Riverside Park and the Emirates Durham International Cricket Ground. The Ashes Test Match series in 2013 has been a key driver in developing this bid, to ensure that the retail offer is maximised during this period of national attention on the Town.
62. The AAP has developed a 'Let's Join In Fund' to support community groups who wish to deliver a celebration event to mark either the Queen's Diamond Jubilee or the London Olympic or Paralympics Games. The fund of £5,000 has received 15 bids from local groups across the AAP area. Due to the amount of requests and the quality of their applications the AAP Board have agreed to increase the fund to £5,557 to accommodate all of the groups who applied. This grant scheme will lever in more than £13,510 in match funding and will ensure that the necessary funding is available to local community based groups to bring in appropriate equipment to deliver popular and safe events.
63. The **4 Together Partnership** Team has been busy managing the many changes to their Board make up over the last few months. The 4 Together Partnership was delighted to welcome a new public rep to the board, Brian Gibson (Ferryhill Resident), and a new business representative, Joanne Urquhart (Business Development Officer). There is another public representative vacancy with four interested parties to date. Work is ongoing to



schedule the interviews as soon as possible in order to get our rep on the board in time for the May meeting.

64. In order to share best practice and encourage idea generation across AAPs the 4 Together Partnership is in the process of developing an enviro visit for the Chester-le-Street AAP in order that any interested board members can come along to the 4 Together Partnership and have a tour of the area and discuss some previously funded projects through the environment priority. The tour will visit some of these previously funded projects and it is hoped that we can generate some positive ideas and share our experiences (positives and negatives) so that our partners can gain from what has ran in other areas and start to build a picture of potential projects for their own area.
65. The **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP** continues to work on the Big Local programme. Over the last year, there has been some activity to raise awareness about the Big Local amongst residents and local groups. This is an exciting opportunity for the community to undergo positive change which will provide a lasting legacy. It is about bringing together all the local talent, ambitions, skills and energy from individuals, groups and organisations who want to make South West Bishop Auckland an even better place to live. Through the Big Local Trust there is access to a range of partners who provide expert advice and support as well as finances to help develop the local partnership. You can find out more about partners and training opportunities through the website <http://www.localtrust.org.uk/> where you will also be able to look at what is happening in other areas and read local case studies.
66. The four programme outcomes are directly about local people putting themselves in the driving seat: Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them; People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future; The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises and People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.
67. The Big Local is not about the government or a national organisation telling local people what to do. It's not about individual groups fixing their favourite problem without talking to a wide range of different people who live and work in the community and it's not about short-term thinking – the group have 10 years or more to plan and deliver the best options for their area.
68. The Big Local is meeting shortly to officially form a partnership to look at what to spend the £20,000 allocation; from this an application form will be completed and Durham County Council will hold the money on behalf of the group. Some of the things under consideration for spend of the money are to support the training development of local people so that they can get involved and make decisions through the partnership as well as the initial development costs of the board. This grant is available to get more people involved.
69. **The Derwent Valley AAP** recently funded a 'Derwent Valley Sports Club Coaches' project delivered by Leisureworks. The aim of the project was to increase the opportunity for local sports clubs to put forward candidates to qualify as assistant coaches and coaches whilst volunteering at local clubs within the area. The delivery of this project has resulted in an increase in the

number of local people with coaching, first aid and safeguarding/child protection qualifications and 700 volunteer hours have been given back to the sports clubs who took part. The outcomes of the project are detailed below include local sports clubs benefiting from the project and a number of people being qualified in a range of related qualifications.

70. The Derwent Valley AAP funded a regular young people's film and animation club delivered by Kids for Kids UK. Using funding contributions from both Area and Neighbourhood Budgets, a series of film related workshops and activities were held during the summer and half term holidays for aspiring young filmmakers aged between the ages of 6 and 19. One of the short films developed by pupils at St Pius RC Primary School has been short listed in the VAFI 3<sup>rd</sup> International Children and Youth Animation Film Festival which will be hosted in Croatia. This is the second film to be short listed for an international award as part of the on-going Kids for Kids project.
71. The Derwent Valley AAP in partnership with local Elected Members, is providing a new way for local residents in Derwent Valley to submit project ideas and suggestions for the area. The 'Make a Wish in Derwent Valley' campaign has so far received over 100 suggestions which are now being fed in to the work of the AAP's Task and Finish Groups. A custom built Wishing Well has recently been located in some of the local schools across the area providing an opportunity for young people to contribute their ideas. The Wishing Well will be visiting community centres and other public buildings throughout the coming months and feedback will be given to those who have submitted an idea as part of the campaign.
72. **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP)** has dedicated £15,460 from its area budget to support Budding DJs to take to the airwaves at a Newton Aycliffe Schools to set up their own radio station. Greenfield School and Community Arts College in partnership with Woodham Community Technology College is setting up and running 'Synergy Radio' to help pupils learn more about developing and designing radio shows with daily themes and focuses. The equipment will allow tutor groups at both schools to have the opportunity to produce their own morning breakfast shows and cover a wide range of topics e.g.) sports reports from the Olympics. It's hoped that different subject areas can be taught using the equipment and this will in turn promote the use of media technology and other technological advances such as broadcasting equipment.
73. The radio equipment will also be available outside of normal school hours for those who have a general interest in broadcasting or want to take radio presenting to the next level as a career. Local youth groups and the town's primary schools with an interest in broadcasting will also be able to use the equipment. David Priestley, head teacher at Greenfield School and Community Arts College, said: "The opportunity for the young people of Greenfield Community College and from all other schools across Newton Aycliffe to have access to this state-of-the-art equipment is unique and a powerful learning tool. The equipment funded by GAMP gives young people the ability to learn about language, sound, production and media across the curriculum and within the out of school hours programmes".

74. GAMP, along with Durham County Council's Employability Team, have come together to offer local firms the chance to create apprenticeship opportunities within the GAMP area. The project will work with local firms to create 11 apprenticeships for young people living in the GAMP area. The apprenticeship programme will offer a wage subsidy of £2,500 and supervision costs of up to £350 to small, medium enterprises to create apprenticeship opportunities that focus on unemployed 18-24 year olds. GAMP (Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership) has dedicated £15,000 from its area budget to the project, with a further £16,350 match funding from Durham County Council's Employability Team.
75. Children and young people is once again a priority for **Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP)**. In order to hear the voices of young people TAP organised an activity day for young people in February 2012. The event was held at the Teesdale Community Resources Hub and involved over 240 young people. The event had three key aims; to inform people about TAP, to hear people's views and finally for young people to have an enjoyable experience. This was done through a variety of consultation activities and the young people had access to the fantastic resources at the Hub, including the high ropes course, canoeing, BMX track, music studio and beauty salon. All partners pulled together with thanks going to 2D, TCR Hub, DaleForce, One Point and Teesdale YMCA. Information collated at the event is now being fed into the task and finish groups and will help to inform where resources are allocated in the coming year.
76. Communication is a key factor when engaging with communities and TAP are currently reviewing their approach to communicating with all stake holders. As part of this TAP have set up a Facebook page and are encouraging people to 'Like' it so they can get regular updates on TAP activities.
77. **East Durham Area Action Partnership** launched three funds to creatively engage with the community and support the overarching priority of Maintaining the Social Fabric of our Society. The Community Learning fund will contribute to improved education and learning, family relationships and the development of support networks within the local community. Building on the success of the AAP Family Learning Fund, this project will enable small VCS groups contribute to the delivery of learning opportunities and services to the local community, provide access to learning through community learning opportunities, support parents to engage in the learning process with their children by providing family learning activities, provide non accredited learning opportunities for adults and provide the first step towards gaining support to access employment opportunities.
78. The project aims to provide community based learning opportunities for adults and those families experiencing intergenerational unemployment. This project will engage members of the community in first step learning as a move towards more structured and accredited training which will ultimately increase employment prospects.
79. Learning opportunities have been recommended for inclusion in the 2011/12 Action Plan by the Education and Children and Young People Priority Groups and this project addresses the following issues raised by the East Durham Forum:

- a. need to help parents to help their children and break the negative cycles,
  - b. engage with parents to address parenting skills,
  - c. need to increase the confidence of parents and increase their involvement in their local community,
  - d. need to provide funding for non-accredited training and learning which provides opportunities to progress in the community,
  - e. need to provide learning for the whole family, develop everyone's skills and support networks,
  - f. provide out of school activities within the whole community for the whole family.
80. East Durham AAP have launched the Community Celebration Event Fund and will provide grants of up to £1, 500 to groups organising events in the East Durham AAP Area to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and/or the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games provide great opportunities to inspire people to take part in sport, physical or cultural activities in their community. By making a small grant available to groups in the area, the AAP would be encouraging and assisting groups to seize this opportunity whilst enhancing local community spirit and cohesiveness.
81. Additionally, this complements the County-wide 'Join In' campaign being led by DCC's Leisure Services team, the aim of which is to encourage as many people across the County as possible to partake in activities and events in the run up to the London 2012 games. There are also synergies with national campaigns such as 'The Big Jubilee Lunch' where the aim is to get as many communities as possible to sit down and have lunch together on the Sunday of the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend.
82. **Three Towns AAP Youth Awards 2012** are focussed on recognising inspiring Young People who have achieved great things in their community. Nominations for the award scheme dedicated to young people have far exceeded expectations. The Three Towns Youth Awards, spearheaded by the Three Towns Area Action Partnership (AAP) and 2D, has received 73 nominations, across seven categories of which 21 have been chosen to go through to an awards ceremony. The Youth Awards aims to recognise the achievements of young people in the area and since the inaugural event last year, has gone from strength to strength. A panel of judges made up of youth forum members, AAP board members and the extended services coordinator for the area, made the very difficult decisions. The event will be a celebration of Local Young People and their achievements.
83. The Small Grant fund was devised by the 3 Towns Partnership Activities for Children and Young People Task and Finish group, it was felt that a funding pot should be available that Children and Young People could apply to directly. 2D are the lead on the project but the 3 Towns Youth Forum are the panel for deciding which projects should be progressed to receive the funding, the 3 Towns Board felt that the power should be in their hands as representatives of young people in the area, empowering Young People and engaging them with local groups and issues. The aim of the project is to deliver a funding stream directly to children and young people in the 3 Towns

Partnership area to enable them to enhance activity; create challenge; develop life skills and to make a positive contribution to their local community. To date, the 2011/12 Activities for Children and Young People Small Grants fund has agreed to progress 12 applications with a view to provide funding.

84. Spectrum's Active Toddler Group, a project funded by the AAP, opened its doors in late March 2012 for the first time. Those who attended loved it and thought it was fantastic value for money. The sessions are designed to get young children active, using the whole sports hall for jumping, scooting, rocking, pushing and play to tire youngsters out!
85. With the purchase of 30 pairs of Roller Skates for little feet, the weekly Saturday Family Roller Skating sessions have transformed in popularity. The sessions are often fully booked and proving to be a winner with both parents and children, for fun and value for money.
86. **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** has implemented the Sports Apprenticeship Project which aims to create 45 apprenticeship opportunities within the AAP area currently has 22 young people engaged. The apprenticeships are in sports coaching and apprentices will gain NVQ's in Leadership Activities, Community Sports Leader Award Level 2, and FA Level 1 Coaching Award. They will also gain a certificate in Employment Awareness and 2 Key Skills equating to GCSE Grade C. Esprit Football Academy (the organisation leading the project) would also like to create a new employment position for a part time Sports Development Officer. They aim to do this by utilising local facilities within the community and by providing work experience in schools within the geographical area for the apprentices to work in.
87. Sessions are being delivered across the AAP area to ensure equity. The sessions from Fishburn Youth and Community Centre are running well, and the sessions from Coxhoe Leisure Centre are also on line. Esprit Football Academy is funding additional sessions in Bowburn Community Centre following meetings with the Youth Worker in the area, due to issues with travel. The work experience element is going well, and participants are working out of Deaf Hill and Coxhoe Primary School. The Saturday morning club has started at Fishburn, Coxhoe, and Trimdon Village Primary Schools.
88. **Stanley AAP's** Small Grants Fund is now open for applications. The Small Grants Fund is a fund that has been established to provide relatively small grants for locally based not for profit groups - community and voluntary groups, organisations, associations, ward and community partnerships and social enterprises wishing to develop relevant projects. The Small Grants Fund is administered on behalf of the AAP by Derwentside Council for Voluntary Services (DCVS). The Small Grants Fund will only fund projects/activities that meet one or more of the Stanley AAP priorities which were developed by local people. These priorities are: Regeneration of Stanley and its villages; Opportunities and activities for young people; Transport and environment and Crime and community safety.
89. Local Community Groups, Community Partnerships, Voluntary Groups, Charities and Trusts, and Social Enterprises (including Community Interest Companies) can apply for grants up to £2,000. Grants will be awarded via a

relatively quick and easy process. The deadline for receipt of applications for the first round of Stanley AAP's Small Grants Fund is Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April.

90. Stanley AAP Board Members approved an Area Budget Application for Brass 2012 in Stanley Project at their Board Meeting in March 2012. The project is part of BRASS: Durham International Festival 2012 - an annual celebration of internationally acclaimed brass artists featuring outdoor arts, new commissions, challenging collaborations, outreach work and the very best of contemporary brass playing, taking place annually over the first two weeks of July. The £17,500 of Area Budget Funding granted to the Brass 2012 in Stanley Project will deliver a bespoke package of activity that will contribute to the AAP's Regeneration of Stanley and its Villages, and Opportunities and Activities for Young People priorities.

#### **Recommendations and reasons**

91. Cabinet are asked to note the content of the report.

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**Contact: Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils  
Officer, Tel: 0191 383 4632**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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Finance - Area and Neighbourhood budgets are utilised and delivered through the 14 AAPs.

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - Altogether safer is the responsibility of the Safe Durham Partnership.

Human Rights - None

Consultation - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications - None

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Cabinet

30 May 2012

Children, Young People and Families  
Plan 2012-2016



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## Report of Corporate Management Team

David Williams, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Claire Vasey, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

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### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Cabinet to consider the final draft of the Children, Young People's and Families Plan (CYPFP) 2012-2016 before it is sent to full Council for approval.

### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 In April 2012, revised statutory guidance issued by the Department of Education on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services stressed the importance of ensuring that Local Authorities (LA) continue to focus on the progression of, and improved outcomes for, children and young people. In order to support the improvement of outcomes, the LA acknowledges that we cannot do this alone and that it is imperative that a strategic partnership plan that articulates how this will be achieved in partnership remains in place. The new plan is pivotal in achieving this vision together with our partners. The new plan covers the four year period 2012-2016 and will be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 Following a review of the Children's Trust in County Durham, a number of changes have been proposed. In order to reflect the increased focus on the needs of the 'family', the Children's Trust has been renamed the *Children and Families Trust* and the Children and Young People's Plan the *Children, Young People and Families* plan.
- 2.3 The involvement and contribution of children, young people and families has been central throughout the development and shaping of this plan and a number of consultative events have taken place.

### 3.0 Current Position

- 3.1 A formal consultation period for the plan ended on 29 February 2012. 26 responses were received and considered from a variety of stakeholders including the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). All responses have been considered and the vast majority have been reflected in the plan.
- 3.2 The comments received focused mainly around layout/formatting, performance measures, and additional information to strengthen particular points made within the plan (e.g. Elected Member involvement).

### 4.0 Strategy and Outcomes/Priorities

Following formal consultation and comments provided, the general direction of the plan and the outcomes/ priorities and strategy remain as follows:

#### 4.1 Strategy

- 4.1.1 We will deliver success through a two-fold strategy. Firstly, we will focus on those areas that are root *causes* of poorer outcomes rather than focus on both the *causes AND effects* of poorer outcomes. Secondly, we will mobilise our resources to intervene early. The needs of vulnerable families will be identified at the earliest opportunity and they will receive the support that they need at a much earlier stage. We will do this through the delivery of our integrated service – One Point.

#### 4.2 Outcomes and Priorities

CYPFP Outcome	No.	CYPFP Priority
Children and young people realise and maximise their potential	i)	Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain to prepare them for adulthood
	ii)	A range of positive activities are available for children and young people
Children and young people are healthy and make positive choices	iii)	Negative risk taking behaviour is reduced
	iv)	Children and young people are more resilient
Children, young people and families needs are fully met	v)	Children are safeguarded and protected from harm
	vi)	Early Intervention and Prevention services improve outcomes for families

- 5.1 After consideration by Cabinet the Plan will be taken to a full Council meeting for approval.
- 5.2 The Plan will also be presented to the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2012.
- 6.0 Recommendations and Reasons**
- 6.1 Cabinet is asked to note the Children, Young People and Families Plan and recommend its approval by the County Council.

### **Background papers**

Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016

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**Contact: Claire McLaren, Planning, Quality and Research Manager**  
**Tel: 0191 383 3604**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** - There no financial implications.

**Staffing** - There are no staffing implications.

**Risk** - The risk attached to this plan is linked to future spending reductions in public sector funding and the impact of such future reductions on delivering against the objectives and priorities within the plan over the next 4 years.

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - The CYPFP has engaged with and consulted with children, young people and families across all backgrounds, ages and equality strands. The CYPFP has ensured that the voice of all children and young people is heard, shared and reflected within the plan. There are no adverse implications for any equality group.

**Accommodation** - There are no accommodation implications.

**Crime and Disorder** – There are positive implications for crime and disorder as the plan is aligned with and contributes to the current priorities within the Youth Justice Plan.

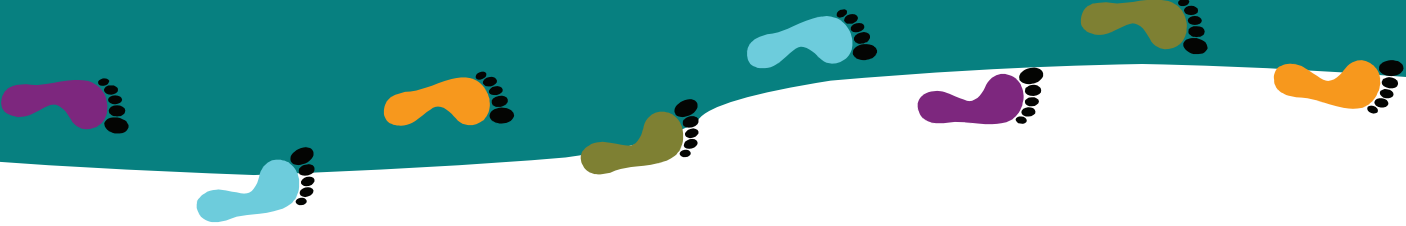
**Human Rights** – Human rights have been considered in the production of this plan. Children and young people have been central to the development of this strategic plan and the plan has ensured that their voices are heard.

**Consultation** – Extensive consultation has been carried out in the development and approval of this plan. Partners, parents, families, children and young people have all been provided an opportunity to shape the direction and the content of this plan at each stage.

**Procurement** - There are no procurement implications.

**Disability Issues** – The views and needs of families of and children with disabilities have been considered and reflected in the plan and the needs of children with disabilities remains paramount to the work of the Children and Families Trust.

**Legal Implications** – there are no legal implications.



# CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PLAN 2012-2016

**FINAL DRAFT 15 MAY 12**

*Taking steps in the right direction, so our children and young people can 'believe, achieve and succeed'*



Altogether better  
for **children** and  
**young people**

County Durham  
Children's Trust

**NHS**  
County Durham  
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# Welcome to the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016





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# Foreword

Since 2006, the Children and Families Trust has been on a journey of learning and has improved many things which matter most to children, young people and families despite a significant reduction in public sector spending in recent years. The publication of our third plan provides an opportunity to look back on what we have accomplished since our last full plan in 2009.

In County Durham the Children and Families Trust has been at the forefront of leading the dramatic and significant change in how we provide front-line early intervention and preventative services with the launch of the One Point Service in September 2011. In January 2012, the Children and Families Trust was rated as 'outstanding' for the quality of the services that it delivers for safeguarding and good for the quality of services it delivers for looked after children.

Whilst our achievements are celebrated, we must look forward. This plan will set out our ambitions for the next four years. It takes account of key policy drivers and other legislative changes and provides details on the areas we need to focus on and what actions we intend to take as a partnership to improve the lives of children, young people and families. However, we must be realistic. The impact of the coalition government's reduction in public sector spending means that we cannot deliver as many things to the same extent as we did before. We need to work together in a different way; work harder and more efficiently; and use our limited resources more effectively in order to make this happen.

**One of the key changes in response to this is to focus on a reduced number of priorities than in previous years that tackle the *root causes* of poorer outcomes and not the *effects*.**

The Children and Families Trust has also experienced a transformation and a new structure is in place which reflects the changing nature and approach to our work. New locality working arrangements will continue to deliver improved outcomes at a local level whilst building on the achievements gained by the Local Children's Boards.

Children, young people and families have been central in shaping our new plan and we have worked together at every stage in the development of this plan and in identifying our 6 new priorities. We have listened to and taken children's views seriously to what could and should be done to make further improvements to their lives, whilst maintaining a realistic vision of what can be achieved.

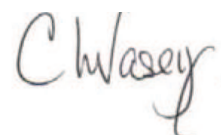
We will continue to put the views of children, young people and families at the heart of our work and by doing so we are confident that our ambitions will be realised. We look forward to you joining us on our journey for the next 4 years.



**David Williams**  
Corporate Director  
Children and Young  
People's Services



**Councillor Claire Vasey**  
Lead Member  
Children and Young  
People's Services





We have achieved many things since our last plan. These include the:

## Positive results of Inspections

The announced inspection of safeguarding and services for Looked After Children (LAC) assesses how well the partnership is keeping children safe from harm and delivering better outcomes for looked after children. Overall Ofsted rated County Durham's Children's Services as 'outstanding'. They judged the overall effectiveness of our safeguarding services to be outstanding; our capacity to improve these services is also described as outstanding. The overall effectiveness of our services for looked after children is described as good; and our capacity to improve our looked after children's services is judged as outstanding.

A positive result of the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment in March 2011 was achieved with no areas identified for priority action.

All Children's Homes are judged good or better.

The outcome of the last four fostering inspections and the last two adoption service inspections received an 'outstanding' grading.

## Development of the One Point Service

In September 2011, we launched the One Point Service, bringing together over 750 members of staff across 10 teams under the single line management of the Local Authority. The Service will ensure that all community based universal and targeted services are focused upon delivery of prevention and early intervention services.

## Raising of educational attainment

The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A\*- C GCSE grades, including English and Maths increased from 55.3% (2010/2011) to 59.5% (2011/2012) and represents the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of above national average improvement in GCSE outcomes.

13.6% of Looked After Children who were in care for at least one year achieved the equivalent of at least 5 A\*-C GCSEs, including English and Mathematics, above our target of 12% (2011/12). 52.3% of LAC achieved 5 A\*-C GCSEs – an improvement from 44% in the previous year (2010/11).

We have narrowed the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at Key Stage 2 from 23.2% (2010/2011) to 20.9% (2011/2012).

We have narrowed the gap between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children and young people and the rest at Key Stage 2 from 32.8% in 2010/11 to 26.5% in 2011/12.

The Special Educational Needs/Non-Special Educational Needs gap at Key Stage 2 (English and Maths) has narrowed to 45.7% in 2011/12 compared with 49.6% in 2010/11.



## Effective safeguarding of children & young people

The percentage of children in need referrals occurring within 12 months of previous referral has improved from 26.0% in Quarter 3 2010/11 to 23.4% in Quarter 3 2011/12.

The percentage of children ceasing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan (who had been the subject of a Plan continuously for two years or longer) has improved from 3.7% in Quarter 3 2010/11 to 2.4% in Quarter 3 2011/12.

## Creation and implementation of the Think Family Strategy

We have developed the 'Think Family' approach, strategy and action plan involving a range of partner agencies across County Durham. It recognises where families have multiple and complex needs and is delivering against those needs.

## Development of the Family Pathfinder Service

The Family Pathfinder Service was established in 2009 as part of our preventative strategy. Three Family Pathfinder teams work across the County with the whole family to prevent children from entering the child protection system or requiring a more specialist high cost intervention. The national evaluation of the Family Pathfinder Service has shown a significant reduction in adverse outcomes for children and families with a significant reduction in risk factors on exit from the service including an 80% reduction in the risk of family violence. This service was also shortlisted for a Local Government Chronicle (LGC) award in the Children's Service Category.



## Increasing Education, Training

## Participation in Employment and

In 2011, 91.7% of school leavers engaged in learning (this includes full time education, work based learning or employment with training including apprenticeships).

We have reduced the percentage of 16-18 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) during 2010/11. Performance for the official NEET figure (November-January) was 8.5%.

We have delivered a range of innovative learning and support opportunities, through a European Social Fund (ESF) Youth Participation Project designed to support the progression of young people. 1619 of our most disadvantaged young people completed a programme which facilitated their progression to further education, employment or training.

We have developed the 'Teenagers to Work Scheme' which aims to enhance care leavers' employability skills and give them 'real work' opportunities. In the summer of 2006, there were 10 work placements. In the summer 2011, 58 young people took part in the project.

## Launch of the Full Circle and 4Real Service and improvement of emotional wellbeing

The Full Circle Service is a multi-professional children's mental health service launched in November 2009. It supports the emotional wellbeing and mental health of

looked after children, children in need and adopted children, post trauma and abuse. Data shows that 88% of children had improved outcomes following intervention by the Full Circle Service.

The 4Real Service is a jointly commissioned multi-agency young person's substance misuse team offering targeted and specialist interventions.

4Real Alcohol Brief Intervention Workers, working with Durham Constabulary, ensure that all relevant young people who are stopped by the police are directed into the service. Programme completion rates were 81% as of October 2011.

We have undertaken the Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) Pathfinder Project to support the development of innovative models of therapeutic and holistic emotional and mental health support for children and young people aged 5-13.

As at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, 97 schools and other settings achieved Durham Anti-Bullying Accreditation Status. All local authority children's homes are either accredited or working towards it.

## **Reduced rate of teenage conceptions**

The under 18 conception rate in Durham is falling, but more work is required. The latest available data from 2010 shows a conception rate of 43.2 per 1,000 girls aged 15-17, compared with a conception rate of 44.0 during 2009.

## **Improvement in services for disabled children and their families**

We have delivered an unprecedented number of short break hours for families with disabled children, smashing the target set and leading to improved outcomes for families and savings for the local authority. Since 2008/09 the short breaks strategy has reduced the cost for new external placements by £1.1 million. This work has received national recognition.

## **Reduction in homelessness**

Safeguarding and Specialist Services (SaSS), housing providers and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) have developed and implemented a homelessness protocol which has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of young people who become homeless or have inappropriate accommodation. Prior to the protocol, more than 335 young people presented as homeless (2006/07). This reduced to 222 in 2010/11, of which 101 young people were returned home.

## **Promotion of healthy eating**

All primary schools in County Durham have achieved 'Healthy Schools' status. Further examples of work include the delivery of 196 'Cook 4 Life' courses involving 1,240 participants; 50 'Cooking Together' and 17 'Small Steps to Good Nutrition' courses delivered through Children's Centres and other community venues. In addition two 10-week programmes have been developed – 'The Time to Choose' and 'Junior One Life' programmes to help children, young people and parents / carers make healthy lifestyle choices.

## **Increased participation of children, young people and families**

We have developed a Participation Strategy which focuses on children, young people and families becoming involved and engaged in all aspects of the work of the Children and Families Trust. Examples of our success includes: 313 organisations having achieved Investing in Children membership and the development of a range of reference groups and forums such as the Making Changes Together Partnership.

## Reduction in the number of children and young people entering the Youth Justice System

Durham Constabulary and County Durham Youth Offending Service have reduced the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System by 71.4% (2007/08 to 2010/11) using the unique Pre-Reprimand Disposal (PRD) programme. The PRD provides early assessment and specialist intervention to identify and address need at a young person's first contact with the Youth Justice System. The success of the PRD has been recognised by a series of national awards in 2010//11 including a royal visit from HRH The Princess Royal to County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) in September 2011.

The integrated pre-court system (implemented September 2010) builds upon the success of the PRD and ensures assessment and specialist intervention for all young people pre-court. This had a considerable impact on reducing first time entrants and reducing re-offending.

The number of young people reoffending in County Durham and the number of offences committed continue to fall. The reduction in frequency rate per 100 young people who re-offend after 6 months (January to March 2011) shows a 4.4% reduction compared to the same period in 2009 and 15.7% reduction against the same period in 2010.

There has been a particular impact on the number of girls who are first time entrants or who re-offend in comparison to boys. There has been a 79% reduction in female first time entrants and a 68% reduction in boys (2007/08 to 2010/11) over the same period. The rate of re-offending is considerably lower for girls than it is for boys. Early intervention (pre-court) plays a major role in supporting this performance.

## Positive Activity of young people

The percentage of young people participating in youth work has increased to 11.5% in Quarter 3 2011/12 exceeding the quarterly target of 10%.

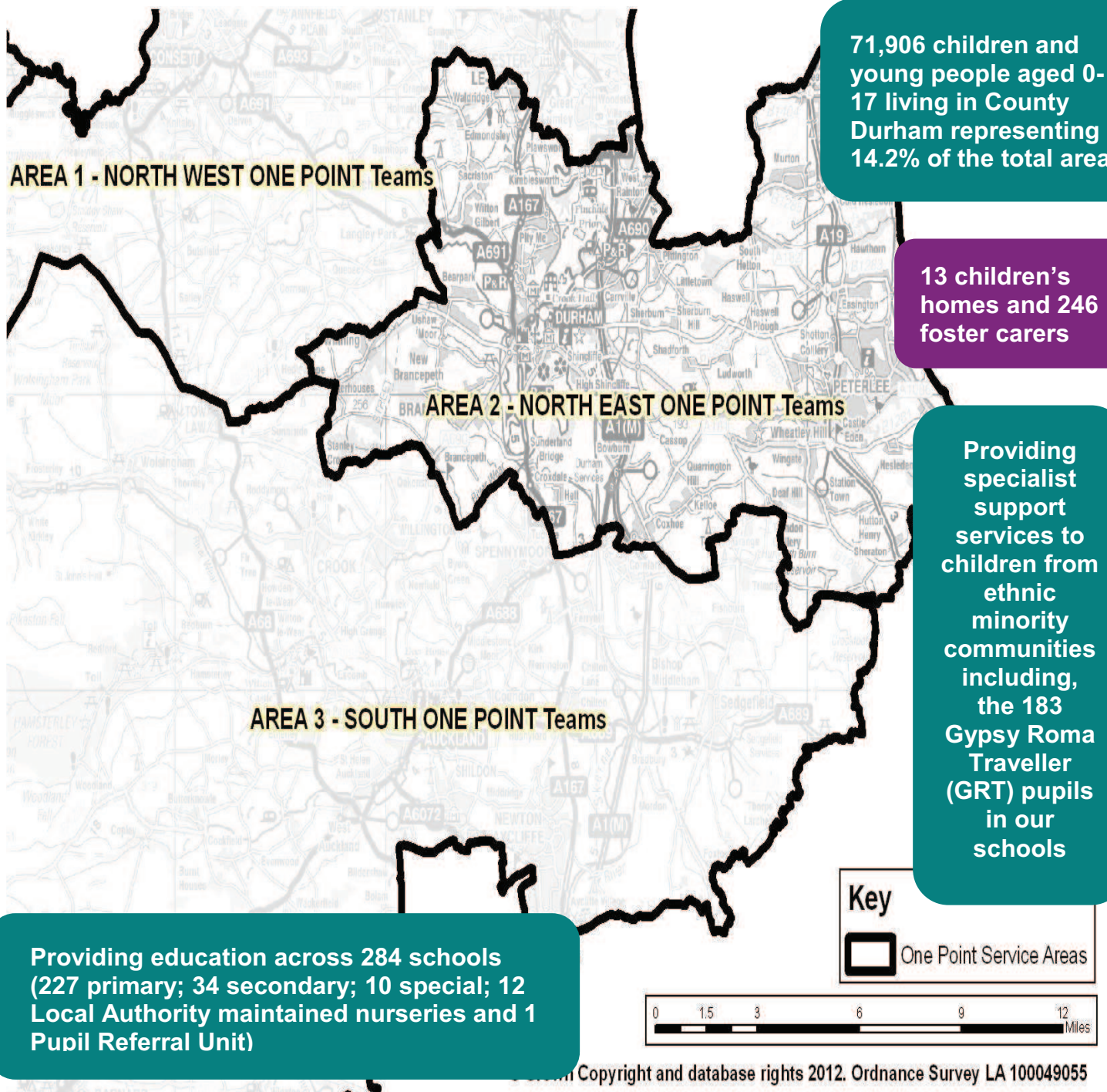
From April 2009 to March 2011, all children and young people under 16 years of age could access free swimming lessons. Due to change in government policy and the financial climate, the free swimming has ended. Whilst it was running, the uptake in County Durham was significant.





# Snapshot of County Durham

N.B. All data correct as of February 2012



71,906 children and young people aged 0-17 living in County Durham representing 14.2% of the total area

13 children's homes and 246 foster carers

Providing specialist support services to children from ethnic minority communities including, the 183 Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) pupils in our schools

Providing education across 284 schools (227 primary; 34 secondary; 10 special; 12 Local Authority maintained nurseries and 1 Pupil Referral Unit)

Providing foster placements and children's homes for 647 looked after children

1.71% children and young people speak a language other than

2369 pupils in our schools with a statement of SEN

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from neglect and harm including 468 children and young people who are subject to a child protection plan



## Our Vision and Strategy 2012 - 2016



Within County Durham we have high aspirations and a clear shared vision for all of our children and young people. By making steps in the right direction, we want them **all** to 'believe, achieve and succeed'. We recognise that in order to achieve our vision, we must continue to work effectively as a partnership.

***We must ensure that the sum of our parts is greater than the value of our parts alone.***

The statutory requirement to produce a Children and Young People's Plan was revoked in 2010 by the new coalition government. The decision taken to remain as a Children and Families Trust and continue to work to a strategic plan for children, young people and families within County Durham is testament to our commitment to continuous progress.

We have achieved much since our last strategic plan 3 years ago, across the breadth of our work and in our performance. We operate effectively as a partnership which is evidenced through our Ofsted rating of '**Outstanding**' for the services we deliver to safeguard children. However, we also know that progress is not without its challenges. With unprecedented cuts and a change in political direction, we recognise that we must change the way that we deliver and work together in order to continue to progress. We also need to consider and respond to a number of key policy drivers, details of which can be seen in Figure 1 on page 11.

With reducing resources and a pressure to do more with less, we recognise that we must refocus our efforts and concentrate on a fewer number of the *right* priorities in order to reap results and maximise efficiency.

This Plan is deliberately focused on what we need to achieve at a strategic level over the next 4 years. Each priority will be supported by a 'Commissioning Plan' at the next level down which will set out what actions we will take over the same period of time.

### **Our strategy is two fold**

Firstly, we will rationalise our focus to those areas that are root *causes* of poorer outcomes rather than focus on both the *causes AND effects* of poorer outcomes. By focusing on the cause this will naturally lead to improvements in the effects. For example, by focusing on raising aspirations, we believe we will have a positive impact on the effects of this, such as rates of teenage pregnancy or substance misuse. We also be conscious of the impact of the wider determinants of health and the work of the Marmot review in influencing and tackling health inequalities.

Secondly, we will mobilise our resources to intervene early. Early intervention is critical to reducing the demand for more specialist services. The needs of vulnerable families will be identified at the earliest opportunity and they will receive the support that they need at a much earlier stage. We will do this through the delivery of our integrated service – One Point. One Point has a clear vision. It will provide a pathway of care for children from birth to 19 and will work with a range of partners and providers to ensure that universal, targeted and specialist provision is delivered to meet need.



## Guiding Principles

The delivery of our vision will be based upon guiding principles. These include:

- ✓ Engaging with children, young people and families as equal partners in the delivery of services.
- ✓ Using resources efficiently across all of our priorities. There will be a continued focus on value for money in everything that we do, to ensure maximum efficacy.
- ✓ Working in partnership to maximise our resources, ideas and deliver improved services and outcomes.
- ✓ Valuing equality and diversity and promoting opportunities for the most disadvantaged families.
- ✓ Overcoming obstacles and always striving for the best for our children and young people.

### Figure 1: Children, young people and families – Key policy drivers

The key policy drivers outlined below have been pivotal in influencing our strategy and our work:

#### Health and Social Care Bill

This Bill proposes extensive reorganisation of the structure of the National Health Service, including abolishing NHS Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) and creating Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), partly run by General Practitioners (GPs).

#### Munro Review

Following the Munro review of child protection services, the Government, together with relevant agencies, professionals and local authorities, are committed to shifting the focus of the child protection system on to the things that matter most: the views and experiences of children and young people.

#### Education Act 2011

The Act is an important step in implementing the Government's education reform programme and helping to create an education system that delivers ever higher standards for all children.

#### Academies Act

The Act enables more schools in England to become academies, with greater freedom and flexibilities. The Government expects a significant number of academies to open as a result of the act and for the number to grow each year.

#### Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act plays a key role in the Government's ambitions to decentralise power away from Whitehall and back into the hands of local councils, communities and individuals to act on local priorities.

#### Marmot Review

Following this Review, the 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' report proposes a new way to reduce health inequalities in England. It proposes an evidence based strategy to address the social determinants of health, the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age and which can lead to health inequalities.



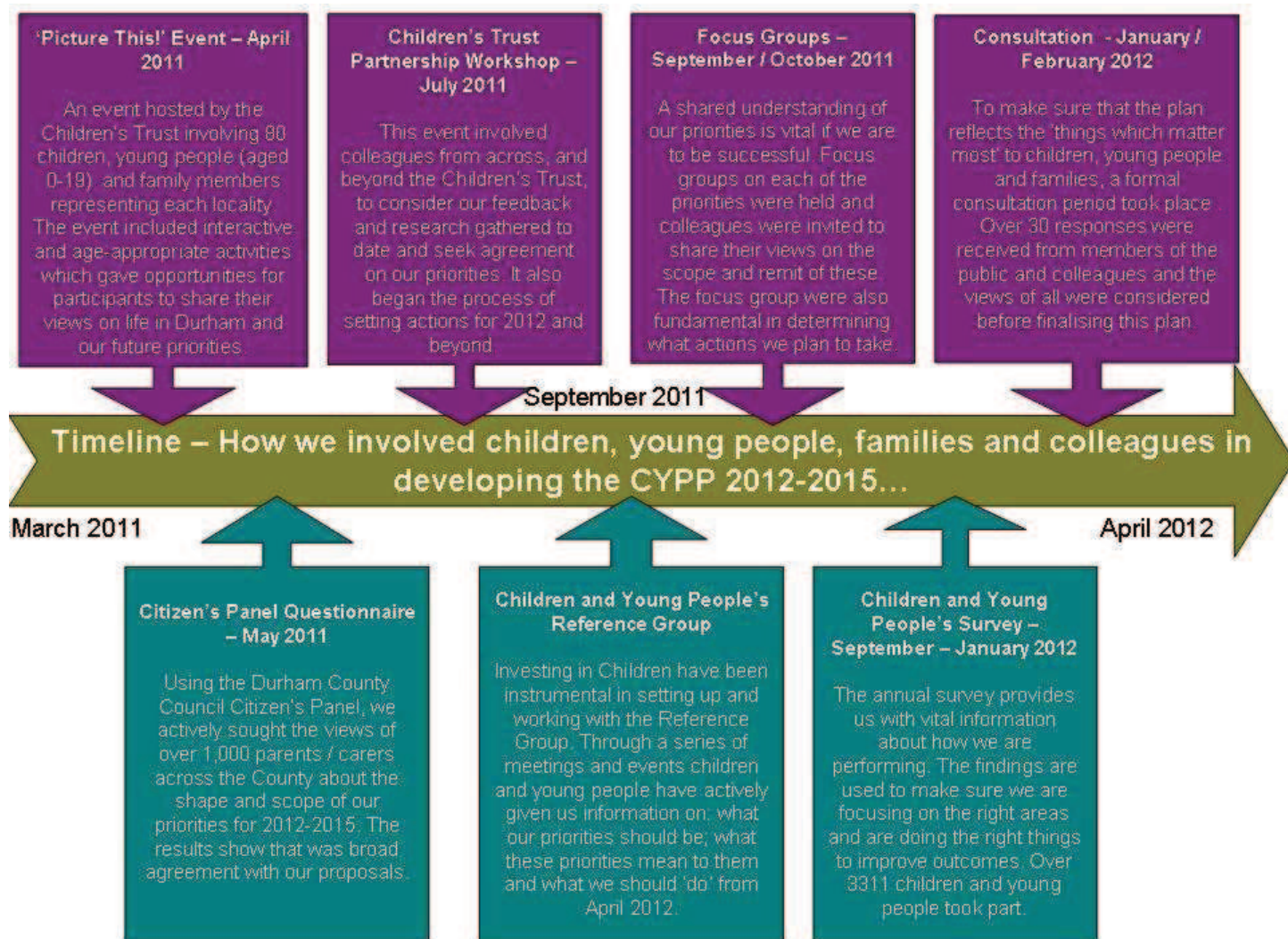
# Identifying our priorities for 2012 - 2016



Our CYPFP draws on a vast range of evidence including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), performance data, policy drivers, legislation and the ongoing engagement with children, young people, parents, carers and partner agencies (see Appendix 1).

Central to our approach is the participation and engagement of children, young people, families and partners. Figure 2 below shows this in more detail:

**Figure 2: Participation and Engagement in the CYPFP 2012-2016**



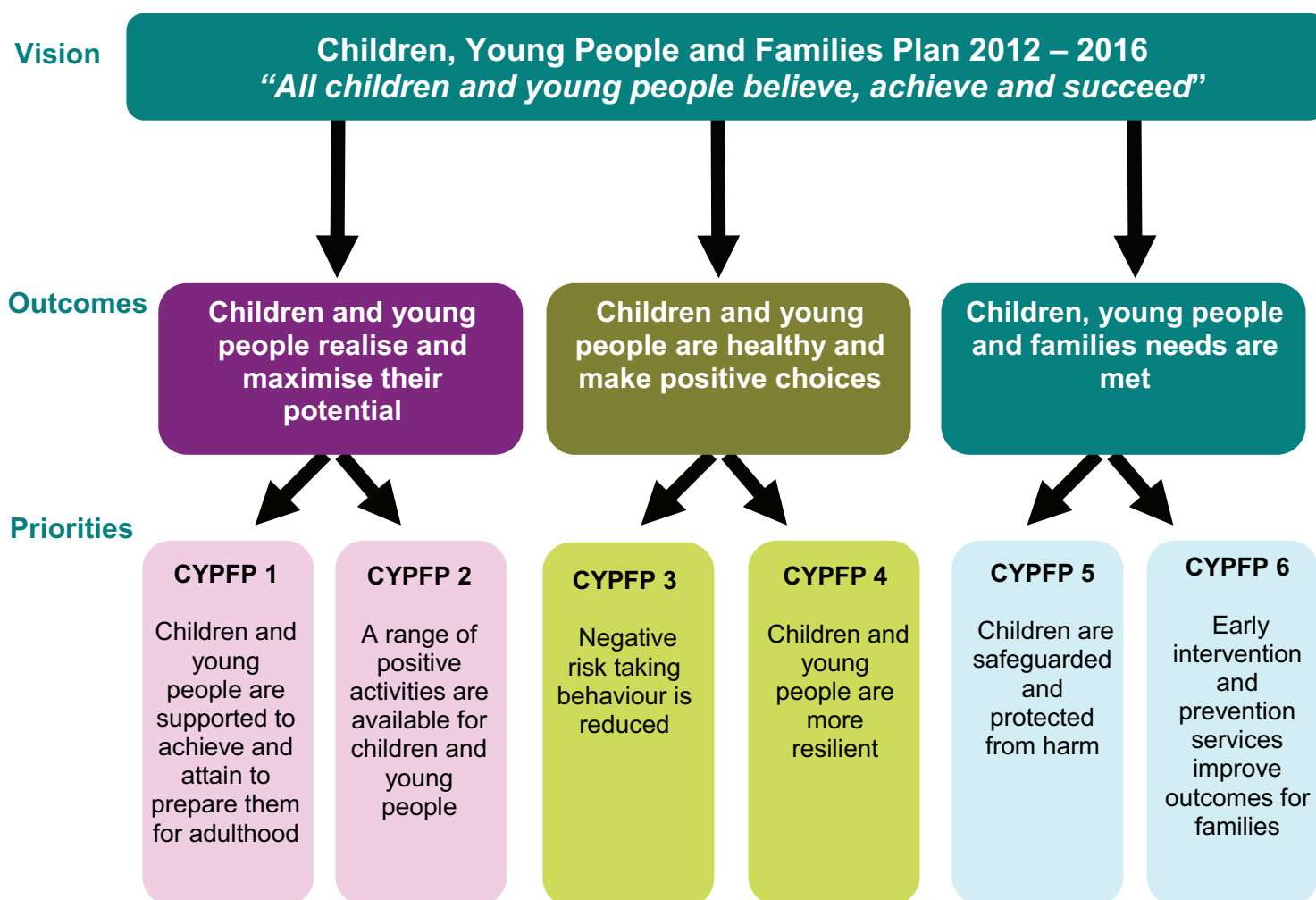


# Overview of Outcomes & Priorities for 2012-2016

The outcomes that we want for our children and young people and the priorities we have selected to help us achieve these have been evidenced and developed to ensure maximum impact in a climate of budget reduction. We will focus on the 'root causes' (reason) rather than the 'effects' (result) of poorer outcomes.

We have identified 3 outcomes that we most want to achieve and 6 priorities to help us achieve these. These can be seen in Figure 3 below:

**Figure 3: CYPFP 2012-2016 Outcomes and Priorities 2012 – 2016**





## OUTCOME 1 - Children and Young People realise and maximise their potential



***'This means that children and young people in County Durham.....***

***..... are supported and encouraged to be the best that they can be no matter what their dreams are. They will be able to thrive in the environment where they live and learn, to achieve their very best'.***

We are committed to ensuring that all children and young people have the opportunity to be the best that they can be, including the most vulnerable. To achieve this we need good quality services which are efficient, effective and responsive to need.

We will focus on encouraging children and young people to achieve above and beyond academic qualifications, although we recognise that the achievement of these is vitally important for future outcomes and life choices. We believe supporting a child or young person requires the raising of aspirations, instilling a belief that they can achieve in many different areas of life and enabling them to actively engage in education, employment or training. This will create a platform for a more successful future.

***"People need to help us find places to meet and things to do so we can make new friends".***

***'Picture This Event' - Research with children and young people 2010/11***

It's not just about having places to go and things to do. It's about the *quality, choice and accessibility of opportunities available to enrich* children and young peoples lives. We know that having a range of activities available can positively impact on a number of positive outcomes for children, such as maintaining a healthy weight, improving educational attainment, improving emotional wellbeing, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving self confidence. A wide variety of stakeholders play a vital role in this area, ranging from schools to uniformed organisations, from voluntary groups to Community Sport Networks.

To achieve this outcome we have identified the following two priorities as key to our success:

**CYPFP Priority 1:** Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain to prepare them for adulthood.

**CYPFP Priority 2:** A range of positive activities are available for children and young people.

# Priority 1: Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain into adulthood

## Our Key Actions for 2012-2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Implementation of the Raising of the Participation Age Plan.	Improving Progression Partnership Lead
Deliver the Joint Disability Strategy.	Commissioning Manager, CYPS
Sustain and promote the attainment and achievement of Looked After Children.	Head of Countywide Services, CYPS
Invest in early years to ensure readiness for school.	All partners
Improve educational outcomes for children with special educational needs (SEN) and other vulnerable groups by delivering high quality services.	Head of Countywide Services, CYPS
Young people have access to impartial and independent careers guidance.	Improving Progression Partnership Lead
Young people have access to and benefit from high quality, comprehensive education and training opportunities, including Apprenticeships.	Improving Progression Partnership Lead

## How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	54.1%
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grade GCSEs or equivalent at Key Stage 4	Not set – tba
Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths	60.4%
Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSE (or equivalent) at KS4 including English and Maths	21.0%
Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers (Key Stage 2 and 4)	19.9 (KS2) 31.9 (KS 4)
Percentage point gap between those known to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the rest, gaining Level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2	44.9%
Percentage of 16-18 year olds who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	8.0%
Participation rates at 16 and 17 years old in education, employment or training	93% (16 year olds) 90%(17 year olds)
Percentage of young people aged 16-19 with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties in education, employment or training	69.0%
Percentage of young people looked after/in care in education, employment or training	40.0%
Percentage of young people gaining a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	50.1%



## Priority 2 - A range of positive activities are available for children and young people





### Our Key Actions for 2012- 2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Develop and deliver the Places to Go and Things to do Commissioning Plan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tackling the issue of transport through a collective approach with partners;</li> <li>developing a universal market and communication strategy; and</li> <li>developing a change strategy in order to improve attitudes towards children and young people</li> </ul>	Commissioning Manager, CYPS


### How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Children and young people's participation in out-of-school sport	Not set – tba (baseline year)
Percentage of young people who have taken part in an activity outside of school in the last 4 weeks	Not set - tba (baseline year)





## OUTCOME 2 – Children and young people are healthy and make positive choices



***‘This means that children and young people in County Durham.....***

***..... look after themselves and others by making positive decisions and responsible choices about their behaviour. They will take positive risks as part of growing up with support from adults. They will be able to cope with what life throws at them and bounce back from tough times’.***

Risk taking is a normal and healthy part of growing up, however, sometimes, risks are taken that are not positive and lead to negative results. Taking risks in a supportive environment is critical to the development of strong and emotionally resilient children and young people.

In County Durham, we know that negative risk taking behaviour can lead to higher teenage conceptions, higher alcohol and drugs use, youth crime and high obesity levels. This places young people at risk of physical or emotional harm and/or poorer outcomes. In order to tackle priorities around teenage pregnancy, youth crime, smoking, obesity and alcohol use, we will focus on a strategy that helps young people make responsible choices about their behaviour,

Children and young people who are resilient will be able to cope with difficult situations, make positive decisions and bounce back from tough times. Good emotional health and wellbeing in children and young people contributes significantly to them developing good resilience.

***“If you want to be respected by others the great thing is to respect yourself. Only by that, only by self – respect will you compel others to respect you”.***

**Fedor Dostoevsky, Russian Novelist**

Resilience is important because it is the capacity to face, overcome and be strengthened by or even transformed by the adversities of life.

Our work in this area is aligned to County Durham’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (due for completion in October 2012). This strategy will provide the cross-partnership foundations to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children, young people and families, including supporting our work in reducing risk-taking behaviour and improving resilience amongst children and young people.

To achieve this outcome we have identified the following two priorities as key to our success:

**CYPFP Priority 3:** Negative risk taking behaviour is reduced.

**CYPFP Priority 4:** Children and young people are more resilient.



## Priority 3: Negative risk taking behaviour is reduced



### Our Key Actions for 2012-2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Implement Social Norms project in secondary schools in County Durham which considers risk taking behaviour (e.g. alcohol, teenage pregnancy, smoking).	Commissioning Manager, DCC
Work in partnership to reduce re-offending by young people by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing ASSET information to influence provision of universal and targeted services;</li> <li>• improving the quality of exit strategies to reduce re-offending;</li> <li>• implementing and improving CDYOS Offending Behaviour Programmes and evaluating effectiveness; and</li> <li>• increasing the use of restorative approaches.</li> </ul>	County Durham Youth Offending Service
Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing further the integration between the pre and post cohort in CDYOS;</li> <li>• ensuring a case management approach considers all sibling in the family;</li> <li>• increasing access to Positive Futures programmes; and</li> <li>• working with the One Point Service.</li> </ul>	County Durham Youth Offending Service

### How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Percentage of children in Reception with height and weight recorded who are obese	9.4%
Percentage of children in Year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese	21.5%
Under 18 conception rate (Percentage change from 1998 baseline of 54.4 conceptions per 1,000 15-17 year old women)	Not set – tba
First time entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System aged 10 - 17 (per 100,000 population of 10-17 year olds)	712 (340 FTEs)
Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders	Not set – tba

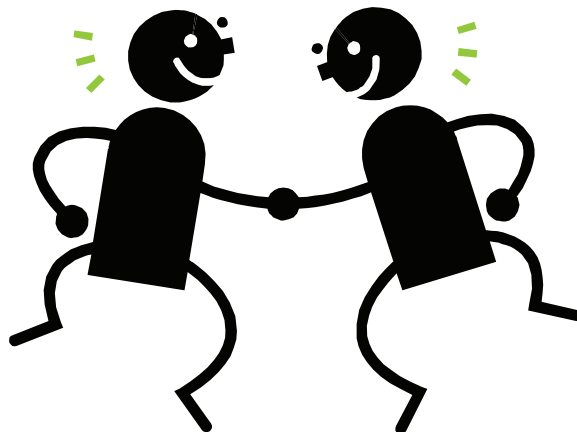
## Priority 4: Children and young people are more resilient

### Our Key Actions for 2012-2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Develop and deliver an Emotional Wellbeing strategy and commissioning plan.	PCT Commissioning Manager
Develop and deliver a Resilience commissioning strategy and plan that considers all risk taking behaviour e.g. sexual health/ teenage pregnancy, smoking, alcohol and substance misuse and obesity.	Commissioning Managers, DCC & NHS County Durham

### How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children	Not set – tba April 2012
Percentage of children and young people who report that they make friends easily (Year 6 and Year 9)	Not set (baseline year)
Percentage of children and young people who report that they are happy (Year 6 and Year 9)	Not set (baseline year)





## **OUTCOME 3 - Children, young people and families' needs are met**



***'This means that children and young people in County Durham.....***

***.....are kept safe from harm and vulnerable families receive the support that they need at the earliest opportunity. Children will be protected from neglect and grow up in a safe environment'.***

Safeguarding and ensuring the welfare of children is about protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development; and ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

We want to ensure that all children and young people are kept safe and feel safe at all times, no matter what their background. Safeguarding is a key priority for the Children and Families Trust and it runs as a main theme throughout this plan. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) continues to provide the Trust with key challenge and oversight in this area.

**"There is no duty more important than ensuring that children's welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want, and that they can grow up in peace."**

**Kofi Annan – former Secretary General of the United Nations**

Preventing families from becoming vulnerable and enabling them to maximise their life chances is vitally important. By ensuring that children, young people and their families are given the necessary social and emotional support at the earliest opportunity possible, we will help children and young people to reach their full potential. The complex issues faced by families who are in need of help often cannot be addressed by a single agency but demands a coordinated response, especially those families who have children with additional needs. We will deliver an integrated approach in order to support families to promote positive outcomes.

To achieve this outcome we have identified the following two priorities as key to our success:

**CYPFP Priority 5:** Children are safeguarded and protected from harm.

**CYPFP Priority 6:** Early intervention and prevention services improve outcomes for families.



## Priority 5: Children and young people are safeguarded and protected from harm

### Our Key Actions for 2012-2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Promote a 'child-centred' focus across and beyond the Children and Families Trust.	All partners
Implement the Working Together Protocol.	All partners
Develop effective working practices with adult mental health services	SASS, DCC
Implement the Munro review of child protection recommendations.	SASS, DCC
Implement the Announced Inspection of Safeguarding and Services to Looked After Children action plan.	DCC & Health

### How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Percentage of children in need (CiN) referrals occurring within 12 months of previous referral	20.0%
Percentage of referrals to children's social care result in assessment of need	63%
Number of Initial Child Protection Conferences relating to Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan as a result of parental substance misuse	67%
Number of Initial Child Protection Conferences relating to children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan as a result of parental alcohol misuse	83%
Children subject to family proceedings as a result of parental substance misuse	Not set – tba



# Priority 6: Early intervention and prevention services improve outcomes for families



## Our Key Actions for 2012-2016

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Implement the One Point Operational Plan.	Head of Early Intervention and Partnership Services
Complete an options appraisal on future delivery arrangements for the One Point Service.	Head of Early Intervention and Partnership Services
Address gaps in childcare sufficiency as identified through the childcare sufficiency audit.	Childcare Manager, CYPS, DCC
Undertake a review of the relationship between the Think Family Board and the Children and Families Trust.	Head of Early Intervention and Partnership Services
Ensure all partner agencies have a working knowledge of the Common Assessment Framework / Children in Need interface.	One Point Service & SASS

## How will we measure success?

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Target 2012/13</b>
Number of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) completed	1,200
Number of pre-CAFs undertaken	Not set – tba
Number of service users accessing One Point Services	Not set – tba (baseline year)
Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	11.0%
Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	54.1%



# Delivering the Outcomes – Our Partnership Arrangements

The County Durham Children and Families Trust is part of a much bigger picture of ambition and delivery in County Durham. Leading on ‘*Altogether Better for Children and Young People*’, the Children and Families Trust is one of five strategic multi-agency thematic partnerships of the County Durham Partnership (CDP) which aims to deliver an ‘*Altogether Better Durham*’.

The CDP is made up of key public, private and voluntary sector organisations that work together to improve the quality of life for local people. There is a strong track record of working in partnership across County Durham which is evident throughout the CDP framework. The partnership framework is made up of the CDP Board, CDP Forum, five thematic partnerships and 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). This can be seen in figure 4 below. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Board also play an important role in addressing the priorities within this plan.

The Partnership Board meet on a regular basis to drive a common purpose and ambition for the county, influence the use of all partners’ resources and ensure a strong focus on the achievement of the county’s priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

The delivery mechanism which will realise the ambitions of the Children and Families Trust and therefore the contribution to the work of the CDP and SCS is through the Children, Young People and Families’ Plan (CYPFP).

**Figure 4: County Durham Partnership Framework, 2011**



## The Children and Families Trust

The Children and Families Trust has recently undergone a structural review in order to respond to the changing landscape in the way that key services are delivered. Early intervention services are now delivered through three specific areas within the County. Within the areas there are 10 One Point Service 'hubs' and 22 spokes delivering key and 'connected' services.

The governance arrangements of the Children and Families Trust include:

### The Children's Executive Board (CEB) x 1

The CEB provides the strategic and senior leadership to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families in County Durham and ensures that partnership arrangements are effective. It leads on joint strategic and resource planning and oversees joint commissioning and performance management of the Children's Trust. The CEB is also responsible for managing risk and ensuring a range of control measures are identified and implemented to reduce the potential impact. Councillor Claire Vasey as the lead member for children and young people sit on the CEB and provides elected member direction and support.

### Area Management Groups (AMG) x 3

Area Management Groups provide the leadership within each of the three areas to improve outcomes. They ensure that the strategic plan is translated into operational plans for the area and that a multi-agency network of support operates effectively at a local level. The Area Management Groups play a pivotal role in linking strategy and operations via effective planning, performance and commissioning. They also play a critical role in ensuring that the voice of children, young people and families contributes to the decision making process.

### Local Delivery Partnerships (LDP) x 10

Local Delivery Partnerships play a key role in ensuring that services are delivered within the locality and that agreed processes and procedures are operating effectively. The groups rely on information and communication between agencies in order that the 'network of support' is working in practice and that appropriate teams are formed around the child and family.

*The relationship between the Children and Families Trust and other key partnerships and groups is essential to the success of our work. These include:*

### Durham Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

The LSCB continues to work directly with the Children's Executive Board to ensure that safeguarding children and young people is prioritised by all represented partners. The LSCB is a statutory partnership that agrees how agencies and services should work together to safeguard children. The LSCB provides effective challenge and scrutiny of the work of the Trust and its partners in safeguarding and protecting children and young people in County Durham through established protocols. The Durham LSCB website (<http://www.durham-lscb.gov.uk>) provides more information on the role of the Board.

### Joint Commissioning Board (JCB)

The Joint Commissioning Board has responsibility for coordinating and overseeing commissioning activity across the partner agencies that comprise the Children and Families

Trust. It provides a vital link between services so that they work together to maximise commissioning to reap the greatest benefits for children, young people and families. As such, the JCB oversees how resources are pooled and deployed at a strategic level, as well as monitoring and reviewing the Annual Commissioning Plan to ensure that commissioned services are in place and are effective and efficient. The JCB reports directly to the Children's Executive Board.

## **Community of Interest for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)**

The Children and Families Trust has established an active Community of Interest (Col) with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). The Community of Interest represents and supports the collective interests of the VCS. It works towards ensuring that they remain actively engaged with the work of the Trust at all levels. The Community of Interest also plays a vital role in supporting the VCS to ensure outcomes for children, young people and families are improved.

## **Parents & Young People's Participation Development and Reference Groups**

The Children and Families Trust is committed to involving children, young people and parents/carers throughout the breadth of our work. The Participation Groups coordinate our approaches to fostering the rights of children and young people, particularly their right to participate and also the participation of parents/carers in our work. The groups include representatives from main service providers, the Local Delivery Partnerships and children, young people and parents / carers. The groups set the standards and ensure that our practice provides ample and appropriate opportunities for children, young people and parents / carers to participate.

The Reference Groups, which are supported by Investing in Children, are the vehicle to making sure this happens and that the views of children, young people and parents influence the Trust. The Reference Groups have vital links with other wider groups of children, young people and parents / carers to ensure as many as possible can contribute.

## **Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)**

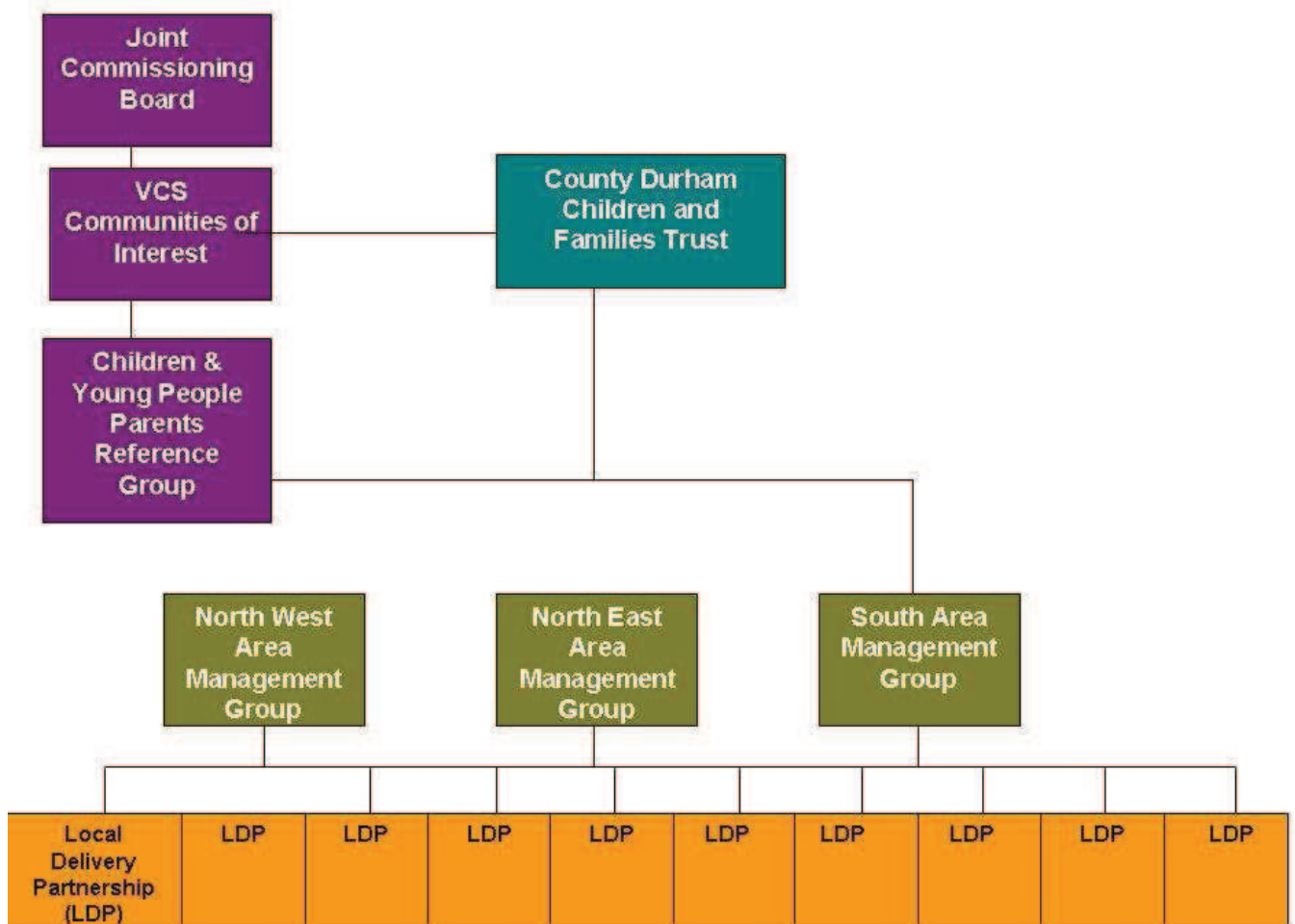
There are two Clinical Commissioning Groups which include General Practitioners (GPs), nurses and other health professionals which have been established to cover the whole of County Durham. These groups are working towards approval to take on the responsibility from the NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT) for planning and buying local health services.

## **Improving Progression Partnership (IPP)**

This multi-agency partnership takes the lead in developing a strategic overview of County Durham's education and training priorities relating to participation, achievement and progression of young people. These priorities are informed by analysis, plans and through liaison with area based and thematic groups. This group ensures that there are effective linkages with other partnerships, including the Children's Trust and the County Durham Economic Partnership.

The structure of the Children and Families Trust is shown overleaf in Figure 5.

Figure 5: The Structure of the Children and Families Trust from April 2012





The Children, Young People and Families Plan is deliberately focused on what we need to achieve at a strategic level over the next 4 years. However, each priority will be supported by a 'Commissioning Plan' at the next level down which will set out what we need to achieve over the same period of time but in much more detail. The extensive research and information that we have gathered in the identification and selection of our priorities and high level actions will be used as part of the evidence base that will determine the content of the Commissioning Plans (Appendix 1). At this strategic level, therefore, we will focus on monitoring outcomes.

We will do this by ensuring that our performance monitoring and management approach is robust. We will use the performance management approach already firmly embedded within the partnership to ensure that our performance is monitored and managed and that constructive action is taken quickly to overcome any obstacles. The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee also plays a key role in providing scrutiny and challenge and elected members are involved in managing performance and delivery at a local and area level through links with the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs).

We are confident that our plan reflects our strategic direction as a partnership and that we are focusing on the right things that make a difference to the lives of children, young people and families. However, we also acknowledge that it is important to ensure that we are **making progress** and that our strategic areas for focus **remain the right ones**.

## How will we do this?

In partnership with children, young people, families and key partners, we will:

### On a quarterly basis:

- Monitor and manage performance of the plan through the Children's Executive Board performance scorecard and initiate further work as required e.g. performance clinics;
- Monitor performance and provide independent scrutiny and challenge through the quarterly Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Hold children and young people's reference groups to monitor performance and progress of the plan from a children and young people's perspective. A process for how best we can do this will be agreed with Investing in Children (IIC). The aim of this will be to ensure that young people can monitor our progress against the actions that we have set out and review whether we are making a difference from a young person's perspective.

### On an annual basis:

- Undertake a full review of the plan by:
  - holding a stakeholder event, supported by a programme of children and young people's 'Agenda Days' focusing on identify emerging priorities or drivers for change;
  - researching emerging 'Drivers for change' which impact on the work of the Children's Trust and the Children, Young People and Families Plan including performance, national and local policy and strategic and operational issues affecting the Children and Families Trust;
  - undertaking a survey of children and young people; and
  - consulting and engaging with key stakeholders and groups such as the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the formulation of our plan.



## Glossary

AAP	Area Action Partnership
AMG	Area Management Group
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CDP	County Durham Partnership
CDYOS	County Durham Youth Offending Service
CEB	Children's Executive Board
COI	Community of Interest
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CYPFP	Children, Young People and Families Plan
CYPS	Children and Young People's Services
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DCC	Durham County Council
EET	Education, Employment and Training
EYP	Early Years Practitioner
EYS	Early Years Sector
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GRT	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
IIC	Investing in Children
IPP	Improving Progression Partnership
JCB	Joint Commissioning Board
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
LDP	Local Delivery Partnership
LGC	Local Government Chronicle
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NHS	National Health Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PRD	Pre-Reprimand Disposal
RPA	Raising of the Participation Age
SASS	Safeguarding and Specialist Services
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SRE	Sexual Health and Relationship Education
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector



## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of our partners in the development and creation of this plan. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude and show our appreciation to ALL the children, young people and their families who took part in consultation events, provided views and helped to shape the content and direction of our new Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016. Your support has been invaluable.

Please be assured that by giving up your time, you have contributed to providing a brighter future for the children, young people and families of County Durham through the creation and subsequent delivery of this plan. You have made sure that it is focused on the things that will make a difference to families' lives by ensuring that we listened to what you had to say.

Together we will ensure that each child and young person in County Durham, by making steps in the right direction, *'believes, achieves and succeeds'*.



## OUTCOME 1 - Children and Young People realise and maximise their potential

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p><b>Priority 1: Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain into adulthood</b></p> <p>Young people told us that 'school and education' and 'employment and jobs' are highly important issues affecting them and there are concerns about finding a job and having enough money. Specifically, children and young people told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to increase the range of opportunities to learn new skills.</li> <li>• Tuition fees are a barrier to accessing further education.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to 'try-out' courses and training opportunities before committing to them.</li> </ul>		"Picture This" event / Investing in Children		
Children, young people and families told us about the importance of good information, advice and guidance that is tailored around the specific needs of children and young people.		"Picture This" event / IIC		
There needs to be continued focus on supporting and 'narrowing the gaps' which exist between vulnerable groups and the rest. This includes: looked after children; those from deprived areas; Gypsy, Roma and Travellers; and those with Special Educational Needs.			JSNA 2011	Performance Scorecards
Partners need to intervene early and ensure the best start in life for all children and young people, supporting transitions and the key events in the lives of children and young people and raising achievement at age 19 / level 3.		CYPP focus group		
There has been a significant change in careers advice with the introduction of a new National Careers Service which will provide a national helpline and website to provide information. The new, full service will be fully operation by April 2012.	Education Bill			

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability Green paper puts a focus on early intervention and integrated support, access to better quality vocational and work related learning to allow progress.</p>	<p>SEN and Disability Green paper</p>			
<p>The Education and Skills Act 2008 states '...make available to young people and relevant young adults for whom they are responsible such services as they consider appropriate to encourage, enable and assist them to remain in education and training'</p>	<p>Education and Skills Act 2008 Section 28</p>			
<p>Statutory duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of all young people who are over compulsory school age but under 19, or are aged 19-25 and subject to a learning difficulty assessment.</p>	<p>Education and Skills Act 2008</p>			
<p>The Raising of the Participation Age means that all young people will continue in education or training to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015. This places greater emphasis on Local Authorities to ensure that vulnerable groups are targeted and supported to ensure that they achieve in line with their peers and continue to engage in education, employment or training once they reach age 16.</p>	<p>Education and Skills Act 2008</p>			
<p><b>Priority 2: A range of positive activities are available for children and young people</b></p>				
<p>The 3 main categories acting as barriers to participation in positive activities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport - lack of affordable and regular provision</li> <li>▪ Information and marketing - lack of clear unified marketing strategy</li> <li>▪ Attitudes - towards children and young people/improving service focus around children and young people</li> </ul>	<p>Joint Commissioning Board report December 2011</p>			

Page	Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
2	<p>'Parks and play areas' and 'places to go and things to do' are very important to children and young people and families. Issues identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● unsuitability of parks and play areas (improving equipment and reducing waste);</li> <li>● improving swimming facilities;</li> <li>● gender-specific provision such as football facilities and skate-parks for boys and dancing for girls;</li> <li>● the need for a wider range of facilities and the opportunity to travel and visit other areas, more purpose-built youth centres and facilities that children and young people can call their own;</li> <li>● a wider range of activities available at weekends, during school holidays and during festivals across the year, such as Christmas and Easter.</li> </ul>		'Picture This ' event / Investing in Children Research		
	<p>Local residents identified that one of their top priorities included the provision of activities for teenagers. Residents rated the following as issues that are important to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Activities for Teenagers (37%)</li> <li>● Play Facilities for Young Children (14%)</li> <li>● Parks and Open Spaces (13%)</li> </ul>		County Durham Residents Survey 2010		
	<p>Transport is a specific issue that prevents children and young people accessing leisure opportunities. The rurality of the county and the cost of transport between towns and villages pose a significant barrier preventing children and young people accessing activities.</p> <p>Children and young people have told us that they'd like to see some services come to them – such as mobile cinemas set up in parks / local venues and using libraries and other venues for reading, writing and study groups specifically for children and young people.</p>		Investing in Children Research		

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>Existing legislation that supports youth work is described in statutory guidance in Section 507B Education Act 1996 (March 2008). This sets out the requirements for local authorities to provide youth work in three areas: positive activities, decision making by young people and 14-19 learning. The duty sets out two forms of activity to improve well-being. The first activity is 'educational leisure-time activities'. The second activity is 'recreational leisure-time activities' which includes sports and informal physical activities as well as a wide range of cultural activities including music, performing and visual arts.</p> <p>The House of Commons Education Committee report (23 June 2011) recommended that the Government announce publicly an intention to retain the statutory duty on local authorities to secure young people's access to sufficient educational and leisure-time activities, taking into account young people's views and to publicise up-to-date information and remind local authorities of this duty.</p>	<p>Education Act 1996 – Statutory Guidance March 2008 / House of Commons Education Committee report</p>			

## OUTCOME 2: Children and young people make positive choices

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<b>Priority 3: Negative risk taking behaviour is reduced</b>				
<p>Research with children, young people and families found the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children aged 0-7 years have told us that they are concerned about young people drinking alcohol.</li> <li>Children aged 8-12 years told us about concerns they have about children and young people leading a healthy and active lifestyle, as well as use of alcohol and drugs by children and young people.</li> <li>Teenagers we have spoken with raised the subject of sex education and have told us that accessing free contraception is an issue which concerns them.</li> <li>Youth crime, anti-social behaviour and the need to feel safe were ranked in the top ten of themes highlighted by children and young people as being important to them.</li> </ul>		<p>“Picture This” event</p>		
<p>Children and young people in County Durham have also told us that contraception services are not well publicised, accessible or welcoming and some young people fear that their right to confidentiality will not be respected. Children and young people have told us that it is difficult to get the right help and advice especially around the effects and consequences and use of drugs and alcohol.</p>		<p>Investing in Children Research</p>		
<p>The issues that affect parents often have a significant and detrimental impact on their children. These issues include: mental ill-health; domestic violence; substance misuse; learning difficulties and disabilities. The links between these factors as a cause of poor outcomes is well established. It is also important to recognise these impacts on children and young people’s risk taking behaviour.</p>	<p>County Durham Think Family Strategy</p>			
<p>The Government’s Reducing Demand Restructuring Supply, Building Recovery national strategy has been introduced to help support young people facing increased risks of developing problems with drugs or alcohol. Vulnerable groups - such as those who are truanting or excluded from school, looked after children (LAC), young offenders and those at risk of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour, those with mental ill health, or those whose parents misuse drugs or alcohol - need targeted support to prevent drug or alcohol misuse or early intervention when problems first arise.</p>	<p>Reducing Demand, Restructuring Supply, Building Recovery (national strategy)</p>			

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>Alcohol-related hospital admission rates for under-18s in County Durham was 122 per 100,000, higher than the regional rate of 107.7 per 100,000. County Durham is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> worst out of 326 local authorities.</p> <p>Research shows that in County Durham higher proportions of children subject to a child protection plan / looked after are as a result of parental alcohol misuse, as well as mental health and domestic violence.</p>			JSNA 2011	
<p>Overweight young people have a 50% chance of being overweight adults and, unless childhood obesity is addressed, this is likely to increase demand on the NHS and Adult Services due to the health problems associated with adult obesity.</p> <p>The link between sustained breastfeeding and deferred weaning (to at least six months) and reduced risk of childhood obesity is increasingly well established. As breastfeeding initiation is lower in County Durham than nationally or regionally, whilst breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks is also lower than for England or the region, the county therefore has a greater risk of childhood obesity.</p>			JSNA 2011	
<p>National Strategies including "Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government strategy for England" (2008) set out the aims for the healthy growth and development of children which promote healthier food choices, building physical activity into lives, creating incentives for better health and personalised advice and support.</p>	Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government strategy for England			
<p>Reducing teenage pregnancy is central to improved outcomes for young men and women. It reduces health inequalities, child poverty and the costs associated with addressing the poor outcomes for young parents and their children. Low aspirations and low self esteem are some of the key risk factors for under-18 conceptions.</p>	'Teenage Pregnancy Strategy: Beyond 2010'			

Page	Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
24	<p>Having children at a young age can be harmful to young women's health and wellbeing and severely limit education and career prospects and ensuring young people have access to a full range of contraception methods maximises effective contraception use, which impacts positively on both conception and abortion rates. The commissioning process was followed to establish the current need, services provided, best practice and what our commissioning priorities should be in order to continue / accelerate the downward trend in our performance. Our 4 key strands are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Health and Relationship Education (SRE)</li> <li>• Contraception Services</li> <li>• Support to Teenage Parents</li> <li>• Data Intelligence and Communication</li> </ul>			<p>JSNA 2011 / Joint Commissioning Teenage Pregnancy</p>	
	<p>The government's green paper proposes reforms to tackle health and social problems affecting young people and provide targeted local support to help young people into constructive employment and training. The paper signals a move away from heavy-handed prison sentencing to restorative justice approaches. Risk factors, associated with young people offending, include: levels of deprivation and other social issues; a lack of understanding of consequences; impulsiveness; a need for excitement; peer pressure; temper; inappropriate social skills; and substance misuse.</p>	<p>Breaking the Cycle – Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders</p>			
<p><b>Priority 4: Children and young people are more resilient</b></p>					
	<p>Children and young people have told us about the importance they place on emotional health and wellbeing. They've told us that the issues which matter most to them include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• friendships and relationships</li> <li>• self - esteem</li> <li>• positive behaviour</li> <li>• bullying</li> <li>• feeling valued and respected</li> </ul>		<p>"Picture This" event / IIC</p>		
	<p>Children and young people told us that adults should listen to them more and that it would be beneficial if more members of the Children's Workforce were trained to help and advise them on a range of complex, and often sensitive, issues.</p>		<p>Investing in Children research</p>		



Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>The government aims to provide early intervention and prevention to improve quality of life by focusing on empowering people to lead the life they want with dignity and respect. The strategy aims to expand provision of psychological therapies to children and young people. National Statistics show that prevalence of mental health disorders in children is higher for those:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• living in lone parent families or reconstituted families;</li> <li>• whose parents have no educational qualifications;</li> <li>• living in workless households;</li> <li>• from low income families;</li> <li>• from families in receipt of benefits; and</li> <li>• from families who belong to routine manual groups or live in rented housing or within areas of higher deprivation.</li> </ul>	<p>'No Health without Mental Health' strategy (2011)</p>			
<p>There is a rising prevalence of emotional problems and this is likely to impact on: educational attainment, absences from school, exclusions, friendships, physical health and offending behaviours.</p>			<p>JSNA 2011</p>	
<p>Being valued gives a child or young person a sense of inner worth that allows them to cope with every day life. Respect for themselves and others develops from knowing that they are listened to, knowing their views are considered, feeling they 'belong' and have healthy relationships. All of these factors are inter-linked allowing a child to develop resilience which will give them the courage to face what ever comes their way from childhood through to adulthood.</p>	<p>Hart, A. and Blincow D. with Thomas, H. (2007) Resilient Therapy: Working with children and families. London: Routledge</p>			
<p>Research conducted with secondary schools demonstrated the positive impact of being made to feel valued and respected by including them in the decision making. This in turn made a positive contribution to their feelings of wellbeing. Comments from young people included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "We got to voice our opinions on whom we thought would make the best teacher...In the end we got the teachers we chose."</li> <li>• "We have changed the school council structure ...allowing everyone a chance to have their say."</li> <li>• "We can write our ideas and thoughts about the school, and what we want to change".</li> <li>• "School council meetings take place whenever we want...we just ask for one."</li> </ul>		<p>Investing In Children research</p>		

# OUTCOME 3: Children, young people and families' needs are met

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<b>Priority 5: Children are safeguarded and protected from harm</b>				
<p>There are agreed protocols in place between the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Children and Families Trust to ensure effective challenge and scrutiny of the work of the Trust and its partners in safeguarding and protecting children and young people in County Durham. The LSCB poses specific challenges for the Trust concerning: information sharing; use of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs); impact of parental mental health; sexual exploitation and early intervention.</p>	<p>Role of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and relationship with the Children and Families Trust</p>			
<p>The Munro review demonstrates the need to improve safeguarding services as well as the need to 'intervene early'. It highlights the importance of a successful and robust interface between integrated, preventative services and safeguarding services as well as refocusing the work of safeguarding services on intervention, not processes that detract from working with families that have complex needs. The repercussions of the review will continue mean that there will be some dramatic changes in the child protection system and will in the longer term promote simplicity and improved frontline work with families.</p>	<p>Munro Review of Children Protection</p>			
<p>Our research shows that between 2007/08 and 2010/11 there has been a consistent and substantial increase in safeguarding activity in County Durham. This can be partially explained through the implementation and promotion of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and an increased focus on safeguarding as a result of heightened public and professional awareness stemming from well-document cases such as 'Baby P'. The demand for safeguarding services at a glance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of initial assessments has increased over the last 4 years from 2,521 to 3,449 in 2010/11, an increase of 36.8% (928).</li> <li>• The number of core assessments has increased over the last 4 years from 633 to 1447 in 2010/11, an increase of 128.6% (814).</li> <li>• The number of children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 population has increased from 17 in 2005/06 to 44 in 2010/11.</li> <li>• The number of children looked after per 10,000 population has increased from 40 in 2007/08 to 52 in 2010/11.</li> </ul>			<p>JSNA 2011</p>	<p>Performance Scorecards</p>

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>In the last twelve months, there is some evidence to suggest that this increased demand for safeguarding services has levelled off, with small decreases in referrals and the number of children who are subject to a child protection plan remaining consistent with levels in 2009/10. However, increases in the number of children who are in the care of the local authority, that often present with complex needs which require sustained, on-going support will impact upon resources and service delivery.</p>			JSNA 2011	
<p>Research shows that growing up in child poverty has a significant impact on children and young people both during their childhood and beyond, with clear links to safeguarding and specialist services.</p> <p>The County Durham Child Poverty Needs Assessment illustrates that child poverty affects many families in County Durham with pockets of deprivation spread across the County. The issues affecting parents include mental health, substance misuse, learning disability and difficulties and domestic violence are well-documented and the links with neglect, physical abuse and the need for intervention by safeguarding services is well-established. Identifying and addressing these issues which impact of parenting ability and capacity requires a multi-agency and coordinated response. Universal services play a key role in identifying and addressing the issues affecting parenting ability and capacity.</p>	<p>County Durham Child Poverty Strategy / Needs Assessment</p>			
<p>Research shows that children that grow up in poverty can be more vulnerable to maltreatment, particularly neglect and physical abuse. Child neglect is complex and multifaceted and therefore difficult to define. It can range from physical to psychological/emotional neglect, absence of supervision, abandonment and supervisory neglect.</p>	<p>NSPCC research (Poverty and Maltreatment, 2008)</p>			
<p>There is a strong correlation between poverty and neglect with 98% of families whose children at risk of emotional maltreatment or neglect were characterised by the extreme poverty of their material environment – reflected in the fact that 59% lived in over-crowded housing conditions, and with 56% of parents reporting high levels of emotional stress.</p>	<p>(Tuck 2000). Thoburn et al. (2000)</p>			

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>The County Durham 'Think Family' Strategy states that: <i>'Families are the building blocks of our communities. As well as providing for the current generation, families bring up the children who will be the future of County Durham'</i>. The strategy outlines the importance of families in providing the positive nurturing, learning and care needed to enable children to lead healthy and happy lives. Fundamental to this is good parenting which leads to improved attainment, resilience, healthy lifestyles, confidence and feelings of self worth.</p> <p>It is recognised that families that have multiple and complex needs can be at risk of needing specialist services in the future. This Strategy sets out intentions to working across traditional age-related service boundaries to "Think Family". In taking an integrated approach, we will meet needs in a more effective and efficient way – intervening early to prevent the future need to provide safeguarding services.</p>	<p>County Durham Think Family Strategy</p>			
<p><b>Priority 6: Early intervention and prevention services improve outcomes for families</b></p>				
<p>The Early Intervention: Next Steps, the research and report conducted by Graham Allen MP, tells us that we need to intervene early, to make sure that our children get the best possible start in life. We need to keep supporting them throughout childhood in ways which help them reach their key milestones of social and emotional development. Between birth and the age of 3, neglect, bad parenting and other adverse experiences can have a profound negative effect on children and their brain development. The rationale is simple: many of the costly and damaging social problems in society are created because we are not giving children the right type of support in their earliest years. Early intervention enables every baby, child and young person to acquire the right foundations upon which future success depends.</p>	<p>Allen Review of Early Intervention</p>			
<p>The review of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) concluded that the earliest years in a child's life are absolutely critical, providing the essential foundations for healthy development. If these foundations are not secure, children can experience long-term problems which often present wider social consequences. It is imperative that the support and education provided in pre-school settings is of a high quality. In 2008, the EYFS was introduced with the intention of providing a framework to deliver consistent and high quality environments for all children in pre-school settings, recognising the importance of this period in a child's life. The review shows that outcomes for young children are improving. However, it is not perfect and the Tickell review provides recommendations that are designed to build on and improve the current statutory framework.</p>	<p>Tickell Review of Early Years Foundation Stage</p>			

Why is this issue important to us?	Policy / Research	Consultation	Needs Assessment	Performance
<p>The Marmot review into health inequalities (February 2010) proposes an evidence-based strategy to address the social determinant of health, the conditions people are born, grow, live and work and age and which can lead to health inequalities. The review builds the case to improve health for all and reduce unfair and unjust inequalities.</p>	<p>Marmot Review 'Fair Society, Health Lives'</p>			
<p>The Field review sets out a new national strategy for tackling child poverty and promoting social mobility – the ability to move between one social class to another. In order to tackle the health inequalities and the pockets of poverty which exist across County Durham, our focus and commitment to intervene early and prevent future, costly services is fundamental to achieving these aims.</p>	<p>Field Report of the Independent Review of Poverty and Life Changes</p>			
<p>Recent performance information for child poverty for County Durham shows that 20,945 children under 16 were in poverty which represents an increase of 940 children (4.2 percentage points) from the previous year. This equates to 23.5% of children under 16 in poverty in 2009 compared with 22.7% in 2008.</p>			<p>JSNA 2011</p>	
<p>The green paper aims to develop stronger local strategic planning and commissioning arrangements for local authorities and health services to play a pivotal role in ensuring children and young people with SEN or disabilities receive high quality support which includes day time care, overnight care and educational/recreational activities for disabled children outside their home.</p>	<p>SEN and Disability Green Paper</p>			
<p>The JSNA shows that the number of disabled children and young people is growing due to advances in medicine and technology that prolongs life, whilst the number of children and young people with autism is rising. The JSNA indicates that as severely disabled children and young people receive a statutory service from the Children and Young People's Disability Service, there is likely to be increased demand for such services in the future.</p>			<p>JSNA 2011</p>	
<p>Our approach in County Durham ensures that both parents and children are able to get the support they need, at the right time, to help their children achieve good outcomes. It means making sure that families receive integrated, co-ordinated, multi-agency, solution-focused support. By identifying problems early, all services can work closely together to help prevent a family's needs escalating and requiring more intensive intervention.</p>	<p>County Durham Think Family Strategy</p>			

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